

No. 190. March 2023

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

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A collection of tree roots (ash and hazel) revealed after heavy rain on a bank in Hungers Lane, which seem to be writhing like worms to find their way back into the soil. Photograph by Jonathan Newdick.

FRONT AND BACK COVERS

A winter hedgerow on a bright morning after a frosty night. The view is to the south of Tillington and the field is very likely one of those worked on by William John Bennett with his powder-blue Ransomes plough. See pages 24 and 25. Photograph by Jonathan Newdick.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY

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The Petworth Society was founded in 1974 'to preserve the character and amenities of the town and parish of Petworth including Byworth plus the parish of Egdean; 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, anywhere and the annual subscription is £14.00, single or double; postal £18.00, overseas nominal £25.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following.

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Designed, typeset and produced by
Jonathan Newdick and printed in Chichester
by SRP Design and Print Ltd.

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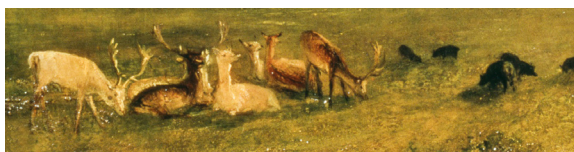
Natwest Chichester,
Sort Code 60-16-27.
Account 89087186.

The Petworth Society supports the
Leconfield Hall, Petworth Cottage Museum,
the Coultershaw Beam Pump and Petworth Fair.

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CONTENTS

	The Petworth Society	2
	Editorial	4
	Chairman's notes	6
Alison McCann	A breach of promise	7
Andrew Loukes	Lady Leconfield proposes	12
David R. G. Johnston	Ebernoe: Horn Fair and Romanies	20
Gerald Gresham-Cooke	In the steps of artistic giants – a walk	22



Paul de Zulueta	A lapsed friendship: Ranville twinned with Petworth	27
Andrew Loukes	Picture note: 'Honeyway House' by John Roote	36
Bob Sneller	'I'm 34 but 36 fits better'	38
Miles Costello	An unlikely survivor	45



Mike Mulcahy and Mike Pengilly	What's brewing in Petworth	46
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CORRECTION

The byline for the article 'The Petworth Star' on page 36 of the December issue should have read 'Debbie Stevenson and Miles Costello'. We apologise to Mrs Stevenson for omitting her name.

EDITORIAL

Andrew Loukes

I was greatly flattered on being asked to become the new Editor of *The Petworth Society Magazine*. Few other small towns can boast such a vital repository of local information, knowledge and history, all now brilliantly archived online as well as published in print. To me, the quality and importance of the Magazine shares the same happy imbalance against the size of the town as do the major collections within Petworth House, the vast and far-reaching Petworth House Archives, the town's wonderful museums, fairs and fêtes, and the high cultural profile of its festivals and exhibitions.

I was additionally daunted to follow in the editorial footsteps not only of such a Petworth Society stalwart and knowledgeable local historian as Miles Costello but also those of Petworth town's greatest chronicler and oracle, Peter Jerrome, to whom we will always be grateful for the significance of this magazine. Hopefully, my tenure will be a case of standing on the shoulders of giants, to paraphrase Isaac Newton; while, thankfully, another great champion of our local cultural heritage, Jonathan Newdick, remains the Magazine's outstanding designer, ensuring its look and feel remain unchanged.

In terms of content, Jonathan's interview with the Petworth Society treasurer of the 1970s and '80s Bob Sneller continues the long and important tradition of capturing the memories of townspeople within these pages. Also in this issue are further familiar contributors, not least my colleague Alison McCann, who shares a touching story discovered during her researches into the 3rd Earl of Egremont. Others include David Johnston and Gerald Gresham-Cooke, whose excellent walk reminds us of the unique appeal of Petworth to both Turner and Constable. We are also fortunate to welcome the military historian Paul de Zulueta as a new contributor.

As a former curator at Tate Britain and Manchester Art Gallery, my personal connection with Petworth began with the building memorably described by John Constable as 'that house of art'. I have been fortunate to work at Petworth House since 2009, first for the National Trust and from 2021 for Lord and Lady Egremont. In 2013 I was proud to have initiated charged-entry exhibitions for the National Trust, which brought works of art from Tate Britain, the V&A, the British Museum and elsewhere to Petworth.

BELOW 'That house of art.'

John Constable, *Petworth House from the Park*, watercolour, 20.7x27.2 cm., September 1834, (detail), V&A Museum, London.

An interesting early precedent for Petworth exhibitions of loaned material with an admission fee is discussed in my own inaugural piece.

The future of our cherished magazine depends on willing contributors. If you can offer articles or images related to the town, its history or its people, which you feel would be of interest to others, please do get in touch. Most of all we covet memories. While many of those able to recall the Petworth of the first half of the last century may have either left us or contributed their stories already, I am sure it would be of great interest to today's readers – and certainly of value for future generations – to continue capturing the essence of the town from the 1950s to the 1990s. Who, for example, remembers drinking and dancing in the subterranean rooms now occupied by the Basmati restaurant? And where else might this sort of information be recorded? It is important.



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Alexandra Soskin

This March 2023 issue of the Magazine, No. 190, is our new editor's maiden full issue. I introduced Andy Loukes in the September issue and set out some of his eminent background. Since then, you will have had the opportunity to meet him at his excellent talk in the Leconfield Hall in November 'Petworth through the eyes of some important artists'. Andy's well-attended talk was chock-full of interesting facts and observations, and fulsomely illustrated from a number of sources.

Earlier, in October, Mike Pengilly, of Brewery 288, and Mike Mulcahy gave us a perspective on drinking habits in Petworth, past and present, in their talk 'What's Brewing in Petworth' which is reported in detail on page 46.

If you were able to visit in December, I think you will agree that the Petworth St Edmund's Day Fair was very well run and great fun. Despite the chilly Christmas weather, large numbers turned out for this ancient fair, established around the thirteenth century. The Harris brothers once again provided the rides, including their famous South Downs Gallopers, and the Petworth Town Band made sure we were in the Christmas mood. The Town Crier announced what was going on, and later we were even treated to a giant entertainer, stalking through the crowd on stilts! Lord Egremont turned on the Christmas lights bringing a final big splash to the festive scene. Congratulations to Miles Costello and the committee for another excellent fair and, importantly, for keeping this ancient tradition alive and strong.

On December 10th our new Book Sale team held the final sale of the year. We had a good turnout with many regulars attending. You can find the schedule for the 2023 sales on our website (www.petworthsociety.co.uk). We are looking for additional help with the sales, so if you or someone you know loves books and would like to join in, please email Sarah or Mike Singleton (info@petworthsociety.co.uk) or phone them on 01798 343 083.

Forthcoming Events: we have a number of events planned for the spring and summer. Please see our website (www.petworthsociety.co.uk) for these. Please also do send us your email address form (from the December issue). This will enable us to email you with information about forthcoming events; and to send you a password for logging in to your member's page.

A breach of promise

Alison McCann

As part of my research for a biography of the 3rd Earl of Egremont, I spent much of the lockdown in 2020 working through the British Newspaper Archive. This wonderful website, launched in 2011, contains digitised copies of a huge range of national and local newspapers from the 1700s onwards. The database can be searched, and my search for references to the Earl of Egremont in the relevant period produced some 14,000 references, all of which had to be checked. They contained all sorts of interesting information, though not all of it was immediately relevant. One reference led me to the report of the court case for breach of promise, brought by the daughter of the Head Gardener at Petworth House, against a nephew of the Agent there, in 1836. The evidence given on behalf of both parties gives a rare glimpse of the personal lives of some of the inhabitants of the House and the town of Petworth.

Betty Harrison, who brought the case, was one of the nine children of Charles Harrison who came to Petworth as Head Gardener in 1828. Harrison had previously been employed at Wortley near Sheffield in Yorkshire. Early in 1833, Betty, then aged about 21, acquired an admirer, John Gould, the 18-year-old nephew of William Tyler, the 3rd Earl of Egremont's Agent. John Gould's father, Richard, was for a time the Earl's rather unsatisfactory tenant at Sladeland in Kirdford, where John was born in about 1815. He was probably educated at Christ's Hospital near Horsham, as William Tyler had appealed for the Earl's help to get his nephews admitted there. In 1830, at the age of 16, John was apprenticed to his uncle as a clerk. When he started courting Betty, he was still under age.

Betty was 'serious and religiously disposed' and the couple used to go to Mr Wallace's Independent Chapel in Petworth together. In April 1833, John asked Betty's parents for their permission for the intended marriage. He wrote frequent long and impassioned letters to her, full of prayers, religious extracts, and professions of his devotion to her. Some of these were read out in court, to the amusement of the listeners. In August 1833, he wrote that: 'In the name and with the assistance of the Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ who came down to save sinners' he would marry no-one but Betty. He said that he was engaged to marry her, unless death prevented it, and that he would

marry her as soon as he had sufficient means. As late as January 1835, he wrote that he had selected her as his future wife, had always had her spiritual welfare at heart, and loved her, 'his dearly beloved sister' for several reasons, one of which was that she was a child of God. Only samples of John's letters were read out in court, as the foreman of the jury objected that doing so exposed religion to ridicule.

John's mother, Sarah, had other ideas. She was William Tyler's sister, some of her sons were living in his household, and she obviously had expectations of inheritance when Tyler should die. According to her son, she started spreading stories about Betty being a bad character. John wrote to Betty in January 1834 that he had dealt with these stories, and would marry no-one but her, if she would have 'such a miserable sinner'. It seems that it was John who had a bad reputation, as earlier that same month, he had written four sides of foolscap paper to assure Betty that he was not the father of 7 or 8 children by different women, as was reported. Since he was only 19 or 20 at the time, he would have had to have been rather active to have produced so many offspring. When he came of age in April 1835, he repeated his promise to marry her, though he thought they might have to wait until his father died. Since Richard Gould died in 1848, it would have been a long wait.

In January 1835, Betty began work in the kitchens at Petworth House. She does not appear in the wage books, nor does a Miss Hoyle, who also worked there, and who married one of John's brothers. It is likely that they were the equivalent of apprentices to Charles Slade the cook, to learn cookery. But Betty's health was not strong enough to stand the hot and strenuous work in the kitchens, and she stayed there for less than a year. Then she was sent for some weeks to the Anchor Inn at Horsham, which was run by Henry Newman, to recover her health. She helped in the bar there. Although her health improved while she was there, after she came home it deteriorated again, and by the time of the court case she was living at home in poor health.

In October 1835, William Tyler died, leaving £4,000 to John, but £80,000 to his mother, which made her a very wealthy woman. The money was also left to her entirely under her control, probably because Tyler had

BELOW The larder, part of the historic kitchens at Petworth House, with later Victorian improvements but looking much as it would have done when Betty Harrison worked there in 1835.
© National Trust Images, Andreas von Einsiedel.



no high opinion of her husband. Although in January 1836 John was still assuring Betty that they would be married, by April he was explaining that he had been guilty of 'awful and abominable sins' and that his mother would only countenance him if he married someone rich, not Betty. He pressed her to postpone the wedding until his mother's death, though according to Betty's sister, her parents were already busy with preparations for the wedding, which was to take place in London in June. According to the sister, John was determined to marry, because his home was like a hell, even worse than it had been when Tyler was alive.

But in May 1836, he announced that the marriage was off. By the summer,

Betty was suing him for breach of promise. His excuse was that after promising to marry her in June 1835, which he had at first denied, he had discovered that she was 'a loose and wanton woman'. His defence therefore consisted of stories of her bad behaviour. Some of the witnesses were fellow workers for the Earl of Egremont. In June 1835, during the short time that she had worked in the kitchens, the whole household had moved to Brighton when the Earl was staying there. Only a housekeeper was kept there permanently, so when the Earl went there, so did his household staff. Betty shared a room in the Brighton house with Jane Richardson and her cousin Mary Richardson, who were probably housemaids or kitchen maids. Jane gave evidence that Betty had gone out with James Burgess, another servant, while they were at Brighton, and had not got back until after supper, and Jane thought she had been drinking. She did admit that she was not friendly with Betty, thought she was proud, and that all the Harrisons were 'above their condition'. James Burgess deposed that he had indeed taken her out in Brighton, because Betty had never been there, and he showed her the sights of the town. They visited a respectable sculptor and his wife, and Betty was always well behaved and was not drunk. Mrs Davis, the housekeeper, told the court that they could not believe a word that Jane Richardson said, and that she had complained of her to Lord Egremont. The other servants obviously made fun of Betty's Yorkshire accent, which the court also found amusing.

John Boxall, another witness for John Gould spoke of Lord Munster's servants, and others 'taking liberties' with Betty. One wonders when he could have seen this, as he is described as coachman to Richard Gould, John's father. Henry Newman's former sister-in-law gave evidence that while Betty was at Horsham, her conduct was too free with Newman, that she kissed him, and sat on his knee, drank too much, was often tipsy and immodest. Doubt was cast on her testimony, because she had a grudge against her former brother-in-law, who she thought had hastened his first wife's death by his treatment of her. Newman admitted that he pulled all ladies who came into his bar onto his knee, but when he tried to kiss Betty, she slapped him. He claimed that it was his sister-in-law who drank and 'misbehaved' with a trumpeter from the local barracks.

As well as accusing Betty of loose behaviour, the defence counsel tried to suggest that John's relationship with her was just a boyish attachment, and that she was 'an artful hussy' who had led him astray. Only one extract from a letter that Betty wrote was read in court. She wrote 'If I should die first, I should like, if the Lord permit, to convey your soul to rest; if the Lord permit

us to be joined in holy wedlock, I hope it will be to His honour and glory'. Then she went on to say, rather more humanly 'I hope it will not be long before I feel your beard against my chin [loud laughter in court]. I would not hinder you' (more laughter).

According to the newspaper report, there was a lot of laughter in court, and the whole case seems to have been treated with some levity, especially by the defence counsel. There was even a joke against the Earl of Egremont. George Smith, one of Tyler's clerks, gave evidence that Lord Egremont went into his kitchen every day to see the bill of fare 'not the fair of the kitchen' (laughter). Did the Earl still have a reputation for the ladies, even at the age of 85? Defence counsel made fun of Betty's mother's Yorkshire accent when she gave evidence, which prosecuting counsel condemned as 'a specimen of the mode in which the defendant has chosen to conduct the action, and of a piece with the disgraceful attempt to destroy the character of the plaintiff'. The court obviously believed those who supported Betty, and they found John guilty of breach of promise, and awarded Betty £150 damages.

One hopes this was some consolation for her. In February 1837, John Gould was married in London to Mary Street, the daughter of James and Mary Street of Petworth. They lived in East Street, Petworth, where he carried on his uncle's solicitor's practice. He and Mary had seven children, and John died in Hastings in 1908.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to find out what happened to Betty Harrison. It seems likely that she went with her parents when Charles Harrison quitted his position as Head Gardener in 1838. Perhaps John's presence in the town with his new wife was distressing for Betty. Given her ill health, from which she had suffered since childhood, she may have died quite young. But her name is too common to be able to trace her.

It is a sad little story, but it does give a glimpse of the real human beings who are otherwise only names in a document. The tensions between fellow servants – did Jane Richardson think Betty was above herself because, if one judges by her letter to John, she had a very high level of literacy for a gardener's daughter? Or did her intense nonconformist religion and Yorkshire accent mark her out as different? How kind of James Burgess to take Betty to see the sights of Brighton. How unkind of Sarah Gould to insist that her son married for money, and to try to destroy Betty's reputation, even though Sarah's own origins were on a par with Betty's. Did Henry Newman really pull every woman who visited his inn onto his knee? Was this normal and acceptable behaviour in a publican? As usual the story raises even more questions.

Lady Leconfield proposes

The Petworth Loan Exhibition of 1908. Andrew Loukes

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the exhibition ‘Turner’s Sussex’ at Petworth House, which was followed by ‘Constable at Petworth’ (2014) and ‘William Blake in Sussex’ (2018). All of these exhibitions featured major loans from collections including Tate Britain, the V&A and the British Museum, and they all sold out of tickets. No other small town, nor country house, has hosted loan exhibitions focused on painters of this magnitude, only possible because of the quality and reputation of the art collection in Petworth House itself and the unique associations of the town with some of our most important artists. More recently, the Newlands House Gallery has carried on the tradition of borrowing major works of art for successful charged-entry exhibitions.

A cache of hitherto unpublished material amongst the uncatalogued papers in the Petworth House Archive reveals an early precedent for loan exhibitions with an admission fee held in Petworth. This show was mounted as early as 1908 and, unlike the exhibitions of the last decade, did not include stellar works of art from leading museum collections. Perhaps more interestingly, it was formed largely of objects belonging to local residents but nevertheless amounted to some 400 exhibits and offers a glimpse into the nature of heirlooms and prized possessions across a range of social classes in Edwardian Petworth.

The three-day ‘Petworth Loan Exhibition’ was the brainchild of Constance, Lady Leconfield (1846-1939), and was announced by an open letter which was handwritten and issued by the Honorary Secretary of the exhibition, Mrs H. Smith of Egremont Row. Copied for distribution using an early photostat process, it is reproduced opposite.

At this date the Dowager Lady Leconfield was primarily living in London, at 12 Great Stanhope Street, following the death in 1901 of Henry, 2nd Lord Leconfield. Her son, Charles, 3rd Lord Leconfield, had inherited and was living in Petworth House but had yet to marry. Her exhibition’s wide-range of acceptable loans and the nominal date-parameters of 1800 to 1880 both ensured a sufficient supply of objects and allowed the community to enjoy a sense of shared nostalgia. Lady Leconfield’s own continued affection for

Equmont Row
Petworth
April 25th 1908

Dear

Lady Leconfield proposes to hold a Loan Exhibition in the Town Hall, Petworth on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday - May 5th, 6th + 7th from 2.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. each day. The prices of admission will be :-

1/- on Tuesday from 2.30 to 6.30.

1/- on Wednesday and Thursday from 2.30 to 4.

4^s on Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 6.30.

Lady Leconfield would be very grateful to you for any exhibits of drawings, paintings, embroidery, lace, wood carving, fancy work, and amateur handiwork of every description made during the first eighty years of the last century. Dresses, prints, valentines, or any articles illustrative of this period will also be gladly received. The proceeds will be divided between St. George's Home, Bourdon Street, and The Orphanage at St. Albans, both worked by the Sisters of All Saints.

All goods will be insured to their full value, if declared on accompanying form, and every precaution will be taken against damage. Watchmen will be on duty each night.

The Form A should be sent to me, if you are able to exhibit, not later than Thursday April 30th in order that some idea of the number of exhibits may be formed and space allotted.

Form B should be sent with the exhibits, addressed to me to the Audit Room, Petworth House on Saturday May 2nd between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Yours faithfully
(M/S) M. de Smith
25 on Dec.

the Victorian period in particular would later be further reflected in articles written for various publications, including *The Times* and the *New York Times Magazine* in the 1930s, which were reprinted in the book *Random Papers*, published privately by her daughters-in-law in 1938.

There are no known images of the exhibition, which fell between the retirement of one of Petworth's great photographers, Walter Kevis, and the establishment of the other, George Garland. Surviving, however, is the ledger which lists all lenders and their loans, along with many of the forms which they submitted and assorted pieces of documentation related to the project's installation, its finances, and the necessary security and insurance arrangements. There is also a draft poster, written in the hand of the Estate's Agent, Herbert Watson, but it is not known whether this was ever printed or copied. His wife sent eleven loans, including jewellery, costume, china and pictures.

The majority of recorded lenders were indeed women of the town, with a few from surrounding villages, and typically they brought samplers, valentines, toby jugs, shawls, quilts and other handicrafts. There was also a significant proportion of framed prints and drawings: James Woods – builder, contractor and undertaker – of Angel Street, who was responsible for installing the exhibition, includes in his bill a specific mention of 'hanging pictures' and an itemised charge of 1s.6d for wire and tacks for this purpose. Where framed works of art are listed in the ledger and on the forms there is usually either no artist's name given or that of a less well-known figure, reflecting the ambition of the show to give a flavour of an age rather than to celebrate great masters.

Lady Leconfield's own loans included letters from Queen Victoria, four valentines, specimens of needlework done in Petworth School, and four small portraits of her sisters-in-law painted on ivory by the prolific Victorian miniaturist Sir William Charles Ross, which survive in the private collection at Petworth House. The Countess of Lucan and the Marquis and Marchioness of Hamilton also supported the exhibition with loans, the latter supplying '3 Landseer sketches'. Among the more eye-catching loans from townspeople was a 'Picture (unframed) by Lady Egremont', lent by Alice Daintrey, which must have been a rare

example by either Alicia Maria Carpenter, wife to the 2nd Earl, or Elizabeth Ilive, wife to the 3rd Earl, both of whom were known to paint. There was also a watch-stand carved by Jonathan Ritson, who worked extensively in Petworth House during the early nineteenth century, lent by Mrs J.B. Nevatt, whose family had worked at the house for generations and also had a tailor's shop in Market Square (see *PSM* 1991 No.65). Mrs Suter, meanwhile, lent 'Charms against disease & trouble'. A full list of those who lent to the exhibition (with addresses where supplied) is given at the end of this article.

The intended recipients of the exhibition's profits, the Sisters of All Saints, were one of the first Anglican orders for women. They were founded in 1851 at the famous Victorian Gothic Revival church on Margaret Street, London, designed by the leading architect William Butterfield and completed the previous year. Initially employed in nursing the poor of their parish, the Sisters gained wider attention for their work on the front during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Along with their orphanage at St Alban's, the 1908 exhibition letter references St George's House, Bourdon Street. This latter institution had been established in Mayfair, just across Berkeley Square from Lady Leconfield's London house, to rehabilitate 'fallen women' by offering them both shelter and the opportunity to re-train for domestic service. The cause of 'fallen women', who had transgressed the morals of Victorian and Edwardian society, became a fashionable one and was supported by such high-profile figures as Charles Dickens, William Gladstone and Christina Rossetti.

In the event there were no exhibition profits for the Sisters and their causes. A handwritten balance sheet among the surviving papers indicates that against admission fees, the costs for insurance, security, installation and other expenses, amounted to a total loss of £3.6s.4d. The most expensive outlay was £5.12s.6d to the police for their attendance. This paid for three uniformed officers and another in plain clothes and brought a slight rebuke to Watson from the Chief Constable in Midhurst, requesting that any future requests for attendance should come with longer notice. The £1.5.6d paid to Sun for insurance against fire, theft and damage was for total cover of £1,000 with an upper limit of £50 for any single item. The insurers were

**You are requested
not to touch.**

Petworth Loan Exhibition.

Exhibited by

ABOVE AND RIGHT

Exhibition labels and the cover to the insurance document for the Petworth Loan Exhibition of 1908.

SUN FIRE OFFICE,

HEAD OFFICE:
63, THREADNEEDLE STREET, E.C.



Policy No......

Name of Insured.....

Annual Premium £.....

Please read the enclosed and return it for correction
if any alteration be required therein.

reassured that the loans would be guarded at all times and stored in 'a large room adjoining Petworth House' (the Audit Room) prior to their installation. Additional expenses included the one shilling paid to W. Knight, the Town Crier, for announcing the exhibition.

From the recorded admissions, approximately 130 people paid to see the exhibition across its three days. We do not know how the exhibits were arranged although there are surviving blank labels upon which the lenders' names were written and their objects described. Neither is it possible to gauge how the exhibition was received, but the prestigious nature of the Town Hall as a venue at this date perhaps, for many, instilled a heightened degree of pride in lending and novelty in attending: as late as the 1950s, when John Wyndham presented the building to the town and it henceforth became known as the Leconfield Hall, its long-serving caretaker Owen Bridger recalled its use primarily for exclusive events such as the Police Ball, the Hunt Ball and Magistrates' sessions, while 'More workaday events took place in the Iron Room', the now-demolished corrugated structure which stood on the land behind the old NatWest Bank on Market Square (see *PSM* No.96, June 1999).

As a feat of organisation, the 1908 exhibition was an extraordinary example of the energy and can-do attitude of its time. From the date of the loan letter, April 25, to the return of the loans on the 8th of May, the entire project was announced and concluded within fourteen days. Notwithstanding the grumbles of the Chief Constable, along with similar sentiments undoubtedly expressed less formally by others involved, the mounting of a loan exhibition with complex security, insurance and installation considerations within this timeframe would be completely alien to any exhibition organiser of our day, when loan exhibitions take a minimum of a year and often much longer in their delivery. While its visitor-figures and profits do not compare with shows such as 'Turner's Sussex' and those which continue to follow, with the majority of their loans and visitors coming from outside of the town, the 1908 exhibition re-emerges as a remarkable forerunner which is well worth commemorating.

Petworth Loan Exhibition

May 5th 6th 7th 1908.

FORM. A.

Exhibitor's Name + Address.

Mrs. Arnold

Middle Street. Petworth

No.	List of Exhibits	Value.
157	1. 4 Lots of old Lace 5 Arts.	
152	2. Apron	
153	3. Muslin Sleeve	
154	4. Velvet Bodice	
155	5. Part Silk Gown	
156	6. Satin Petticoat	
157	7. Skirt of Baby's Robe	

All early Victorian £5 .. 0 .. 0.

all exhibits to be removed on Friday
May 8th those remaining after that
date will be at Owners risk.

LENDERS TO THE 1908 PETWORTH LOAN EXHIBITION

Mrs Arnold (East Street),
Mrs Barrington Kennett (Barlavington),
Mrs J.S. Barrow (Habyn Hill, Rogate),
Miss Bartlett,
Mrs Barwell (Barkfold House),
Mrs J.S. Beachcroft,
Mrs Bridger (Rogate),
Miss Bryan (Lombard Street),
Mrs Bryant (East Street),
J. Bromham,
Mrs Buchanan,
Miss Burdock (Thompsons Hospital),
Mrs Carver (High Street),
Mr H Chatwynd-Stapylton (Hilliers),
Mrs Colebrook (North Street),
Miss Daisy Collins (East Street),
Miss Cooper (Grove Street),
Mrs Cooper (Percy Row),
Miss Cousens (Lombard Street),
Mrs Cragg (Middle Street),
Mrs Emma Daintrey,
Mrs Alice Daintrey,
Miss Emmeline Deane (97 Linden Gardens,
London),
Mrs Death [in *Random Papers*, Constance
Leconfield remembers Mr Death's
bookshop on Angel Street, page 48],
Misses Dyne (Rogate),
Mrs Eager (Market Square),
Mrs Ede (Rogate),
Mrs Franklin (The Firs, Rogate),
Marquis and Marchioness of Hamilton,
Mrs Jarrett (Market Square),

Mrs A.A. Knight,
Mrs Gordon Knight (East Street),
Mrs Hoad (Egremont Terrace),
Miss Holt (Mentone, Petworth),
Mrs George Howard (The Lads' Institute),
Lt. Col. Hollist (Lodsworth),
L. Langridge (Pheasant Court, Petworth),
Countess of Lucan (Laleham House, Staines),
Lady Leconfield (Petworth),
Mrs Mant (Petworth),
Mrs Marshall (Wernham Farm, Rogate),
Miss Mitchell (Thompsons Hospital),
Mrs Moase (South Cottage),
Mrs Arthur Nattali (Tillington),
Mrs. J.B. Nevatt (East Street),
Miss New (Orchard House),
Rear Admiral Ommanney,
Mrs John Osmaston (Hawkhurst Court),
Mrs Penrose (The Rectory),
Mrs C. Ricketts (High Street),
Mrs Shepherd (East Street),
Mrs Skinner (Grove Place),
Mrs A.H. Smith,
Mrs A.H. Spicer (North Street),
Mrs Staffwith (Ryde House, Angel Street),
Mrs Standen (North Lodge, Burton Park),
Ernest Streeter,
Mr and Mrs G.T. Suter (Fox Hill, Petworth),
Lt Colonel Tawke (Tillington),
Lady Thompson (Rogate),
Mrs H.T. Upton (Grays, Petworth),
Mrs Watson (New Grove),
Mrs Wright Biddulph (The Chalet, Petworth)

Ebernoe: Horn Fair and Romanies

David R.G. Johnston

The tiny village of Ebernoe slumbers throughout the year; nothing stirs, no outer noise ever intrudes on the pastoral breathing of this evergreen village: the only noticeable sounds may be the sporadic rustle of leaves caught by a gusty breeze, the cackle of a woodpecker, or maybe even the occasional bark of a fox echoing through the woodlands. But then, on the 25th of July, that simple rustic peace is broken by a disturbance equal to the pandemonium of a seaside arcade – it's the arrival of Horn Fair. Nobody knows how long the fair has been established, though it is said to be at least 500 years old.

For many generations, the fair had been an occasion for the gathering of gypsies – not the roadside tramps, who often pass as such, but genuine Romanies. They pitched their picturesque camp in the bracken, and were almost as welcome as the fair itself. The true Romanies were proud people, with their own language, etiquette and social customs. If you were invited to join them in a meal, you would find these ancient tent-dwellers' table was on the grass, the meal being boiled up in a large cauldron where many kinds of food had been cooked together. Among other dainties, you may discover one or two hedgehogs, from which after boiling, the outer spiked clothing came away and there was a white tit-bit left.

In bygone days they lived in those Arab-tent-wigwam sort of habitations, made of old sacks and pieces of canvas laid over bent sticks stuck in the ground. In these conditions, the chill winds of autumn, and bitter winters often affected the health of the occupants, forcing the use of ancient remedies. There was an old belief said to be infallible for the cure of whooping cough – the sufferer was to take whatever remedy was prescribed by the rider of a piebald horse. Whatever recipe was given – be it butter, ale or honey – the patient was cured with the happiest results.

Another belief was in a remedy used to rid an ugly growth of warts. The method used was to take a black slug and rub it over the wart, then impale the slug on the thorn of a hawthorn hedge, or blackthorn, and as the slug died the wart would disappear.

With pots and pans precariously balanced over open fires, accidents often happened, resulting in serious scalds: the old Romanies always preferred to

be healed by sacred charms rather than visit a doctor. The prescribed cure was to wait in great pain until the following Sunday. It was then that the respected 'Charmer' began the process – with head bowed low, and two fingers crossed over the burn, words were whispered:

There came two angels from the North,
One was Fire and one was Frost.
Out Fire – in Frost.
In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In the 1920s the bow wagons became popular – the gypsies then roamed as if in an idyllic existence – they drifted like thistledown about our glorious Sussex. The slightest zephyr of the spirit set them on the move. And lo, they were soon among the sweet-scented rhododendrons of Graffham Common, or high up on the Trundle Hill, then they were knee deep in the heather in Fairmile Bottom. But, in those olden days, it made no difference where they were, they would always return on St James' Day (the 25th of July) to Horn Fair.

The old coloured vardos¹ have not been seen at Horn Fair for many years. But, in line with the old custom, the horned sheep is still roasted in front of a huge brick fireplace situated in the centre of the fairground. The horns, which now take the form of a trophy rather than the actual horns from the roast, are presented after the traditional cricket match – and a special Horn Fair song is sung following the presentation. The wonderful old funfair, with refreshments available all day, still carries on in the same way as it has done in those countless bygone years.

1. A vardo is a traditional horse-drawn wagon used by British Romanis as their travelling home. They have four wheels, initially wooden but later rubber-tyred, the front two two being used for steering. Typically they are highly decorated, intricately carved, brightly painted, and even gilded. The Romani tradition of the vardo is seen as a high cultural point of both artistic design and a masterpiece of the carpenter's art. The heyday of the vardo lasted for roughly 70 years, from the mid-1800s into first two decades of the twentieth century.

In the steps of artistic giants – a walk

Gerald Gresham-Cooke

Tillington church, a mile west of Petworth, is the one of very few churches in the country painted by both J.M.W. Turner and John Constable.

This walk will take in both places where the artists would have painted from. The walk is a distance of 2.5 miles (1.5 hours) and begins at Tillington's famous Horse Guards Inn, GU28 9AF. There are no steep climbs on the walk.

There has been a church at Tillington for over 800 years, now best known for its landmark tower of a Scots crown, seen when driving along the A272.

Park your car on the roadside just past the pub. Head for the footpath, the Causeway, which runs beneath the Horse Guards Inn and several feet above the road. Follow this round until it merges with Cemetery Lane. Stop there and turn around. Here Constable must have sat to look up and painted the church in 1834. He was a liberal artist and has fiddled around with the composition, partly mirroring some of his views of Salisbury Cathedral. His picture (see page 27) is now in the British Museum, and postcards postcards of it are available inside the church.

Now, re-trace your steps back along the Causeway, and at the end turn right across the road, entering the church path leading to the Grade 1 All Hallows' Church with its impressive Scots crown surmounting the tower.

Entering the church with a light switch on the left, will show a bright and symmetrical interior of a nave and two side aisles. Special features are the ancient twelfth-century stone font to the right, with the lovely Millennium stained-glass window above it, one of many impressive stained-glass windows. At the front of the church on the right is the old tower's staircase above the smaller arch into the outer vestry.

The Chancel floor, now hidden by a carpet to preserve it, is of Sussex marble, formed over millions of years from freshwater snails. The Mitford family of Pitshill House were the Parish's main resident family and there are plaques to them on the north wall.

Over the chancel arch is the Royal Arms board, expressing the parish's national loyalty in 1661 at the Restoration of King Charles II, with the national flags of both St George and the Union on either side.

Returning to the church path, turn left outside, catching wonderful views

of the South Downs. By the side wall is a plough, which was owned by the late William John Bennett who farmed below the church. It is a lovely old Ransomes horse plough made in 1928/9. It commemorates a forgotten way of life.

In living memory, when Plough Sunday was celebrated at the beginning of January, it was wheeled into church and brought up the aisle. John Constable drew such ploughs when he came here in the 1830s and this later one at Tillington is a good example of a type of plough that he also sketched elsewhere on his travels. The 'Scheduled Ancient Monument' wall behind shows signs of galletting: the use of Wealden iron-stone chips set into the mortar 'to keep the devil out' – he cannot pass beyond the iron, so it was said.

The tower was erected by the 3rd Earl of Egremont of Petworth House in 1807, with four impressive pinnacles of its Scots crown surmounting the tower. There are only two other of the churches in England with a Scots crown, all based on the St Giles' Cathedral tower on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.

Tradition says that Turner gave Lord Egremont the design for the tower, but Turner's first visit to Petworth House was not until 1809 and the tower was constructed in 1807. In 2007 Tillington celebrated the bi-centenary with a three day event.

Continue your walk towards the Park wall, turning right down the steps onto the footpath (slippery when wet or damp) and proceed along to the main road and then to the New Lodges gate. Once inside the Park, keep to the main path towards the Upper Pond and then eventually arriving at the front of the House.

Turn around to see the view. Tillington church tower was once visible from the House but the trees have grown so it is now obscured, but on a windless day the clock can be heard striking the hour. Turner's painting of *c.* 1828, sometimes known as 'The Fighting Bucks', inside the Carved Room of the House, shows Tillington church in the far background, peeping above the trees.

Turner certainly evokes the view from the front of the house but the finished painting wouldn't have been done there. One of his pencil sketches



LEFT The Ransomes general purpose single-furrow horse plough at All Hallows Church in Tillington. It was made in 1928/29 and was used by William John Bennett on Sokenholes Farm to the south of the church.

Robert Ransome founded his plough-making company in Suffolk in 1789 and as well as being one of the leading makers of farm implements they also built a wide range of other machinery including traction engines and lawn mowers and even, in the first world war, assembled aeroplanes. The company continued as an independent until late in the twentieth century when it was sold to Textron Inc., USA.

BELOW J.M.W. Turner, *The Lake, Petworth: Fighting Bucks*, oil on canvas, 62 x 146 cm., Petworth House. The painting was made around 1828 and reflects one of Turner's frequent visits to Petworth.



BELOW John Constable, *Tillington Church*, signed and dated 'Tillington Sepr 17 1834', graphite and watercolour on paper, 23.2 x 26.4cm., British Museum, London. Here Constable has narrowed and lengthened the tower of the church, much as

he often did with his many depictions of the spire of Salisbury Cathedral. This is emphasised by his low viewpoint which is made even lower by the added strip of paper at the bottom of the picture.



was made on the spot though, and includes a nice separate vignette of the tower (obviously done from closer quarters). Turner's oil paintings are frequently such distillations from pencil sketches made in-situ.

The entrance to see 'The Fighting Bucks' in the House is now available from the Park via the beautiful Victorian ironwork 'Tijou Gate' to the left of the House into the Pleasure Grounds, and then into the House itself.

For those returning to Tillington, re-trace your steps via the West Lawn to the Upper Pond and then through the lodge gates, and back to the church.

A lapsed friendship: Ranville twinned with Petworth

Paul de Zulueta

When I was a young man my father gave me some advice: ‘always try and keep your friendships in good repair,’ he told me, as ‘friends can put up with most things but not indifference.’ I remembered my father’s words as I thought about the idea of a trip to Normandy and the World War II battlefields. As I pored over a map to get a sense of time, distance and fun diversions, I noticed the town of Ranville, east of Caen, Normandy’s capital. Like many people, either inhabitants of Petworth or travelling into Petworth from all corners of the compass, I had seen the now rather shabby road signs saying:

PETWORTH HISTORIC MARKET TOWN
TWINNED WITH SAN QUIRICO DE ORCIA
AND RANVILLE, NORMANDY

I had given the signs little thought except to wonder where Ranville and San Quirico de Orcia might be in France and Italy, and why they had been chosen. I was gladdened by our continuing links with continental Europe. It seemed to me that even the most ardent Brexiteer or fervent remainder shared the common ground of affection and respect for the richness of European culture and the beauty of much its countryside. Around 17million British people visited France pre-Covid in 2019.

Friendships begin with a connection, a feeling that you are drawn to someone or some place. You sense an energy that will enhance your life. It was in 1989 that Janet Duncton, then Chairman of Petworth Parish Council and from a long-standing local family, received a letter from George Bouilly, the then Mayor of Ranville asking if Petworth would be interested in twinning with Ranville. Visits were exchanged and friendships formed.

In 1989, unlike today, many people of Ranville and Petworth had direct experience of World War II either because they lived through those momentous years, or because their parents had passed on stories about the trials of the time. In 1989, the memory of the tragic deaths of 32 people, of whom 28 were young boys, when a Junkers 88 dropped bombs on Petworth Boys School in September 1942 were still raw.

Both Ranville and Petworth had suffered. Jacqueline de la Fuente who became a close friend of Janet Duncton had lost her family as a young girl in the allied bombing of Caen. She harboured a dislike of the British and the Americans. The twinning allowed Jacqueline to get to know and like us, to forgive if not forget.

Under Janet Duncton, Owen Shepherd and John Caine's leadership, the friendships flourished. The Petworth Tennis and Football Club had numerous exchange matches, and the French equivalent of the farmers' market regularly came to sell its wares in Petworth. But as the World War II veterans faded away and age caught up with the people of Petworth and the citizens of Ranville, the ties loosened.

The Mayor of Ranville recently wrote to Petworth Town Council to try and renew and reinvigorate the friendship. In fairness, these are challenging times; other priorities hold sway, and the competition for time, money and resources as marked as ever. But I do not know if the people of Petworth were given a say in the town council's decision not to renew their friendship with Ranville.

If the friendship with Ranville had unravelled somewhat then, I decided I should see our twin town for myself. I stood with my wife Georgina and our fellow travelling companions and friends, David and Alexandra Soskin, chairman of the Petworth Society, on the high ground of Bréville-les-Monts overlooking the commune of Ranville some three kilometres to our north. The air was thick with the scent of ripening apples carried by a warm southerly breeze from a nearby orchard. I recognised Ranville because of its distinctive twelfth-century church spire which soared above the mass of houses, farm buildings and gîtes (holiday cottages) below us.

The high ground where we stood is famous for its site known as Château d'eau de Rommel, or Rommel's water tower. It is where the German field marshal, who was given the task by Hitler of the defence of the Atlantic Wall, stood on a bleak December day in 1943 and remarked to his staff, 'whoever controls this ground will win the battle. From here we will throw the allies back into the sea.'

BELOW

The centre piece of the British Normandy Memorial at Ver-sur-Mer. The sculptor David Williams-Ellis has succeeded in endowing his three bronze soldiers as they charge forward on their granite plinth with a balletic grace not normally

associated with conflict. The memorial itself, which was inaugurated in 2021, is illustrated on pages 34 and 35.



As we drove into Ranville, we saw a large, colourful sign 'Bienvenue à Ranville' and on the opposite side of the road this proud and well-kept sign:



And below it the words:

COMMUNE LIBÉRÉE DANS
LA NUIT DU 5 AU 6 JUIN 1944
PAR LA 6^{ME} DIVISION
AÉROPORTÉE BRITANNIQUE

Ranville was the first town in France to be liberated. They have not forgotten the sacrifice made by so many British soldiers over those two fateful days. As we made our way into the town centre along the Rue Airborne, I noticed two side roads, Rue de Petworth and Rue de Général Poëtt. Nigel Poett jumped on D-day just after midnight with his 5th Parachute Brigade to reinforce two vital road bridges close to Ranville across the River Orne and the Caen Canal. Just off the Rue Airborne sits the beautiful church of Notre Dame de Ranville.

The Calvados region is blessed with many fine churches and cathedrals but Ranville's church evokes a particular warmth of feeling. It's not just the grandeur of its architecture and bell tower with its spire, but more the sense of tranquility which comes from the beautifully kept Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery (CWGC) adjacent to the church.

The first man to be killed in action on D-day, Lieutenant Den Brotherton, is honoured with his grave in the ancient churchyard and not the CWGC. Somehow, it felt appropriate for his unique sacrifice.

The CWGC at Ranville contains 2418 men of the Commonwealth and 323 German graves. A visitor to the Ranville cemetery can be quickly overwhelmed by rows upon rows of servicemen killed in action. What should be a personal salute to the fallen becomes impersonal because of the sheer scale of the cemetery. As Stalin said, 'one man's death is a tragedy, a million dead a mere statistic.' I knew there were a dozen or so graves of men from my former regiment, the Welsh Guards, but we also searched for any men from the Royal Sussex Regiment.

This was more in hope than expectation as the Royal Sussex fought in Italy, cruelly described by the American-born Nancy Astor, the first woman MP, as 'D-Day Dodgers.' The men of Sussex took this jibe in their stride responding with their own ditty, 'The Sod's Opera':

We are the D-Day Dodgers
out in Italy, always on the vino
always on the spree, Jerry bought
a band out to cheer us on our way
but if you look round the mountains
You'll find the scattered crosses, some
which bear no name, for they are the men of
Sussex who'll stay in Italy.

We did find one man from Pulborough buried in the Ranville Cemetery, a Private A. Phillips aged 19 who served in the Royal Pioneer Corps and who was killed in action on July 14, 1944.

Not so far from Ranville is the small CWGC cemetery of St Charles de Piercy, the final resting place of Brigadier Sir Walter Barttelot of Stopham. This ancient and distinguished West Sussex family have been at Stopham, just east of Petworth, since 1379. Sir Walter was killed in action on August 16 commanding a brigade in the Guards Armoured Division. He was awarded an immediate Distinguished Service Order (DSO) after breaking through the German line at Caumont. The local French people put up a magnificent memorial to him close to where he fell. Sir Walter's father and grandfather were also killed in action.

There was one other striking feature of Ranville, though it is true of all

towns in Normandy close to the D-Day landings. Attached to every third lamppost there is a large photograph of a British or allied soldier killed in action against the backdrop of the Union Jack and French flag. One I noticed in Rue de Petworth in Ranville simply read:

NEVER FORGET / NE JAMAIS OUBLIER
WW2 HEROES
JACK BRACEWELL
1 IITH BRITISH ARMoured DIVISION

Just a few minutes to the west of Ranville lies one of the most emblematic symbols of D-Day: the Pegasus Bridge. It was so named after the bridges of Ranville and Bénouville were captured in a Coup de Main operation in the early hours of June 6th by the Parachute Regiment and a company of the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry. The bridge is probably the most visited World War II site in Normandy. And it's not just the British. As we walked across the bridge, I saw coaches from Germany, the Netherlands and a party of Japanese parked outside the Pegasus Museum. The museum has a stunning sound and light show capturing the drama of D-Day. Afterwards we sat in the Café Gondrée, the very first French house to be liberated, lolling in the warmth of the early afternoon and guzzling tarte Normande with a dash of Calvados.

We may have come to Normandy to visit Ranville and see the D-Day battlefields, but the Calvados region of Normandy offers any number of jolly detours. There is, of course, the wonderful new British Normandy Memorial at Ver-sur-Mer just above the D-day beach landing at Sword with its striking sculpture by David Williams-Ellis. It records the names of 22,442 servicemen and women who fell on D-Day and the Battle of Normandy from June to August 1944. Our nation does these things so well, a place of serene beauty where people will gather to remember for generations to come. Once again, I saw people of every age and nationality in quiet reflection.

But it was time to 'break out' from the landing beaches to what we had really come to see and savour: the earthy farming land and hedgerows or 'Bocage' of Normandy, famous for its alliterative cuisine: the four Cs, – Calvados, Camembert, cider and crème. Mix any one of those ingredients with Normandy apples and pears, meadow-salted lamb, omelette à la Mère Poulard, mussels à la crème, lapin à la cidre et Calvados, duckling à la Rouennaise, and you'll recognise the genius and foresight of Janet Duncon and her Petworth friends and colleagues of Petworth. Ranville was an obvious town for twinning.

Thirty-five minutes from Ranville is the medieval town of Bayeux. It may have a sullen past but at its heart is the arresting cathedral of Notre-Dame, sanctified in the presence of William the Conqueror in 1077. A decade or so earlier, Harold took the oath there in the presence of William of Normandy that he would marry William's daughter. This would give William a decent chance of securing the English crown. Harold went back on his word and paid for the price for his perjury at the Battle of Hastings. The Bayeux Tapestry, (detail below) close to the cathedral, recounts the ebb and flow of one of the most historic periods of our island story.

Bayeux was never destroyed during the war. German High Command was billeted there and many of the restaurants and cafés reminded me of René Artois in the 1980s cult television show, 'Allo Allo!' where resistance fighters, RAF escapees and German officers tucked into Normandy's delights seemingly unaware of each others' presence. And the British Army, bless its foresight and sensitivity, built a ring road around Bayeux in 1944 to ensure our heavy tanks did not ruin the exquisite streets and alleyways.

An exhibition of David Hockney's iPad work, 'A Year in Normandie' is also at the Bayeux Tapestry Museum. It takes the form of a 90-metre-long frieze celebrating Normandy's four seasons.

There was so much more to see and do but two and a half days was all we had. As we drove back effortlessly along the empty A16 and A28, I once again reflected on my father's advice on friendship and its transient nature if you are not attentive. I could not help but think if there had been a reversal of fortune in World War II and next to St Mary's Church was a French War Graves Cemetery with the graves of 2,418 Frenchmen and women, and the whole of West Sussex had been witness to French sacrifice, would we be so indifferent to Ranville's desire to continue the friendship?

We have a wonderful music festival in July. I'll write to Jean-Luc Adélaïde, Ranville's Mayor and ask if he'd like to come and renew the friendship between Petworth and Ranville. I rather think he'll accept.

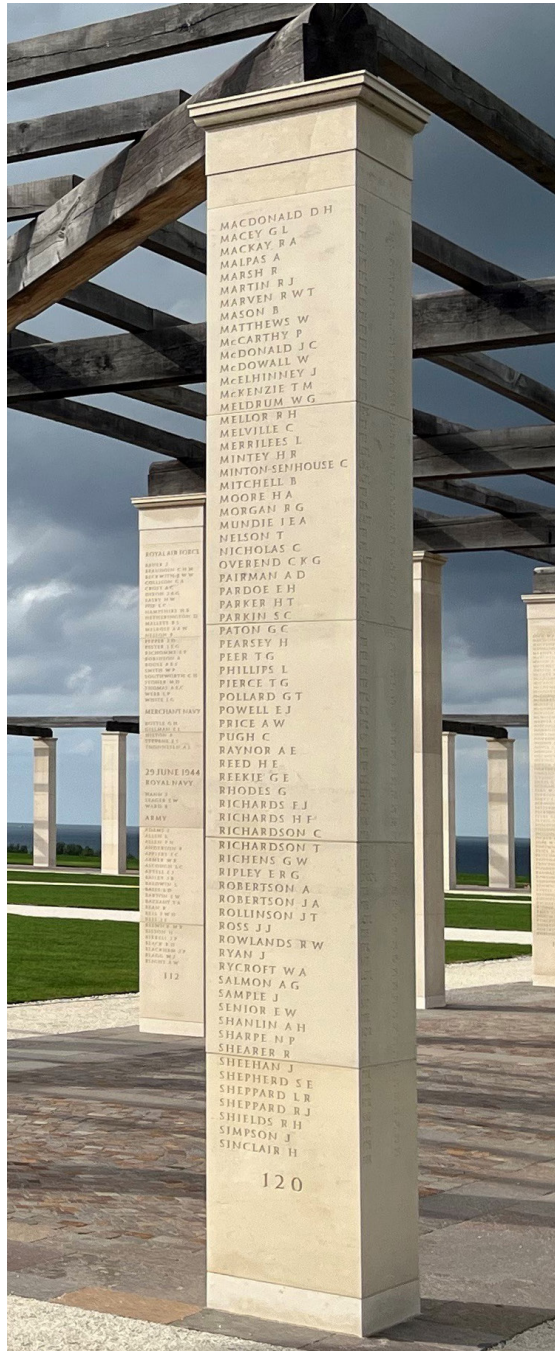




OPPOSITE ABOVE AND RIGHT

The British Normandy Memorial at Ver-sur-Mer, opened in 2021. It is the sole site of memory honouring all 22,442 men and women under British command who were lost in the Battle for Normandy between June 6 and late August 1944. They and their comrades feature on the roll of honour, spread across 160 columns which line the walkways leading to the sculpture by David Williams-Ellis which forms the centrepiece of the memorial.

LEFT Rusting barbed wire on the beach remains as another sort of memorial.



PICTURE NOTE

Andrew Loukes

Honeyway House by John Roote

Signed and dated 1958, oil on canvas, 51 x 61 cms.

Collection of Lord Egremont.

On the back of this painting is recorded: ‘Honeyway House, Petworth, Sussex. Built 1956 by Ursula Wyndham, sister of John Wyndham of Petworth House.’ The recently demolished house – which stood on the Sheepdowns and became a familiar sight to walkers from Petworth to the Virgin Mary Spring or to Byworth – was built for the Hon. Ursula Wyndham (1913-1995), whose brother John, later Lord Egremont, moved into Petworth House following the death of his uncle Charles, 3rd Lord Leconfield, in 1952. The painting was commissioned by Ursula two years after the completion of her house and hung at Honeyway until she moved to Laundry Cottage on the Horsham Road in 1977, as the housing development at Sheepdown expanded. The painting went with her.

Ursula published her autobiography, notably eye-opening for its spikily honest insights into life as a minor aristocrat, in two volumes: *Astride the Wall* (1988) and *Laughter and the Love of Friends* (1989). Prior to moving to Honeyway she had also developed a passion for keeping goats, alluded to in both the foreground pair in the painting (detail opposite, below right) and the relief-panels which sat above the ground-floor windows at the front of the house (detail opposite, below left). Despite issuing a new paperback edition of *Astride the Wall* in 1990, the National Trust declined Ursula’s offer to supply goat yoghurt for sale at Petworth.

Roote’s depiction of the new house, with its gleaming forecourt, garage, fresh bricks and modern take on the William and Mary style, forms a bold contrast with the seemingly timeless Shimmings beyond, a view now interrupted by the tall trees that help baffle the noise from a far busier A283. The house, of no great architectural merit, had several subsequent additions before it was taken down in 2022 by its final owners, who are rebuilding on the site. The goat panels have been thoughtfully retained.



'I'm 34 but 36 fits better'

Bob Sneller in conversation with Jonathan Newdick

We are in a warm and comfortable sitting room in Tillington. On the coffee table are coffee and biscuits and some classic car magazines which betray one of the interests of their owner, Bob Sneller. But we're not here to discuss Minis or Sprites – we are here to talk about Bob's involvement with one of the best-known and long-lived shops in Petworth – Allans, the gentleman's outfitters in New Street.

JN. Now Bob, I know that Allans was a family business of which at one time there were, I think, four shops in the town. But your family name is Sneller. Why is it called Allans?

BS. The history of that is that in the late 1950s a Major Allan bought the business from I'm pretty sure it was the Westlakes who ran it before then. He took it in 1958 for his wife to run and my father bought the business in 1964. As it was well-known as Allans it seemed sensible to retain the name. In those days it was the just three left hand windows selling ladies wear, millinery and knitting wools, basically a drapery shop.

JN. So when your father took it on it would have run together with your older brother David's haberdashery shop.

BS. Not really. Not until later. My eldest brother David left the army in 1967 and took over what was Eager's the drapers at the top of the Market Square. He developed that business selling knitting wools, dress patterns, fabrics and haberdashery. He also serviced sewing machines. My father had an industrial glove factory in Southampton where David learned on the job at repairing sewing machines and once established in Petworth it was well-known for miles around that if your sewing machine had lost its tension or was in any way faulty David was the man to put it right. At around the same time we opened 'the kiddies shop' for babies- and childrens-wear at the bottom of Market Square where Barrington's the Estate Agents now is. This shop was run by my sister Jane.

JN. You were a Southampton boy?

BS. Yes. We came to Petworth when I was thirteen. Six of us were born in Southampton but David was born in Warminster where my father worked for Dents the glove people (established in 1777 and still going strong) before starting his own industrial glove factory which unfortunately hit hard times.

However, my mother was a qualified corsetier – her customers were mostly elderly ladies and she would fit them for their corsets. I can remember one day when I was a small boy seeing her making the corsets and fitting the bones and coming home from school. I was playing I-spy while she was working with her sewing machine. When I asked her what she was doing she said ‘I’m fitting bones in a corset’ and I asked her whose corset it was and she said it was for Mrs Fish, so I said ‘I-spy something beginning with MFB’ (Mrs Fish’s bones). We had a laugh about that.

When we arrived in Petworth Dick went to the primary school under Mr Hill for a few months. He then joined me at the Herbert Shiner, a brilliant school. Loved it. In Southampton I attended a Victorian school with a hard playground with one end for the girls, the other end for the boys. To play football we were bussed to the sports field whereas at the Herbert Shiner it was all there – ten acres, and the view to the Downs was brilliant and still is. They’ll build on it at some time, I suppose.

When I was at school I was a butcher’s boy for Hounsham the butchers who were where Therapy was until recently. We did deliveries mid-week and Saturdays in a little grey A35 van. I was too young of course to drive it.

In Petworth we developed the menswear shop in the Market Square having moved it from the first floor of Eager’s before moving it to its present position in about 1975 I guess. At one time all of my siblings were involved in the family business; all nine of us. But we also employed many local people, some of whom we still see from time to time. In 1970 we bought the High Street premises which is where Tiffin’s café now is. Part of it was then an antique shop run by Mr Napier, one of the first antique shops in the town. The top floor was residential, and the remainder of the ground floor we converted into a shop run by my brother Tony selling everything for the home. My father called us the County Store because we were basically a little department store on four sites. So by then we had one shop in New Street, two in the Market Square and one in the High Street. My father dreamed up the slogan ‘The County Store – try Allan’s first’.

JN. Sounds as if you were pretty big in Petworth.

BS. I suppose so, yes. Interestingly, my father came in 1964 and Philip Neve’s father Charlie came in 1965 and bought Austen’s, so my father and Charles Neve entered Petworth’s history at about the same time. In those days all the shop windows had backs to them and you had a door from the shop floor and you climbed into the window space to dress the window but both my father’s and Charles Neve’s idea was let people see the shop, not just a few things in

BELOW

An advertisement from about 1970 for a Philip Kunick dress and jacket in Rayon jersey. Considering the ensemble was for the 40-inch hip and over, the illustrator has made the model appear impossibly svelte. From the Sneller family archive.

the window and that's what they did. Now, I remember my father saying wouldn't it be great if the next-door house, Avenings, were to come on to the market – we had looked at various other houses to buy because at that time we were living in a very small flat. If in the shop my mother said to a customer 'I'll just go up and look in the stockroom to see what we've got', little did they know that the stockroom was boxes under her bed. My father looked at the old station master's house down at Coultershaw when BR were selling it in 1966 but then out of the blue Avenings did come on to the market so my father went to the building society and asked if they lend us funds and they did.

Where the men's shop now is, was actually the kitchen of Avenings so the house now is relatively small on the ground floor. Interestingly, Charles White the Midhurst photographer came into the shop one day and said, 'Oh I've taken loads of photos in this room.' He said it was once the registry office. You see, before Newlands in Pound Street became the council offices a part of Avenings were council offices. The registry office was the other side of the hallway. We blocked it off and retained it when we sold Avenings ten years after we bought it, so the shop windows of the men's shop now are relatively new. We took out the original bay windows and made them level with the façade. Planning permission in those days was from Petworth Rural District Council, not Chichester. It was all local. So as I say, all of us were at one time involved in the business but when I first left school



Topsize
for the
40" hip and
over by
**PHILIP
Kunick
LIMITED**

Style 1473
The Happy Traveller.
Topsized dress and
jacket in Rayon Jersey.
Colours: Moss, Grotto,
Navy.
£10.1.0.
38"—50" hips.
£11.8.0.
52"—56" hips.

**ALLANS
of
Petworth**
New Street and The Square,
Petworth
Telephone 3116/7
All Departments
THE COUNTY STORE

52

I worked for Lovell's the builders in Bury for three years as a trainee surveyor but my father had a heart attack in 1970 and he sadly died the following year. I left Lovell's and joined the family business then. Dick ran the menswear – he always said he left school on a Friday and started work on the Saturday at 15 and it's true, he did. He was in the shop all his working life apart from when he wanted to do something else at 20 when he went off and became a milkman for 18 months. Taylor's Dairy at Billingshurst on the way up towards Broadbridge Heath.

Jo, my next sister up, ran the teenage department and another of my sisters, Wendy, ran the ladies-wear department with my mother and that's where Wendy learned her sewing skills and she is still much in demand. David did dress fabrics and knitting patterns. Dressmaking was big in those days. Dick and I ran the New Street shop latterly but a lot of the hard graft of the business was put in by my parents and my older siblings. We supplied the Leconfield Estate gamekeepers' clothing. There was a superb company up in Yorkshire somewhere, Leeds I think it was, he was old-school, and we measured and sent him the measurements. It was, and still is, top quality cloth.

As you went into the shop straight in front of you there were the stairs to what were once the Avenings servant's quarters. The back door to the big house, the tradesman's entrance. Owen Bridger used to come in and stoke the Aga. He used to come in that door and go round.

We had a map of England in the shop and we'd put pins in to show where our customers came from. All over the place. They knew what we sold and that we had a big range and if we hadn't got it we'd get it quickly.

We had one or two interesting customers in over the years. We could write a book with some of the things that were said quite seriously. A customer wanted to buy some trousers: he was asked 'Do you know your waistline' and the man in all seriousness said 'I'm 34 but 36 fits better' so Dick said 'Shall we try 36?' 'No. No, I wear 34 but 36 fits better'. On his own admission they were a bit tight. Often the garments were what you call 'mix and match'. You'd have a company that would supply a 42 jacket that would come with a 36 trouser. In Petworth we didn't sell many suits because by and large it wasn't a commuting area but we ran a shop in Haslemere for eleven and a half years, 1977 to 1989, where we literally took an empty shop and stocked it and many of our suits got on the train in the morning.

In the late 80s and early 90s when you could print money in those boom times, we talked about going for six shops and being in the background with

managers in. We looked at Guildford – the Friary complex, Billingshurst, Cranleigh, Midhurst. In those days you had to put down what they called key money, so you paid the developer or the agent for an empty shop and then you had to fit it out at vast expense. But we went for the alternative which was to go down to one shop and not employ anyone because by now we had become a double act. Dick was the one who had the flair for what was wanted. We could do a third of our week's turnover on a Saturday.

I remember a customer saying 'I was in the queue for communion in church the other day and while the music was playing the man in front of me had pink trousers on so I whispered in his ear "Where did you get your trousers" and he said in "Allans In Petworth"'. They were Meyer trousers and the agent was really up and coming. In fact he had mens-wear shops of his own up in Leeds and he encouraged them to go for colours – red, yellow, green, and of course pink. The sort of jackets and trousers you associate with Michael Portillo¹ but, so far as I know he hasn't been in to Allans; probably because the trains don't stop here any more! And we had the very popular Oakman shirt that came in many colours. We sold hundreds of those, thousands probably. And striped blazers.

We weren't high fashion. The trouble with high fashion is you can sell it today but tomorrow you can't give it away. So, middle-of-the-road but colourful and something a bit interesting. We developed a huge stock and I can remember in the early years and the accountant said 'Your stock's too high' but my mother had a saying that if you haven't got it you can't sell it and you can't argue with that. We had to buy our stock – there's no sale or return and that's where Dick had a good eye. He'd say to me sometimes 'Trust me, it's going to be a winner' and ninety-nine times out of a hundred he was right, but if you showed him a VAT return he'd go 'What's that?' So, I did the accounts. I remember the very first vat returns in 1973 when it first came and in. We'd only pay when you sold something but with Purchase Tax you had to pay when you bought it. I've still got the ledger. All hand-written.

JN. I also associate you with the church.

BS. Yes. It was the Petworth Christian Fellowship, latterly known as Petworth Community Church but after forty-odd years it has ceased to exist. For several years in the 90s we ran the Lamp coffee shop in Lombard Street with some paid staff and some volunteers – long gone now but still remembered by many.

When we retired from the shop people said to us at the time 'Put a manager in' and we thought about it, but you get a call on a Sunday evening saying,

③

SUMMARY 1/10/73 - 31/12/73.

PAGE	ZERO Goods	TAX Goods EXC. V.A.T.	V.A.T.	ZERO RATED CREDITS.
1.	187-72.	2696-23.	262-51½	-26p
2.	286-48.	2675-07.	259-49.	
3.	316-14.	3093-47.	300-20.	
4.	143-30.	2220-85.	216-48.	
5.	147-57.	1854-42.	179-55.	
6.	-	917-99.	89-52.	
	1081-21.	13448-03.	1307-75½	-26p.

less -26p.
1080-95.

+60%
= 648-54.

TOTAL ESTIMATED
SELLING PRICE.
= £1729-49

Total Goods Sold in F
2,4421-63
less 2 Rated o. 1729-49
£2,2692-

22692.13 ÷ 11 = £2062.92
less INPUT TAX PAID 1307-75½
£755-17.

ALLANS of PETWORTH
NEW STREET and THE SQUARE
THE COUNTY STORE
PHONE 3116

Served by _____ Checked by Miss L. Tyler, Selham. Date 4-3-71

21-12-70	Machina Repair		
"	Quilt		75
12-1-71	Quilt Cover		5.70
"	2 Supto w 1/4		4.00
14-1-71	1 Pady. Hooks w 1/4		4.20
"	4 Hooks		14
22-2-71	Credit		42
"			03
4-3-71	lamp.		1.27½
			3.75
			17.71½ ✓
			15.99
			15.24

EMS
206-46

Some Allans paperwork from the early 1970s. An early VAT account dated 1973 and an invoice for a customer from Selham from two years earlier. Both from the Sneller family archive.

'I've got the flu' and what do you do? You go in. You have to, and we thought no, that's not for us. If it's an office, you can work from home as was done during lockdown, but you can't run a shop from home.²

JN. Do you miss it?

BS. No, don't miss it. Not at all. I seem to be as busy in retirement as I was in the shop. But, having said that, if I were offered my life again, I wouldn't change much of it.

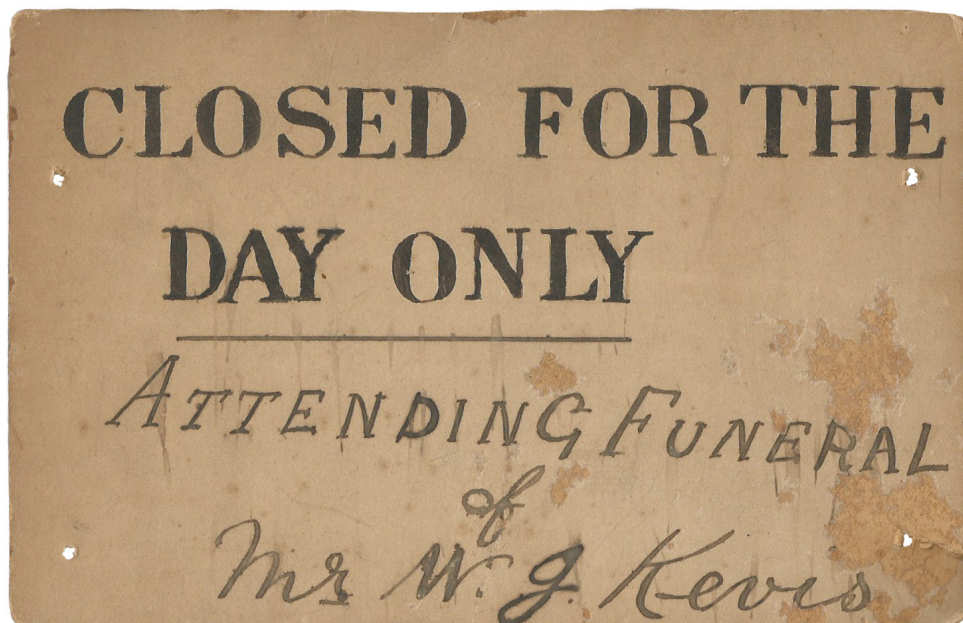
1 In 2009 the former politician Michael Portillo began filming a series of television programmes, 'Great British Railway Journeys' for the BBC. The series would expand to cover 'Great Continental...'; 'Great American...'; and many more. His gimmick is to appear dressed in gaily-coloured and often ill-matching jackets and trousers in which he invariably seems self-conscious.

2 Allans continues under new ownership and, apart from the personnel, nothing much has changed.

BELOW Three of the Sneller Siblings, Dick, Wendy and Bob boldly using the zebra crossing in New Steet for an impromptu photoshoot outside their shop in 2012. From the Sneller family archive.



An unlikely survivor



This cardboard notice was placed for one day only in the autumn of 1924 on the door of Mr Earle's tobacconist shop in Lombard Street (now the Kevis House Gallery). Mr Earle is absent from the shop as he is attending the funeral of his uncle Walter Kevis, the Petworth photographer, who had recently died at the age of 71. The funeral probably took place at Purley in Surrey.

Kevis worked as Petworth's photographer in the studio above his tobacconist shop for over thirty years, eventually retiring to Purley in 1908, passing on his tobacconist business to his nephew Herbert Joseph Earle, but it would be some years before Petworth's photographic tradition was revived by George Garland. As the notice would be out of date on the day after the funeral, and as it is written on a piece of cardboard with no structural integrity it is astonishing that it has survived for almost 100 years. It is reproduced courtesy of Miles Costello.

What's brewing in Petworth

Mike Mulcahy and Mike Pengilly

On a cold October night, drawing on Miles Costello's excellent and informative book *No Passing Trade: a View of Petworth's Historic Inns and Alehouses*, (Window Press, 2014) the Petworth Society addressed the intriguing subject of brewing beer in Petworth, in the past and the present.

There is ample evidence that Petworth was not lacking in public and ale houses. In fact, Miles Costello's book lists over thirty of them. Sadly, this number is somewhat reduced in the 21st century.

There are plenty of remnants of a largish brewery in the High Street. The reason for it being there, and its later disappearance, proves interesting. Historical records indicate that the 'Stag Brewery' was founded around 1845 by James Milton. Later, in 1884 Manning Milton was recorded as the owner.

It might be expected that the brewery that owned three pubs might service other outlets and become profitable; but that year Milton took out a mortgage on the property of £300 at an interest rate of about six per cent. One has to suppose that these properties on the High Street (or Back Street as it was then known) might be worth slightly more than £300 today.

The business appears not to have grown as hoped and in 1886 the owner attempted to sell the Queen's Head (Turk's Head / Red Lion) for £725 to include the cellarage. For this endeavour, Mr Daintree, a Petworth Solicitor, was employed to facilitate the legal side of things. However, problems once again arose, and in 1894 Milton sued the now apparently bankrupt Daintree for £921.

In 1900 Milton sold The Stag Brewery, The White Hart, The Queen's Head, The Club Room and The Wheatsheaf to the Guildford Brewery, Friary Holroyd & Healy's, for £10,000 – a sum worth about £1.3 million in today's money. In 1928 they had around four hundred pubs. In 1956 they amalgamated to become Friary Meux. No longer so local, they had now become a national enterprise with 672 pubs by 1963. Predictably, they were eventually bought by Allied Breweries who closed the Guildford Brewery in January 1969.

So, as mirrored throughout the land, a local brewing enterprise got swallowed by a multi-national. One wonders if that is the future; but wait – another Petworth brewery has surfaced...!

BELOW

The Old Crown Inn at the top of Lombard Street which was destroyed by fire in 1898. Photograph by Walter Kevis.



Selling beer has always been a competitive business and in the last fifteen years, there has been a wave of microbrewery start-ups across the country. Many are so-called ‘craft breweries’ – hipsters making heavily hopped beer deliberately marketed towards a younger generation and away from traditional styles.

The good news is that both traditional ale and craft beer makers all embrace the use of modern technology, materials and developments in ingredients that our brewing forefathers at The Stag Brewery and earlier brewers could only have dreamt about. For they had to use open flame burners, leaky wooden barrels, lead piping, crude control, rudimentary cleaning practices and certainly no refrigerated storage. Today’s brewers operate with shiny stainless-steel equipment

and measure efficiencies, adjust water pH and buy hops that taste of pineapple from America, whilst deliveries are via DPD. But the products are generally more consistently brewed to meet higher quality standards. A far more limited range of beer was made and sold until comparatively recently – around the 1990s. Going back in time, before the Angles arrived here from Germany with their barley, we only made mead and cider in this country.

The hops that are so intrinsically associated with today's beer for their bitterness and aroma are a far more modern innovation of the fifteenth century. Their preserving qualities were utilised successfully to ship pale ales in still-drinkable condition to the Indies in the early 1800s. Those hoppy Indian pale ales are more popular than ever now; and you don't even need a beard and tattoos to drink them.

The tendency of large breweries to dominate beer production is not a new idea; it has been happening since the 1700s when demand for beer began to grow, continuing during both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As field workers became factory workers, cities grew, leisure time increased and pubs as we know them today became a more acceptable destination for a widening proportion of the population.

Incidentally, during the 1750s the most popular beer style in London was Porter, a dark ale well suited to being made from the local water supply – yes, from the Thames, which was used as a water supply for brewing and malting barley for centuries up until the mid-1800s. The street and river porters literally made it their own and its popularity spread as far as Dublin. An enterprising brewer there decided to try making a stout porter – and you likely know the rest of that story.

The nadir of big brewing came in the 1960s and 1970s and was embodied by the omnipotent pint of Watney's Red Barrel. By all accounts this was an awful abomination of our national bevy and one that combined cheapness and low quality in a beer distinctive for its complete lack of taste or character as well as highly dubious serving practices from a pressurised keg rather than a hand-pulled pint from a cask.

Thankfully things have improved since then with the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), micropubs, microbreweries and the craft trend. But big brewing is a huge global presence commanding ninety per cent of the beer market which itself is ninety per cent lager. So, enjoy your local brewery – and cheers for the pint of real ale!

1. Brewery 288 is a new Petworth brewery of traditional real ales using only British hops and barley.