

Miles Costello  
Petworth  
Collection

Magazine

\* F. A. T. U.  
Adam T. U.  
H. T. Backs - an AD  
From J. U. U.  
A woman, A dog, A  
Walnut Tree  
More Talk from  
Westland!



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Cover drawing by Jonathan Newdick.

It shows a landscape at Perryfields.

Cover design by Jonathan Newdick.

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



## Constitution and Officers

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

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

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

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For this Magazine on tape please contact Mr Thompson.

### *Society Town Crier*

Mr J. Crocombe, 19 Station Road (343329)

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

## Chairman's Notes

*I have tried to reflect some of the events of a busy quarter. I am putting together the programme of monthly meetings and it looks very promising. Details on the Activities Sheet. Don't forget if you have any books for the monthly sale please let me or Miles know.*

*Also on the Activities Sheet details of the first volume of a projected two part History of Petworth. This volume takes the story from Saxon beginnings to 1660 and will appear in October. It is the first such formal attempt since 1864.*

*Peter July 20th*

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## Petworth from the 1950s – a Jubilee reflection

As one looks back, the minor irritations that plague the present seem to fade and the mind sees things in broad terms. Petworth in the immediate post-war years will have had its share of minor irritations, largely unremembered now. Many would be shared by the country as a whole: austerity, shortages, rationing. As in 1918 a war had been won but too much remained obstinately as it was. But Petworth had its special sadnesses, the Boy's School bombing in 1942, with its loss of young lives, would still be an open wound, bleeding not the less for not being on everyone's lips. The removal of the famous spire of St. Mary's, "The Cathedral of the Downs", in 1947 symbolised a mood. An aged Lord Leconfield was nearing the end of his long sojourn at the House, Lady Leconfield was a sick woman. What did the future hold? Petworth had a malaise all its own.

On the face of it the self-sufficiency of centuries was still unthreatened. Petworth shops catered for Petworth people, and for a sizeable agricultural hinterland. Outside shopping, Horsham, Chichester, even London, would be a treat, an exception that proved a rule. "Buy it in Petworth." Few would have the means to travel and many worked Saturdays. Petworth people might watch the long lines of stationary Sunday evening traffic clogging Station Road, Park Road, Church Street and North Street; strangers returning from the coast. Petworth people were no part of that alien flood, at best supplying the white-gloved "specials" that guided it through.

There were pubs aplenty, a pedestrian pub-crawl was as possible now as it had been a century before, butchers even in excess, a choice of shoe-shops, a resident fishmonger, a buzz of grocers. Delivery? "Families waited on daily." And it was true. Bakers, tobacconists, outfitters and so many more. At Olders you could smell the coffee beans, buy butter from bulk or sugar in those impromptu cone-shaped blue bags. Time had no meaning in Olders. Oh, and antique shops, Petworth had its fair share, or so it seemed. Ernest Streeter



had been trading since the mid-1890s, Denmans for two generations. Bill Boss was the first of the "incomers" in 1951. And had no less a personage than Queen Mary not visited Ernest Streeter's Clock House between the wars?



*Westwood's shop in Lombard Street about 1950.  
Photograph by Leslie Whitcomb.*

In the 1950-s and early 1960s Petworth was still a focus for the surrounding countryside and Saturday afternoon still the engine-room of the week. But the old faces were older now and not being replaced. Out of town shopping would bite into the idyll – if idyll it was. The agricultural hinterland was itself changing, labour draining away and the villages looking further afield. Car ownership became general. For Petworth there was no way back: the long march to a new century had begun. "The Antique Centre of the South." An exaggeration perhaps but no wild one. An alien enclave or economic salvation? The jury is always out - and in any case who are the jury? Petworth became a haven for visitors, an early stage on the way west from Heathrow or Gatwick, the quintessential small English country town. People pour into Petworth House, spend a day in the antique shops, visit the Cottage Museum. A Doll House Museum has come and gone.

Property prices rise, setting a premium on incomers. Fifty years ago a little capital could acquire a portfolio of sorts – not now. Antique dealers are castigated for living out of town, but not everyone can afford a property in Petworth. Teachers and others must travel in from

outside. Petworth exports its young people but then, historically, it has always done. Transport is difficult but there are more buses than you might think. Rural deprivation in paradise? Expectation for some is severely limited. There is a price to pay for Petworth being Petworth. Petworth needs a continuing conscience, it needs too to be wary of easy answers. There are none.

P.

*Note*

This article appeared in a slightly altered form in a local newspaper.

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## Boy's School Anniversary Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Feast of St Michael and All Angels.

We are pleased to announce that John Bishop of Chichester has agreed to preside at a special service commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the bombing of Petworth Boys School. The service will be at 3 p.m. at St Mary's Church.

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## Venice comes to Petworth

It is four years since Jonathan Newdick had an exhibition in Petworth. Many will remember his paintings and drawings made on the Leconfield Estate during 1997 and 1998. Since then he has been working in other areas – in south west Ireland and, particularly, in Venice. However, Jonathan's perception of that city is not the traditional one : the following is an extract from the opening address by art critic and curator Emanuele Horodniceanu at Jonathan's exhibition in Venice earlier this year.

"A pencil and a rubber used as a brush and Venice changes her features, struck and shaken by electric strokes of marks, torn from her immobility, her ancientness, her vanity. Revisited, revived and excited by furious romantic sparks which give motion to lost campielli, canals, the lagoon. This stranger has not been spellbound by the seductions of the Serenissima, by her history, her myths, her architecture and colour. He eluded them all. His will led him beyond, to see differently, to live Venice from within. It is a new Venice, the Venice of Jonathan Newdick, restless, stormy, tormented, nocturnal. Essential emotion, city and elements – wind, rain and storm. Frantic and frenzied marks, almost furious, the pencil whips the glossy surface, the rubber erasing and adding light. Firework, explosion, fire – energy to inflame the landscape. To violate and ravish it, to transfigure it.





Jonathan Newdick. *Corte Zon, Venice*. Pencil on film. See *Venice comes to Petworth*.



Jonathan Newdick. *Corte Botero, Venice*. Pencil on film. Private collection. See *Venice comes to Petworth*.



New Venice. Venice alive. The dynamic city conquered by the forces of nature. Nature which is glued to Jonathan's pencil since his debut in the Sussex countryside. This love of elemental nature has become religion, a cult which accompanies his work and which took him to wander widely on the Leconfield Estate and to the south west of Ireland. A traveller of old times, absorbed by the landscape, listening to it, breathing it and gathering it in his work. He make it his church, to convey peace, silence, rage, mystery or anxiety.

Jonathan as an artist can be calm and impetuous, essential and excessive, meticulous and explosive – he knows how to let the mark explode and yet he knows how to let it flow gently on the surface, whether facing a landscape, a view, a portrait or a nude. Venice has released the impetuous, vehement and fierce side of him. A sort of challenge, a meeting and a battle, passionate, physical, with an ancient and difficult rival. To face it he chooses the wildest days and the most disquieting nights. He lingers in hidden corners or in the more classical scenery of St. Mark's lagoon, always overwhelming and dissipating the visible with his gusts and waves of marks. His quick and restless writing to meet and mix water, sky and stone.

New Venice. The new Venice of Jonathan Newdick, a city in motion which liberates herself from the burden of her centuries, from her magnificence, to become city-nature in a whirl of emotions, elements, humours and passions."

For two days only you can see these works here in Petworth. They will be hung in the exhibition room at Petworth House on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd of November and most will be for sale. As well as his interpretations of Venice Jonathan will also be showing some nudes and Sussex landscapes.

## Mystery Postcard

Reverse reads:

"Thank you very much for your nice letter this is a photo of our procession the pageant day you can't see our motor. I will send you a photo of (it?) myself soon. We are all in the Arundel Pageant next month it lasts 5 days so(?) we will have a nice ride to Arundel each day I don't know what we're(?) all dressing as I don't know when I shall come home – not much chance yet. I hope the boys are alright I have five children now.

Love"

It would appear perhaps that the writer was working in Petworth as a housemaid and writing home. The Arundel Pageant was held in 1923 and it would seem that the floats are on their way to Petworth Rectory for the fête. In June 1923 the Parish Magazine notes:

"The Rectory Fête under its new name is now only a month ahead that is July 4<sup>th</sup>. Remember there is no need to wear a fancy dress, but as many as have one are asked to do so and prizes will be given to those judged best. Noting either elaborate or expensive is expected. LET US MAKE the Carnival a great success."

The Parish Magazine carries no report of the event other than this advance notice.



*Petworth – probably in 1923. See "Mystery postcard".  
Courtesy of Mr and Mrs Christopher Knox.*



APPROVED BY PETWORTH SOCIETY  
 APR 17 1978  
 POST OFFICE  
 PETWORTH  
 HANTS

Post Card

ADDRESS

Mr. E. M. Astin  
 101 The Butcher Arms  
 Seward's End  
 Saffron Walden  
 Essex

288

CORRESPONDENCE

Retworth  
 Thank you very much for  
 your nice letter this is a  
 photo of our procession for  
 the pageant day you sent  
 see our motor I will  
 send you a photo of myself  
 soon. we are all  
 in the Coronation Pageant  
 next month it lasts  
 5 days so we shall  
 have a nice ride to  
 coronation each day I  
 don't know what time

Reverse of postcard.

A haven for wildlife – Bright and breezy!

The speaker was bright – Dennis Bright, making a welcome return visit at fairly short notice, replacing the Music Makers, who had cancelled – and certainly bright in his commentary. And the Titchfield Haven Nature Reserve is definitely breezy, making life in the precarious hides decidedly exciting!

Dennis' enthusiasm for the birdlife and mammals on the 450 acres along 2½ miles of the Meon estuary, illustrated by his stunning photography, captivated the audience, not all of whom were prepared for the change of programme, but nevertheless seemed very satisfied with the very different theme.

Haven House, an imposing white residence purchased by Hampshire County Council in 1972 and later, with fund-raising and a substantial National Lottery grant, is an excellent headquarters and visitors' centre with a restaurant. A warden and volunteer helpers have constructed ponds ('scrapes') and maintain waterways and reed beds. Sluices ensure the exclusion of salt water into this rare freshwater marsh.

We lost count of the bird species to be found both as residents and visitors: heron, little egret, water rail, kingfisher, little grebe, bittern, Bewick's swan, warblers, buntings, pochard, Canada goose, oyster catcher, redshank, green shank, bearded tit, terns, remain in the memory. Cormorants, magpies, marsh harriers, carrion crows – predators and prey always competing, populations rising and falling. Mammals too, have their slots in the reserve. We were shown foxes, badgers, roe deer and several species of mouse.

There were memorable shots of the synchronised courting rituals of turtle doves, of fox cubs, of the disorientated badger falling backwards down his sett's ventilation shaft, a glorious sunset and a sequence showing the warden slowly descending into ten feet of silt, with the photographer more concerned with getting his pictures than with rescuing him!

It was good to see Dennis again and even if we can't arrange a Society visit to the reserve, there is no doubt that individuals will soon be making their way into this little-known corner where Southampton Water meets the Solent.

KCT

Miles and Steve's bound-treading Rogation walk

Certainly a Society first but how would it actually work? Meeting first at the car park then driving to the double lodges in Tillington Road. The very presence of a uniformed band indicates something special. How many walkers? Sixty perhaps and some dogs, but that's not counting the band. All in all pretty impressive. The band strikes up, even drawing a response from the ranks of caravans parked just inside the Park gates. The band will see us off down Hungers Lane before making their own way to Rotherbridge.



When did such a crowd last pick their way down the Smugglers' Lane? Not perhaps since the "gentlemen" themselves came that way by night, travelling the other way. They certainly wouldn't be seeking the services of a band! We strike the Petworth Society boundary posts with our sticks: Petworth strike to the left, Tillington to the right. Derek and his Tillington men are here – obviously keeping an eye on the Petworth contingent. Inches are crucial when treading boundaries. Anyway Derek and his men are cordial enough so far.

Celandine and badger setts. Where the lanes cross Father David invokes a blessing on the crops, the fruits of the earth. He recalls doing the same at the seaside but this time for fishermen and the fruit of the sea. Appropriate enough if you think of those who walked once by the Sea of Galilee. He extends the blessing beyond the fleece of supermarket salads to crops everywhere and in particular to those for whom food is short ... "favourable weather, temperate seasons ...."

The southern part of the lane is eroded so that we walk precariously on the stone bed with a deep channel running between. Celandine gives way to bluebell and cow parsley as the dominant flower. There are ripples in the silt and it's very wet. Yesterday, Miles says, it had been quite dry. It must be the irrigation: there's certainly been no rain. We emerge at last into the light at the end of the lane, ahead of us the band instruments gleam in the fitful sun. *Harbour Lights* and *It's a long way to Tipperary*. We stop. Twenty-first century bound-treading doesn't seem particularly stressful. Over the bridge, through the meadows, making for the old railway line. Comfrey coming into cream flower at the side. The Tillington "heavies" are affability itself not even roused by

Tillington born, Tillington bred,  
Strong in the arm and thick in the head.

The origins of the mischievous rhyme are not clear. One suspects that Tillington bound-treaders of old would have been a little touchier than their modern counterparts. In fact we're now exploring the niceties of the Petworth Duncton boundary, a somewhat arcane line running down from the railway embankment. Miles and Steve seem thoroughly au fait with it. The embankment is a monument to the ubiquitous Victorian navy. I remember being with Jumbo once and kicking away the moss to reveal the orange ash of their bivouacs a hundred and fifty years before. Then, as now, presumably, the woods would have been carpeted with bluebells at this time. And skew bridge: surely this masterpiece of the bricklayer's art shouldn't just be allowed to decay? Less important monuments have a preservation order I'm sure. It's a sullen grey day with the sun breaking through only occasionally and a stiff breeze. Bugle growing along the railway line offers a sombre comparison with the bluebells, a study in blues.

On through the low meadows to cross the new bridge at Perryfields. It's not so long since this outpost was actually populated: now there are only the barns and the old iron bridge rusting away amongst the fresh May grass. And that's the very barn that's on the cover of this magazine; people seem surprised that we've actually broken into the private world of magazine covers. Yes, the places Jonathan draws for us really do exist. The ivy's been chopped off a foot or so from the ground, the wrist-thin stems suspended uselessly in the air are like a hanged man. Back down the lane, the strains of *Sussex by the Sea* drifting to us across

the fields. We arrive back at Rotherbridge, geese stepping out in response apparently to the martial tune. The sun shines on the instruments and on the red and gold of the uniforms. We thank the band and trudge back up the lane, the way the smugglers came. Miles and Steve will certainly see the experiment as a roaring success. No doubt they're already thinking about next year.

P.

## A footnote to a report on the Rogation Walk

Suppose that you live in Brighton and that you like to drive out on Sunday afternoons to the more remote parts of the county, park the car and then walk one of the many prescribed routes available from the tourist information centres, probably with the title '*Rambling in West Sussex*'.

Today, you've left the car in Petworth, walked down Grove Lane, turned right into Haslingbourne Lane and then, grateful for a footpath, followed Station Road to The Badger (or is it Badgers now?). After a leisurely lunch there, you cross the road and go down Kilsham Lane. It peters out at Rotherbridge, so you cross the river and ..... can you believe your eyes?



*Petworth Town Band in genial mood at Rotherbridge.. Photograph by David Wort.*



There's a uniformed band playing 'It's a long way to Tipperary' watched by about fifty people in various garbs, some with sticks, most with contented smiles on their faces, a baby in a buggy, a few dogs, even one chap on a bike.

It's like one of those dreams in which ordinary happenings take place in incongruous places. What's going on? Why here? Does it happen every Sunday? We seem to be miles from anywhere – where does the band come from?

Someone calls out, 'One more piece' and the band obliges. There's a ripple of applause and the players carry their instruments back over the bridge. 'Right then, we move on' shouts one of the men with a stick and the crowd follows, then veers off to the right along the river bank, even further into the country.

You'll be glad to know that the chap with the bike was able to answer most of the questions, but whether he was able to give assurance that the people of Petworth are not in urgent need of psychiatric help was not clear.

KCT

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## The 28th Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 22nd May

Extracts from the (unconfirmed) Minutes:

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr A Henderson, .... commented that, following a rise in subscription rates the previous year, membership had fallen from 673 to 604, but it had already recovered to 658. Attendances at meetings were lower but income was maintained by the raffles. Expenditure on the hire of the Leconfield Hall was higher because of the monthly book sales, but income from them had far exceeded the cost. Additional expenses during the year had included rental for the book store garage and purchase of Parish Boundary posts.

Chairman's Report. Mr Peter Jerrome saw his task as twofold: to maintain an obviously successful formula and to ensure that the Society did not settle into a rut. Among the activities traditionally well done were the Magazine (nearly 300 postal members and 70% of locals did not attend meetings, an indication of the value they placed on the Magazine, which now contained over 350 recorded interviews, building up oral history), Fair Day, the Gardens Walk and the monthly meetings. These last were started when no other organisation held them. There was now much more going on in Petworth, which no doubt accounted for lower attendances. Of the new ventures, the book sales were increasingly successful, the Jubilee Dinner was vastly over-subscribed and could become an annual event, the Rogationtide Walk, canal trips and a visit to Shulbrede Priory were proving popular. The Society provided half of the Board of Trustees of the Coultershaw Beam Pump Trust. It was working closely with Lord Egremont's Jubilee Committee, staging slide shows and an exhibition.

Mr Godsmark then illustrated the year's activities with slides: Stedham Flower Festival (visited when walks could not take place during the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic); walks

at Loxwood, Shillinglee and Stag Park; a rain-affected ramble to Blackbrook made worthwhile by Mr Graham Allen's collection of memorabilia and quiz; Fair Day, with shots of the Committee enjoying the gallopers; Vanguard Productions Christmas entertainment; beating the bounds at Rogationtide – a revival of tradition.

Mr Jerrome paid tribute to Mr Godsmark and others who maintained a photographic record of all the Society's activities.

'Business completed ..... Mr Nick Sharp gave an interesting talk about 17th Sussex trade tokens, with examples from his collection.'

As a schoolboy, Nick collected coins, farthings in particular, with the aim of obtaining one from every year in which they were issued. He discovered a mystery 'coin' which turned out to be a rare 17th century trade token from Essex, which he sold for £5, but his enthusiasm was fired to find tokens from the 62 towns and villages in Sussex known to have issued them. Most had a value of a farthing, those worth a halfpenny coming later. Still familiar names appear among the Petworth traders issuing tokens: Barnard, Eade, Hurst, Johnson, Launder, Leggatt, Manser, Peachey, Scutt, Stringer.

Refer to Magazine no. 108, page 43 for more information provided by Nick prior to his talk.

KCT

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## The Golden Jubilee Dinner 11<sup>th</sup> June

I don't think we really expected it to catch on as it did – certainly not that there would be a premium on tickets. We ended with a waiting list of between 30 and 40. Andy was very much the moving spirit, taking applications strictly in order, returning money as necessary, sorting out the seating. Not the best of June evenings, a wind biting through the Pleasure Grounds and the party divided into two – one to hear about the proposed Capability Brown planting in the Pleasure Grounds, the other to look at the recently refurbished Carved Room, then switch round. Might be a good idea on this austere June evening to do the outside first! The Capability Brown project looks to put into practice some of his original suggestions for the Pleasure Grounds, it will seem unpretentious by modern standards, for instance the old roses seem unassuming now, and there will still be room to picnic. Then to the Carved Room: the Turners in their intended position: two were in fact especially painted for their present siting – how often can an artist do that?: The Gibbons carvings meant really to be seen from the side rather than front-on. Holbein's Henry VIII still holds court.

The Marble Hall is packed with members: numbers stretched eventually to 88, white and red wine and elderflower pressé. A chance to meet people and to mix. Then to the Audit Room itself, again a chance to mix. We didn't feel it right to put all friends together – that wasn't the idea. It was to be a chance for members of the Society to meet other members. A simple night out with friends is something you can do any time at a pub. Inevitably to think of those who applied too late, or of the many who might have liked to come but were too far



away – abroad perhaps. Spiced lamb, venison or salmon. Audrey and Rita have done the table flower arrangements beautifully. Each table headed by a committee member, eleven in all. A Jubilee toast to the Queen, sweet, Andy's quiz. Fifteen local(ish) questions. Bishop Luffa or Otway's Haslemere branch, the Midhurst - Chichester road is the A ....? Almost embarrassingly our table seems to have an expert even on the most abstruse of subjects. Fifteen questions only, more I fear might have provoked civil disorder. A really enjoyable evening with many thanks to Lorna and her helpers at the Trust. An occasion certainly to be repeated. At 1020 we emerge from Church Lodge : it's pouring with rain.

P.

## Visit to Shulbrede, June 16<sup>th</sup>

Shulbrede Priory – what to expect? In medieval times one of the Percy earls had made over the tolls of the Petworth Mill to the monks of Shulbrede, almoignage it was called. Other than that not much. Barbara Gridale who had been brought up at Lynchmere, could remember Mr. and Mrs. Ponsonby from the Priory with a pony and cart in the late 1920s and going to the house with the Fernhurst baker to deliver but never actually entering the house. Books say the foundation was by one Ralph de Ardenne, a Warwickshire man, as an abode for Augustinian canons. Through Fernhurst and take the fork for Lynchmere and it's on the right.



And so it proved. A dull, damp June day and everything very green. Geese and peacocks in the drive. Andy has checked off the list, it's fully booked with another waiting list. Something of a squeeze for the cars if you avoid the marshy ground: there's been a lot of rain. The party is divided into two, Laura Ponsonby with one half and her brother-in-law, Mr. Russell, with the other. The latter certainly proves at once amiable and knowledgeable. The priory had been suppressed by Henry VIII with the usual reasons advanced – basically the flagrant immorality of the canons. The venerable prior, a man of seventy years and more, being accused of cavorting with seven whores, not all one would hope at the same time, and in any case something of a feat for man of his years. The fact was, of course, that Henry and his agents were determined on plunder and any excuse would do. Stripped of its religious status the priory became a farmhouse, part of the Cowdray Estate. Over centuries it fell into disrepair. First rented by Arthur Ponsonby in 1902, it was bought by him in 1905 and has remained with the family ever since.

Much of the original priory is gone, but the entrance hall, leading originally to the cloisters, has a thirteenth century undercroft to the right serving as a buttery. A massive, but slightly later, central pillar of Purbeck marble supports the prior's chamber upstairs. From the undercroft we make our way upstairs. The prior's chamber is a huge vaulted room, partitioned in the sixteenth century, apparently to support the roof beams. The partition contains the famous Shulbrede frescoes, possibly the work of an itinerant artist. The best known one illustrates the old Nativity belief that the animals are granted the gift of speech on Christmas Day, the message of each reflecting the animal's characteristic manner, so the duck quacks, "Quando, quando," "When, when," the raven croaks, "In hac nocte" "This night" and so on. With Palestine under Roman administration the animals' choice of Latin is if nothing else politic. The frescoes are faded but still clearly discernible.

Shulbrede also has strong associations with Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918), whose daughter Dorothea (Dolly) had married Arthur Ponsonby. Parry had houses in Kensington Square and at Rustington and his high speed commuting between London, Shulbrede and Rustington sometimes led to a brush with the law. The Parry Room upstairs received a great deal of attention with its generous collection of memorabilia. Time too for a stroll in the extensive gardens.

Finally into the refectory with its rearing mid-June log fire, inglenooks, and a table laden with home-made cakes. Rosemary is finally persuaded to play "Jerusalem" in the prior's room on the very piano that Hubert Parry had used as an undergraduate at Oxford, while a hastily summoned quorum of members provided a vocal accompaniment. Oh yes, you could say everyone enjoyed their visit to Shulbrede!

P.

If you can find a copy of Arthur Ponsonby's *"The Priory and Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede"* (1920), it makes a fascinating read.



## 'It's African Queen country'. The Second Loxwood Canal Trip 23<sup>rd</sup> June

All aboard at the Onslow Arms; some have booked a meal for afterwards. All present and correct for Skipper Andy's inspection. We step into the Zachariah Keppel and are soon



*Drungewick. Photograph by Douglas Price.*

chugging up the canal on the way to the first lock. Trees with watermarked boles are fixtures now but alien to those far-off days when horses pulled the barges from the towpath. It's not long before we reach the first lock. The sides of the boat banging very physically up against the walls and a black rubber "bottle" suspended from the boat taking the force. It's tight in the lock, there's lichen on the stone sides and the indefinable smell of water. Ropes. Ian is taking pictures from the bank – had he been marooned on the April trip? Left at Loxwood like Ben Gunn in Treasure Island? Actually I don't think so, I've seen him in Petworth most days since then.

It's a mile and half each way. Yellow vetch and white hemlock on the steep bank and in the distance what appears to be the "toxic superweed" giant hogweed. But is it? More likely perhaps it's the native species revelling in classic territory. A second lock. Sitting in the lock is like waiting at a station, except for the ropes and bollards, the sound of water and the upward gaze at the "platform". The canal, we're told, was never really viable; one strand of thought saw it as a secure route from London to Portsmouth during the Napoleonic wars. In fact it was as vulnerable to low summer water levels as it was to economic vagary. Nowadays pumps can be brought into use to alleviate low water levels in a hot summer. Small creatures crawling down the lock walls. At first they seem like drops of water. Looking up to the sky, people silhouetted against the clouds. One of the crew fishes out a piece of board with a tool like a dysfunctional hoe.

Snatches of conversation. "May Upton was a man" or "It's African Queen country." One looks out at the yellow flags growing on the bank. Odd floating logs perhaps suggest a crocodile. Not too serious a companion perhaps. Reeds come through the open window. "Don't touch them please, they're very sharp." Zachariah Keppel was an Alfold man and initial backer of the canal project in 1813. He went bankrupt in 1814. Turning round and a chance to disembark and see the beginning of the work that will carry the canal eventually down to Pulborough – hopefully to be ready by 2004. Back aboard again, the locks again, with water

foaming like brackish beer, the lock gates closing and again the feeling of waiting at a station. Cooking smells suggest the Onslow Arms and signal the end of the trip.

P.

## 'Only 25p? We can't argue with that.' Book Sale 6th July

A queue – we've never had that before, snaking round to the east side of the Hall. A definite feeling of expectation – tension almost. Opening the doors just before ten o'clock, fearing that some of the queue may abandon it. They're in. Some dealers we recognise, some simply collectors. Each seem to have their particular focus. You have to be ready for opening: you can't be caught setting up. Some good art books at £2, coffee table really, a good £1 table and a solid 50p table at the northern end. The Rupert Bear table cloths are a tradition for the £1 and £2 selections. Then the great ocean of 25p fiction on eight tables in the centre and on the west side, non-fiction on the east and gardening, cooking and children at the south end. Except for the jigsaws and a few records there's absolutely nothing that was here in May. Some certainly comes from store, but that now turns round in four months. Most stock is fresh.

People bring in books in carriers. Derek and Miles are taking the money, Andy and I filling, there are platform boxes piled high waiting to come out – Friday's forgotten already – Les, Mr. Marmion, Andy, Miles and I emptying the long shallow boxes and gradually filling the two rooms. Piers Ploughman, Herodotus, London over 2000 years, Danielle Steel, Catherine Cookson ... The Square's busy – perhaps it's the Turner Exhibition. More visitors than locals this time, usually it's about equal. It's very busy indeed: by 1040 the cream's skimmed off, another month to replace it. "Only 25p? We can't argue with that." Early Evelyn Waugh novels in the old red Penguin livery, a book on keeping canaries has strayed into the fiction. The art books have already disappeared, the £1 table looks sick, the 50p table's a battlefield. So many books looking for a reader; so many, I'm afraid will never find one. Clearly the busiest yet, but that happens every time now. People come from distance we're told. Out they go, occasionally with boxes, more often with the big strong Petworth Society carriers. It's certainly a good advertisement. A trickle of membership enquiries, people taking a magazine and going off to think ...

It's a quarter to four. Time to start repacking the shallow boxes. The prospect of closing whets the appetite of the casual visitor. It's a long day. Almost apologetically culling a few; we really need to be more severe. Andy, Mr. Marmion and I packing boxes, they pile up in the entrance and David loads them on the trailer.

Book sales are hard work but rewarding in many ways – meeting different people, raising the Society profile. And books make you think – Ronald Firbank's Cardinal Pirelli – did he really stay at Newlands in Pound Street just before the 1914 war? Someone somewhere wrote that he did. That would hardly make him a Petworth writer however.



And always some piece of flotsam that surfaces out of the ocean of books – a battered little volume *Lax of Poplar* (Epworth Press 18<sup>th</sup> Edition 1935) first published in 1927. The paper's gone brown and the spine's on the way out, the cheap cloth cover is sun-faded. It's signed by the author, fading black ink in a characterful hand. Goodness knows where it's come from. The London Methodist Mission in the East End, an autobiography rather uneasily written in the third person. A coster crying, "Fish alive-O" and trying to talk up three very stale, very dead herrings. "Lie down you devils, lie down ...." Oh and the very black drawings are by Alfred Bestall, the illustrator of Rupert Bear. I think of the table cloths under the "expensive" books. Perhaps it's not such a big world after all!

P.



## Come Rain – Come Shine

Shine it certainly did on Sunday 27 July as Annette and Andy's Slindon walk got off to a sweltering start with temperatures up in the 80s. Members arrived from Selsey, Midhurst and Petworth together with Fergus the Scottish deerhound from Bedham. It should be recorded the Midhurst contingent took the scenic route to Slindon and only just made the start.

A shady path led us to the village pond where coot and ducklings together with goldfish were basking in the sun. In Dyers Lane 'Batman' was observed climbing the wisteria outside a grand house and round the corner interest was shown in the pottery. Leaving the cattle pound we struck north and saw a folly on the opposite hillside - a possible visit on a future trek? Into the shade again and a well preserved derelict barn appeared.

Many wild flowers caused identity discussions and led by Jean Gilhooly much ragwort was removed from the verges and grassland. Back on to the Slindon estate, courtesy of the National Trust, a photo call was held featuring a brick wall covered with harts tongue fern. Ian G took the official photograph for the scrap book - Anne S found it difficult to copy the master with the cover still on the lens!

Towards the end of the walk the heat of the afternoon was felt on a particularly open

stretch and then it was back in the shade and the welcome sight of the car park. Refreshments were taken and all departed for home tired and ready for a cool shower.

A. and A.

## 'How could we go anywhere else ...?'

### Some thoughts on Petworth's Golden Jubilee

A sunny Sunday and a closure. Siting the Gallopers a little to the east of normal to allow a space for the teas and, later, the disco. A juvenile ride to the left of the Gallopers. It's a newcomer: Harris Brothers don't bring smaller equipment to the November fair; that's left to the other showmen. Garden furniture on sale in the Leconfield Hall. Robert's very conscious of tradition: Harrises were here for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. It's 105 years ago. "How could we go anywhere else?" This time Robert has the luxury of leaving the caravan in the square itself, up by the Red Cross Rooms. Normally of course, it has to be in the Car Park. The gold embossed brochure has finally arrived at the TIC. I've seen them all since 1887, but this is a real collector's item.

The closure's a doddle compared with November. Without the other fairmen, manoeuvring in the Square is relatively easy. Traffic cruises through the Cut. The occasional coach, even the odd agricultural vehicle, trying their luck and probably wishing they hadn't

....  
Monday morning. A beer glass shattered in Pound Street, jagged edges upright. The fish shop draped in Union flags. Someone has vandalised the public toilets. England expects ..... I suppose everyone has their individual contribution to make. The fair gives a sense of occasion, an anchorage in the remoteness of an empty Square.

It's twelve o'clock, I shan't see the opening of Rosemary Gardens. In the Square the Gallopers are already in motion and the music plays. The brochures are beginning to circulate. Micky Magic the children's entertainer appears, by early afternoon the Tea Dance is getting under way. It's a cold, grey day, not raining, but hardly welcoming. It wouldn't have been a day for the Park, we later hear there was a downpour at Fernhurst and everyone had to go inside.

The Tea Dance starts slowly. The Gallopers are whirling round now and there are children riding the horses on the juvenile. Some horses have names other remain, it seems, anonymous. John Crocombe gives the Tea Dance another shout. Ann's set up the floral arrangement in the Upper Hall quite beautifully. Some think tea dances are old-fashioned but the received wisdom appears to be that they're coming back into fashion. The Town Band is in full swing on the Hall's east side. There are tables outside and people have brought their own lunch; there are, too, cakes in profusion. Downstairs in the Hall Micky Magic is playing to a completely full house – not even standing room! He'd done the same for the Millennium but then he was upstairs. Later he'll be in the Square.



Upstairs the Tea Dance is gathering momentum. "Can't we have this more often?" someone asks. In the understandable concern for youth things like tea dances can be impatiently cast on one side. I sit at a table with tea and a generous slab of cake, and as one not taking to the floor, feel something of an impostor ....

It's still a drab grey day and it's ten o'clock. The disco's pumping out a steady beat. The lights of the Gallopers illuminate the gathering night. Stylised individual gyrating to the insistent rhythm. It's the reverse side of the coin from the Tea Dance. A few late parents with children on the juvenile. The disco continues to midnight.

Up at the Hall in the morning early. Newspapers, royal books and local memorabilia. The meticulously kept Society scrapbooks begin to come into their own. Some cakes are left over from the Tea Dance. The Petworth Society exhibition is an afterthought, the idea being not to leave the fairmen isolated in the Square. Ann's floral arrangements come down from upstairs to give the whole thing a sense of what ....? Spaciousness, ease – whatever it is it's intangible, but crucial. People come in and stay for hours. What was an optional extra becomes integral to the whole thing. Anne's handing out tea from the kitchen and the cakes vanish. The Hall's absolutely crammed during the afternoon. When we pack up at four o'clock the fairmen themselves begin to take down. Soon the galloping horses are being carried on shoulders, legs high in the air, into their cavernous wagon. It's beginning to rain. It's not long before the Square's clear, motor-bikes are coming round the Town Hall, the bollards are back in the Cut. Robert returns the Hall key. All in all Lord Egremont and the Parish Council can feel pleased with their Jubilee efforts.

P.

## Solution to 108

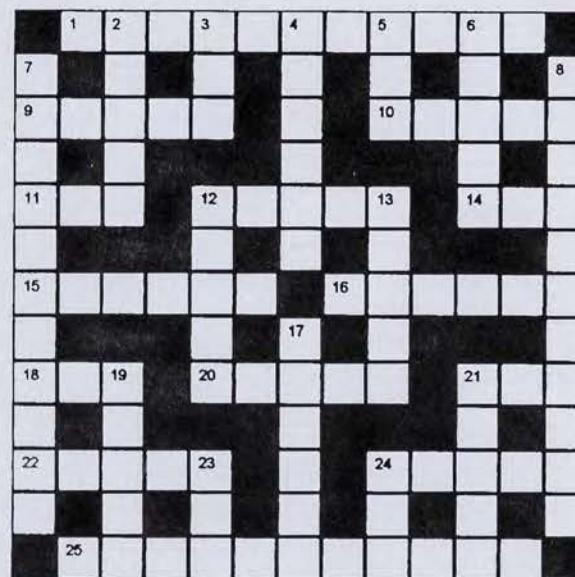
### Across

7 Unearthly, 8 Carew, 10 Gaslight, 11 Lakes, 12 Dyer, 14 Artistry, 16 Cobbett, 17 Jubilee, 20 Florence, 22 Nude, 25 Otway, 27 Rosemary, 29 Osier, 30 Worlds End.

### Down

1 Annal, 2 Rapley, 3 Stag, 4 Bletham, 5 Park, 6 New Street, 9 Plot, 13 Rut, 15 Toll House, 18 Urn, 19 Tea Room, 21 Nays, 23 Damask, 24 Grand, 26 Weed, 28 Silo.

## Deborah's Crossword



### Across

1 Andy – creator of the Moonlit Path in Petworth Park (11)

9 Take back a little loving for a village near Chichester (5)

10 Historic revels held in the Park in 1938 (5)

11 Off you go at Osiers Farm .....(3)

12 .....and watch the ball at the cricket ground (5)

14 World's or Heath (3)

15 Local hamlet with a "castle", a common and a church (6)

16 Noble sounding Petworth family whose grocery shop was on the corner of East Street (6)

18 First thing to do in a medical emergency (3)

20 Tax given as land produce or labour to clergy (5)

21 Irritate (3)

22 Get involved in 19dn. (5)

24 A place to keep your yacht or wash your hands! (5)

25 Patron saint of Egdean church (11)

### Down

2 Minor alteration to 9ac. resulting in a sheepish feeling (5)

3 Hot summer days which make us bright eyed and bushy-tailed? (3)

4 Mr. Kevis (6)

5 Signs of decay in Trotton (3)

6 Rustic character (5)

7 Her pan cloth discovered locally! (11)

8 Form of currency used in place of money – if you went to the A.G.M. you should know this one! (5,6)

12 Nation's warships – the 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northumberland was its Admiral (5)

13 Square event at the end of the Petworth Festival (5)

17 Artist's working space – such as Turner's in Petworth House (6)

19 Crazy artist produces entertainment (5)

21 Progeny (5)

23 Some confusion in the centre of Trotton - looking for a small child! (3)

24 Show disapproval of 19 (3)



## A File and Adam Tiler at Petworth Fair

"...but those who did the most trade were several professing to give jewellery, watches, money &c., away. We only wonder how it is they find so many *flats* to *gull*.<sup>i</sup> One of them (a capital *spouter* he was, too) told his hearers that upwards of 150,000 fools got up every morning in England, and it was hard luck if he did not catch one or two during each day."<sup>ii</sup>

This interesting but brief reference to the tricksters and charlatans who frequented the cattle fair at Hampers Common appeared in *The West Sussex Gazette* of 26<sup>th</sup> November 1863. The report is of particular interest due to its uncommon use of slang, and together with a further account that appears in the same issue of the newspaper it gives us an interesting insight into the character and speech of those less than savoury visitors to the cattle and the pleasure fairs.

The Hampers Common cattle fair of 1863 was noticeable for the want of sheep offered for sale and the general lack of business which was conducted, indeed it would seem that the only people who could claim to show any sort of profit from the fair were those who made their living relieving others of their hard earned cash. It is well known that fraudsters and cheats had long plagued the pleasure fair in the Market Square, but some of their kind had now moved with the cattle fair to Hampers Common where it had relocated in recent years. Clearly the crooks had an eye for any opportunity and if at first they failed to succeed at the pleasure fair then the unsuspecting victim would have to run the gauntlet of the waiting '*fleecers*'<sup>iii</sup> and '*bungnippers*'<sup>iv</sup> at Hampers Common.

Criminal slang has long been associated with nineteenth century London and in particular to the lawless environs of the metropolitan underworld. Whole dictionaries have been made over to the collecting of thieves speech, and with the eighteenth century came a fashion adopted by wealthy young 'bucks' who took pleasure from frequenting the low dangerous districts of London, these carefree youths took up and popularised the language used by the thieves, swindlers and prostitutes, who lived in these areas. The popularity of such speech among the educated classes continued well into the nineteenth century and we find many examples perpetuated in the novels of Charles Dickens. Through literature, slang found a whole new audience and many of the more acceptable examples made their way to the margins of mainstream English.

Of course like all trends, once adopted by the capital city, it was only a matter of time before they made their way into the provinces. Not wanting to be seen as anything but fashionable and on the cutting edge of news reporting, the Petworth correspondent of *The West Sussex Gazette* was not averse to dropping the occasional example of *canting lingo* or *pedlar's French* into his reports.

The author of both articles was probably William Death, a Petworth auctioneer and newsagent, who for well over a decade submitted from his New Street premises frequent court and general reports to the *Gazette*. On this occasion he rather surprisingly, and much to his

<sup>i</sup> *Flats*. Victims. Simple foolish fellows easily duped. *Gull*. To trick or swindle.

<sup>ii</sup> *Spouter*. A showman; one adept at using the showman's patter.

<sup>iii</sup> *Bungnipper*. Yet another term for the common pickpocket.

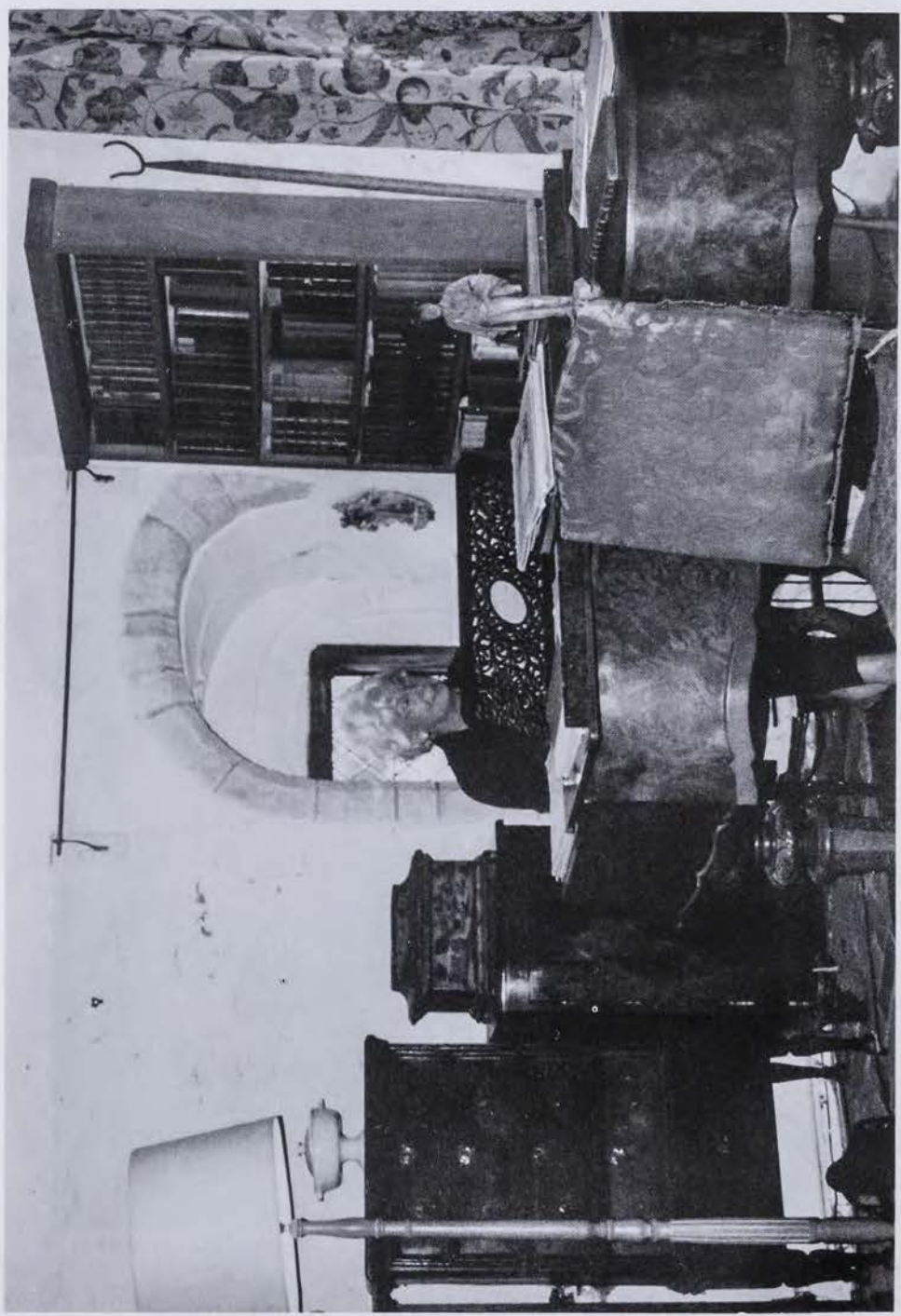


Mant Road host their own Golden Jubilee party. Photograph by Keith Sandall.





*Jubilee celebrations in Market Square. Photograph by Keith Sandall.*



*"Jerusalem" at Shulbrede. Photograph by David Wort.*





Nativity wall painting at Shulbrede reproduced as a tapestry.  
Photograph by David Wort.

credit, manages to give a relatively neutral account of the goings on at Petworth fair. I say this considering he was a familiar and occasionally vociferous opponent of the annual event. Equally one could suppose that had he not possessed such strong views regarding the fair then perhaps the court report would not have gained such prominence in his weekly offering to the newspaper. Certainly Death would have hoped that in this instance it was a case of any publicity being bad publicity for the fair.

The following account gives us a picture of not only those who had come to enjoy the pleasures of the fair but also those from whose actions the annual event had gained its notorious reputation. The Market Square fair was a rather rough and ready sort of occasion, probably attracting undesirables from as far away as Portsmouth and Guildford, aided no doubt by the recent opening of the railway line to Petworth. Clearly the pleasure fair was enjoying something of a renaissance despite the concerted, and on the face of it somewhat justified, efforts of several townsmen including Death to shut it down. The success of the occasion bought with it manifest evils in the shape of an influx of petty thieves, swindlers and beggars. Cheap jacks and prostitutes preyed on the inexperienced countryman keen to partake of the pleasures of the fair. This account gives us a rare description of a 'File' and 'Adam Tiler' at work at the pleasure fair.<sup>v</sup>

*Audacious robbery of money*

Mary Read and John Berry were charged with having on the 20<sup>th</sup> Nov., at Petworth, stolen one money bag, two bank of England notes of the value of £5 each, one sovereign, and one half-sovereign, belonging to Charles Rapley. Prosecutor deposed: I am a farmer at Frithfold, Kirdford; yesterday I attended Petworth fair; I came out of the market-room in the Swan Inn about 6 in the evening.; I paid for a glass of grog in the room;<sup>vi</sup> about 5 minutes before I left the room I felt in my pocket for my purse; it was in the left pocket of my trousers; it contained two bank of England notes, a sovereign and a half-sovereign; the purse was in a nankeen money-bag; after leaving the market-room I came down stairs and to the front door, and stood leaning one shoulder against the north door post; I had one hand, my left, under my jacket, across my back; I believe I did not stand more than two minutes; there were several persons there, the place was crowded; I felt a woman push up against me and feeling about my pocket and breeches; I said, "What do you want, I have nothing for you there;" she said, "How about a drop of short this evening?" I said, "I shall neither give you short or long;"<sup>vii</sup> I gave her a shove, and bid her get out of the way; the woman bolted away from me directly; as she did so, William Duncton spoke to me; I put my hand to my pocket, and missed my bag and its contents; I then looked out for a policeman; I did not see the prisoner Berry near the Swan Inn; I am certain the prisoner Read is the woman who pushed up against me; in about 5 minutes after missing my bag I went with Superintendent Kemmish up the Back Street,<sup>viii</sup> and just by

<sup>v</sup> *File* is the canting name for a pickpocket, while an *Adam Tiler* is an accomplice to whom the *File* passes the stole items.

<sup>vi</sup> *Grog*. Rum and water.

<sup>vii</sup> *Short or long*. Short. Brandy, gin &c. Liquor sold in small measures, as opposed to beer or cider, which is *long*.

<sup>viii</sup> *Back Street*. High Street.



the White Hart Inn I saw the prisoners coming to the end of a passage there, to within 7 or 8 yards of us;<sup>ix</sup> the woman Read turned round and ran quickly up the passage; Mr. Kemmish and I both went after her; the man Berry ran out and up the Back Street; in less than ten minutes after this I was standing at the corner of another street, and saw the prisoners coming together down the street. Cross-examined by the prisoner Read: When I came up to you I did not say, "I think you are the woman by your black bonnet." – William Duncton deposed: Yesterday, about 6 in the evening, I was just outside the Swan door, when the prisoner Read came up and shoved against me; I found her hand in my pocket; I screwed myself away from her; she got my purse nearly out of my pocket; I kept my eye upon her, and saw her go from me to Mr. Rapley, as he was leaning against the door post; she pushed up against him; I saw him push her away, and she went away from him as fast as she could. I went up to him, and in consequence of what I said to him he felt his pocket, and missed his purse; I did not see Berry there. – Mary Read pleaded guilty, and elected to be tried now. She was sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment with hard labour. Berry was discharged, as there was no evidence against him.

Not surprisingly Death does not continue with this style of reporting after his initial endeavour. Perhaps the flowery language was a little much for conservative Petworth, or he may have felt that he had succeeded in establishing in his reader's minds an unbreakable link between the criminal underworld and Petworth fair. It seems quite clear that whatever his intentions the report can only have served Death in his fruitless crusade to have the fair abolished. From our point of view it is a valuable record of contemporary slang in use in one of the least expected parts of the kingdom.

<sup>ix</sup> The White Hart was then a part of the Milton brewing empire with James Bronham as licensee. The alleyway through which Mary Read is supposed to have tried to make her escape is of course the White Hart Passage which connects The High Street to Rosemary Lane by way of the yard at the rear of the former inn.

For background information regarding the fair I have relied heavily on *In the Feast of St. Edmund the King, Petworth Fair 1189 – 1993* by Peter Jerrome.

So my fellow *joskins* I must take my leave and attend to my *lawful blanket*, for she is as queer as *Dick's hatband*, and will surely *put a finger in her eye* if I neglect her.

Miles Costello

## Mrs Tyrell's Sweetshop

Once again articles written in the Magazine have awakened my memory which until I read about the past remains dormant. How interesting I found the article written by Mr Miles Costello as I read so my memory expanded.

The tiny Tyrell's Cottage what happy memories of that house I have. During 1923 we, the Howicks, were living in the lodge opposite. I spent so many happy hours with 'Auntie

Fanny' she was so sweet. I remember old Mr and Mrs Tyrell they used to deliver goods from the shop. Paraffin by the gallon as lamps were mainly in use, not for us though as Lord Leconfield owned his own electric light station, that is another story. Old Mr and Mrs Tyrell had a son named Fred who was a confirmed bachelor until he met Fanny Pellett late in life and married her. I believe she came from farming stock, I may be wrong but listening to her conversation I put two and two together. The little shop was a hive of industry and always smelt strongly of paraffin. Packets of candles were in stock. Tapers, candle sticks, tiny paraffin lamps, all mixed up with laundry requirements, soda, yellow soap, red Lifebuoy soap etc. I wonder how many remember the squares of blue which were put in the final rinse for the whites, sheets etc which usually made them look whiter. There were fly papers. I cannot remember toilet paper. It used to be my job to cut newspaper up in squares, poke a hole in the corner and tie that up on a nail on the wall in the loo. How primitive life was. Now to get down to the most important stock, sweets, so many since gone. "Eaton" toffees 2 pence a quarter, small chocolate bars 1p, aniseed balls, 12 a penny, sherbet dips 1 penny, liquorice shoe laces ½ penny and lots of other goodies. The boys on their way to school at times filled the tiny shop up. At the time I write it must have been a tiny gold mine, what a pity the enormous stores came along and tore the inside from all stores as they were the backbone of country life, a meeting place for housewives. I suppose one can't live in the past but what happy memories I have of 'Auntie Fanny' a lovely lady with a mop of black hair pinned up on the top of her head and a white collar worn up to her neck.

I remember most of the roads and streets mentioned. The pubs also, Ernest Streeter the jeweller. My mother used to buy my ebony from Streeters. I still have an ebony tray bought from there in the late 1930s priced 21 shillings on the back. That was a lot of money in those days, ebony has never been very cheap.

Kath Vigar

## Midsummer at the Cottage Museum

The smell of spent gas – the characteristic smell of 346 High Street. Last week's attendance was about normal for the time of year; the week before's was vastly in excess of normal. Why? People fleeing the World Cup? It's anybody's guess. Or day to day 29 one day, no one the next. We've been doing it long enough now to live at ease with fluctuation. A look from the scullery door into the garden, the washed pink of the perennial poppy, the intense blue of tradescantia – what a reliable tolerant plant the latter is. Sage in profusion at the door, parsley going to seed in a pot. Well Mrs Cummings didn't inhabit a perfect world either. The witch's broom is upturned: "It means the occupant is looking for a man ..." What strange things visitors tell you. Perhaps we ought to put it the other way up. Biro for the visitors' book? But what would you have – a quill? After all the visitors' book is a necessary alien from the twenty-first century. Green purses of columbine seeds, granny's bonnets, the purple flowers have effectively gone now, but they've been a feature of the early summer garden. They'll



self-seed again next year. Sun spurge and broad leaved willow herb are the main weeds at 346, both easily pulled out. Yellow nasturtium in flower already but these trailing ones need watching, especially for caterpillars. What appeared to be annual poppies is some kind of anthemis, yellow chamomile, a golden daisy flower. There are a fair few of them but how they have appeared is a mystery. The gooseberries are beginning to burnish but they're not really ripe yet. At home the blackbird flies off with the big yellow ones, but the birds seem to ignore the small red berries at 346.

Gardens are different: calendula grows well at home but at 346 they always seem rather reluctant. It's a useful plant for giving a "cottagey" feel. I remember seeing it so used at the Weald and Downland Museum. The old people grew it as a herb. Rosemary in great profusion against the back wall, an evening primrose survives but last year's giants, like a race of dinosaurs, have been removed.

Down the cellar, the curious metal template with Tipper on it, a kind of stencil in fact. It's broken in half now but it was found under the floorboards when the house was being renovated. A Mr. Tipper was in Petworth last week looking up his Victorian ancestors. Is there a connection? No one knows. The huge white enamel egg holder. Did Mrs. Cummings really need one that size? Last year's experiment with Isinglass was a creditable attempt at local colour but ended in abject and rather unsavoury failure.

Broad beans and an unhappy parsnip in the scullery: late June isn't really parsnip time – at least in English terms but then I suppose now you have parsnips all the year round. The clock ticks in the parlour. Mrs. Cummings in time but transported by us effectively out of time. Into the upstairs sewing-room, the figure of Mrs. C. seeming to say, "This isn't me ..." but you mustn't let your imagination run away in 346. Books with the old type embossed pictorial covers.

It's one of those summer Saturdays when there's a lot on, the penultimate weekend in June. July would be getting a bit late, August definitely so. The church fête today, "something on" at the Primary School, Northchapel stoolball coffee morning in the Hall, tents and marquees announce a cricket six-a-side in the Park. It's the National Trust concerts next weekend, already the cut grass is drying in long bents. It's 9.50 by the church clock, Mrs. C. could certainly have seen it from the top window even if she was not of the congregation at St. Mary's. A quick nod to Field Marshall Roberts in his upstairs cupboard and away.

P.

## Two Harrison Family Poems

These somewhat rakish eighteenth century poems are important as revealing a whole thought world of which virtually nothing has come down to us. The notes appear to come from the early part of the last century. The Peachey concerned seems to belong to the New Grove rather than the Ebernoe branch of the family.

Courtesy of the Mullens Harrison family archives.

Circa 1730. An old Petworth rhyme.

### *Maids and Moles*

The fairest maid in Petworth Town be lovely Betsy Betsy P-u-t  
She certainly has stole my heart, and none but SHE could do it.  
When she parades in Lombard Street she sets my heart a'quiver;  
And, just as tho I'd seen a ghou, my knees do knock and shiver;  
For well all know THREE duels were fought, and ALL for Betsy's honor  
When John Peachee said she lookt best when she had naught up on her,  
And that he'd show, without delay, e're she was one hour older  
Upon her bottom was her mole – and NOT upon her shoulder.  
Alas the day! Three gallant men slain by his sword did rue it.  
Alas the day! To prove him wrong the three they could NOT do it.  
Three corpses cold in winding sheets THEN knew John Peachee knew it –  
EXACTLY where her famous mole emblemisht Betsy P . . . . u . . . . t.

Now John Peachee he did not love a maiden with a blemish  
So said to her "Now, hearkee Bett, a mare so broadly Flemish  
Be not the mare that I would mount . . . I like 'em swift with passion.  
A maid, like steed, I love to fight . . . and yielding be thy fashion."  
So, John Peachee he did not wed with lovely Betsy P . . . u . . . t  
But said, "Let other find her mole. I'll warrant she will do it."  
I know a maid with passion fierce would stay a man undress her;  
But if she hath a mole I'll know it by this night, God bless her!"  
Doth maiden live who John Peachee his wooing haste could spurn it?  
There WAS no mole upon that maid – on that day did he learn it!  
While Petworth folk did gasp and gape, and Peachee's honor yell at,  
In Lombard Street he sneerd at them encuddling M . r . y P . . l . . tt.

And truth indeed be this.

*Notes by Mullens. W. Harrison.*

An old rumour of Petworth is that a Peachey fought a duel with a Dawtrey on Hampers Common, and the Peachey spitted the Dawtrey after a long drawn fight. This persisted until quite 1913.

The ladies above had surnames:- Pruet and Pellatt.

Circa 1730.

### *The Three Moles*

Three moles had Lovely Betsy Pruet.  
One on her face, where all could view it –  
Alas! I write about the other two  
Which were – well – where non her ought view.



A macaroni once said she had got 'em  
One on her bellee, t'other on her bottom.  
Another gentleman said "Boys, I tell 'ee  
One's on her bottom, t'other's on her bellee."  
Now, if indeed I KNEW I would NOT tell 'em  
For care I nought where Betsy's moles may be.  
Let others have 'em, for I cannot sell 'em;  
The Three Moles Inn be moles enough for me.

*Notes by Mullens. W. Harrison.*

This, one of the many old rhymes about the fair and reputedly very lovely Elizabeth Pruet, relates to Selham near Midhurst in the County of Sussex. Nearby is the Parish of South Ambersham, a detached part of the County of Southampton. She was born 1707. This poem is after she married in 1733.

There was a Three Moles Inn in Selham years ago and, if there is still a Three Moles Inn, I hope the landlord will take good heed to this, it was famous for its very strong ale.

Eventually lovely Betsy Pruet married a man named Mellersh and lived at Heyshott, or thereabouts. Her daughter married Dan'l Dennett of Didling who wrote a very exhaustive (and very very personal) "History of Sussex and its Antient Families" of which the manuscript was taken to the U.S.A. many years ago and was lost. Perhaps, one day, it may turn up.

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## M.T. Sacks & An Old Broom Squire

Harvey Stenning is a wealth of information, a fount of all knowledge. What he isn't an authority on he will skilfully divert the conversation away from with a tale of such obscurity that the original question is soon forgotten. "I remember an ol' neighbour of mine moving a most awkward load with a pram", recounts Harvey for no apparent reason. "I asks him why he was struggling so and he says," "Well Harvey there's a little too much for the perambulator, but not quite enough for a hand cart" Harvey bemoans the passing of village characters only to be reminded that he is in fact one of them.

Not a silent sufferer of fools Harvey observes how easy it is to confuse educated people. Every winter he earns a little extra cutting and selling kindling, the firewood is sold in old fertilizer sacks which Harvey turns inside out and, ever keen to save a shilling, he writes across the sack 'Please return M.T.' "It never ceases to 'maze' me", says Harvey thoughtfully, "How many folk ask what M.T. means." Thankfully I had mentally solved the unintended riddle and, feeling rather smug with myself, was just about to probe Harvey for the reason why he felt the need to put M.T. on the sacks at all, for it seemed unlikely that they would be returned full, however by that time Harvey had long moved on and the moment had passed.

Ever keen to tell a story, Harvey agrees to recount memories of his early days though only with the condition that afterwards he can go on to his great love of besom making.

Doubting somehow that I will be able to keep up with Harvey I lick the tip of my pencil in anticipation and prepare to give it my best shot.

Hello my name's Harvey, but call me what you like, just as long as you don't call me late for me dinner!

I was born at Nevilles Wood on the Stopham Estate near Bedham. The cottage was the old Anchor beerhouse which had been closed for years but whose name had long outlived the business. We lived with my Grandfather Albert Stenning. Albert was a palemaker by trade, working in the woods during the winter and labouring in the brickworks at nearby Harwoods Green during the summer. My father Jack followed in his father's footsteps in the woods, though by his time the brickworks had closed. Father went to school at Stopham until he was 12 years old when he was expected to contribute to the family finances. Like most boys he went to work on a farm, however Albert was not happy with the wages the boy was paid and soon Jack went with his father piece-working in the woods and he would continue until he was 73.

When I was two we moved to Churchwood at Fittleworth, there were 14 cottages and the big house which all belonged to the Churchwood Trust. Mr. Wylde lived in Churchwood House, he was what we called a gentleman farmer, and had Sorrels Farm down by Hallelujah Corner, where he used to grow pyrethrum which would be made into bug powder at the Keating's Powder factory at Billingshurst. I think at first he used to import just the flower heads from the Far East, as they didn't want to sell him the seed. Eventually he managed to grow them himself and there would be fields and fields of them.

When war broke out the ministry took a dim view of gentlemen farmers and in order to prevent the land being commandeered Mr. Wylde let it out to his foreman Bill Allen who continued rent free for several years and he turned it into a conventional farm. I think it was about seventy acres. I worked at Sorrels for about three years, starting with horses, I moved on to a tractor when Reg Puttick, the driver, joined the marines. I was paid £1 3s 6d a week at Sorrels and Mother took £1 of it and with the remainder I was expected to buy my clothes. Later when I moved to Sayers the Fittleworth haulier as a driver my money went up to £2 10s, a large increase you might think, however Mother thought the same and she put my housekeeping up to £2 and I was left with just the odd ten bob, no argument!

We grew a lot of 'spuds' at Sorrels because there was a big subsidy on them. Swedes were another big crop and they would go down to Littlehampton where they were sent off to army bases or ended up in jams and goodness knows what else.

We rarely came into Petworth from Churchwood, Pulborough was nearer and Mother always said that the shops were cheaper there. Just occasionally we came to Petworth, Father liked to watch boxing at the Iron Room and Mother would take my brother and me down to the cinema at the Pound. Fair day was another time when we would come in, there were all sorts of strange booths and stalls, I've seen a man dancing on glass, and there was a boxing booth where you could win a £1 if you could knock the boxer out, of course no one did. There was the big fat lady who people would pay to stare at, strange how things like that fascinated us in those days. I remember seeing Audrey at the fair one year, she won't remember it as she was about 6, but she was with her dad Jack baker and they were standing by the roll-a-penny



stall and I can picture Audrey tapping her fingers to the sound of the great steam organ which always accompanied the fair. It's queer how a thing like that sticks in your memory.

Of course I remember George Attrill, he was the council lengthman and looked after the roads and verges around the village. George was warden at Fittleworth Rifle Club which I belonged to, for some reason George took a shine to me and I was one of the few youngsters that he called by their first name. I have a feeling that it may have been that we were both partial to a bit of poaching. He was equally as good with a catapult as a rifle and could knock a squirrel out of a tree with either. George was the first to score a 100 out of 100 at the rifle club. He liked a drink or two but you never saw him drunk or be a nuisance.

George had two brothers Alf and Ben, they worked in the stone pits on the Stopham Estate for Brown Brothers of Shoreham who had the concessions for the quarries. Browns steam lorries would come up from Shoreham and go back with a full load of 16 tons of stone. When the lorries slowed down to cross old Stopham Bridge us boys would often hang onto the back and sneak a ride. The lorries would usually stop at Braziers Pond at Stopham village to fill up with water before making the return journey.

Mr. Bowyer was headmaster at Fittleworth School; he was also a lay preacher and would walk out to Bedham to preach at the little church there. Miss MacDonald was also a teacher, she lived near us at Churchwood, a very big lady I remember her clipping me around the ear for singing the wrong words to a Christmas hymn when we were out carol singing with the school. I believe Miss Knowles was also a teacher and there may have been another though I can't recall her name.

When I think of the Swan at Fittleworth I just think of the Oliver family, they seemed to have had it for donkey's years, long before the war and probably quite a while after. Mrs. Oliver and a friend carried on at the inn after Mr. Oliver died.

Before my father and his father went paling for Morley's they did hoop making, I think that this trade must have been on its way out by then which was the reason they turned to palemaking. The hoops would be sent to Billingshurst where they would be used in making dry barrels which would be used for storing and transporting such things such as cheese, apples, biscuits and the like, even cement was sent abroad in 'dry' barrels as opposed to liquids which naturally went in 'wet' barrels which by this time were made with metal hoops. The last time that I saw hoops being made was by my grandfather's brother up at Churchwood during the war. Evidently the Ministry of Defence thought that they might be able to store explosives in 'dry barrels' if they made them with wooden hoops and copper nails to avoid the possibility of any spark. I don't think the idea really caught on, or quite possibly the hoop makers simply couldn't make enough hoops.

When the Fittleworth Flyer came through the railway station I have seen it pulling as many as twenty Morley's trucks from Selham. The timber would often go to Scotland where there were used to prevent snowdrifts. During the war much of the timber was used as beach defences. Father liked cutting poles for the Ministry of Defence as they didn't insist on the bark being removed or the ends pointing, this of course made Father's work much simpler.

#### *Besom making*

Since our retirement my old mate Arthur Haffenden and I have been making besom

brooms, which we sell at shows around the county and from a base at Amberley Chalk Pits Museum. It's not a commercial enterprise for you would struggle to make a living at it, but we enjoy it and there are always people keen to see it being done.

We make two sizes of besom, big 'uns for the grown ups and a little 'un for the kids. The handles are cut from 3 year old chestnut which we usually coppice on Leconfield or Stopham land. Sometimes we will follow behind another cutter – quite often old Arthur Purser, you know Jack Purser's son - who is taking out the chestnut suitable for walking sticks, these are tied into bundles of 30 and shipped out to a factory in Germany. Not so long ago the walking sticks would have been made locally but the factories have all closed now.

We use silver birch twigs for the heads of the large besoms and it grows amongst the chestnut like a weed, the ideal age of the birch for our purpose is 12 years. We can't cut the birch until the leaf is off which means that quite often we start as much as a month behind the walking stick cutter, however by the end of the season we will have caught him up as there are two of us and generally he will work on his own. We begin about November but have to be finished by the middle of February before the March sun gets the sap rising on the birch, for then it gets brittle and is no good. Once cut the birch is bound into tight faggots which not only make it easier to store for seasoning but also keeps the birch straight for as they dry out they would twist and become useless. It is important to have a sharp handbill when cutting silver birch and I usually put an edge on it in November and it will not need sharpening again that season.

The chestnut which we use for the broom handles are either too big or small for walking sticks, you see the walking stick cutter carries a gauge on his belt which allows him to ensure that the sticks that he requires fall into one of three sizes, for gauging the lengths he uses his body, and nothing less than four foot one inch is used, though the ideal length should be five foot. By the time the walking stick cutter has been through there should be nothing left on the 'stams' and what is not needed for sticks or besoms is left to rot on the ground. By the time the chestnut is ready to be coppiced again there will be nothing left on the ground. In the case of cutting chestnut for pale making the rubbish is burnt on huge bonfires for it is important to keep the ground clear to make it easier to get the timber out to the nearest track.

For besom handles the sticks are cropped to about 22 inches for the small and 3ft for the large brooms. The small handles are pointed and the bark and 'snotches' trimmed with a handbill while I use a homemade draw knife made from an old sugar beet cutter for doing the bigger ones. The birch faggots which have been seasoning are undone and the sprays made up for the besom heads, this is really a miniature version of a faggot, except that they are bound with wire and then the pointed handle is pushed down through the middle and a nail is hammered in between the first wire to prevent the handle from slipping out. The small besom heads are made from heather or ling which is cut on Iping Common. The 'ling' is much more durable than birch and in the old days they were made into indoor brooms as they were better for sweeping up dust than birch besoms. It is difficult to find heather long enough to make the large broom heads though I believe that up north the ling grows full length which is about chest high.

Basically that is how we make besoms. It may not be exactly the traditional method and



we have certainly adapted various tools to make the work easier, however we have more or less had to learn the skill from scratch. I don't think that anybody else still makes besoms locally except maybe the odd gardener who may make one for his own use, and I believe that Hindhead is the nearest place that they are made commercially.

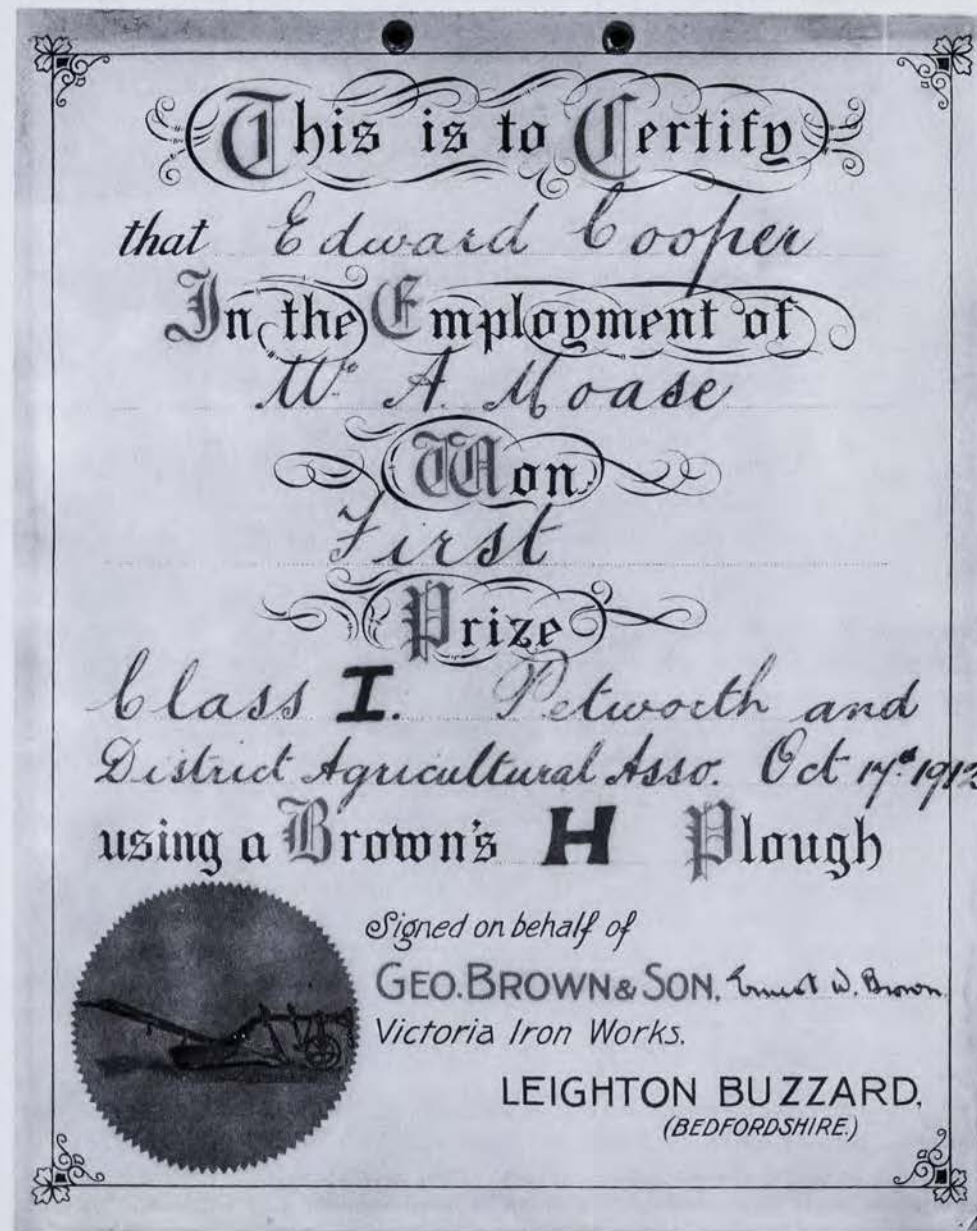
In July and August we usually do three days a week at Amberley Chalkpits. As you can imagine this keeps us pretty busy and on a good day we sell the brooms as quick as we can make them. In fact a recurring problem is finding a broom with which to clean up at the end of the day!

Harvey Stenning was talking to Audrey Grimwood and Miles Costello.

## 'One of the best jobs in Petworth ....'

Edward Cooper was my grandfather, immortalised by George Garland in so many photographs from the twenties and thirties. He worked for over sixty years for the Moase family at Hoes and Coultershaw. As a child I spent a good deal of time at 406 Station Road, one of two cottages of which my grandparents lived in the one nearest the mill. I liked going down there and being out in the fields with the animals. My grandmother was in fact the sister of another famous Garland character, Henry Hooker of Upperton. She'd come into Petworth every Saturday morning to do her shopping and invariably buy 1½ lbs of steak and some kidney. Then she'd prepare the Sunday dinner, a big steak and kidney pudding which she boiled in a big iron pot. I never remember there being anything else for Sunday dinner. She'd also buy another piece of meat, either a hand of pork or a piece of beef – often salted. I don't know that she served it hot, for I never saw a roast joint but sometimes for supper on Sunday she'd cut off a slice of beef. I imagine she cooked it Sunday to leave cold during the week as so many country people did. I always had my beef with H.P. sauce, a luxury I didn't have at home! Granny maintained that working men had to be well fed. She was very capable in her old-fashioned way, but it did mean that when she died in 1931 at the age of 72, my grandfather, who lived to be 90, and my uncle, who lived with them, found it quite difficult to cope. Edward lived on for a while at Coultershaw before moving to a cottage in Grove Street. When my uncle died in 1940 my grandfather went to live with my mother in East Street. At Grove Street Mrs Allison, whose husband was in charge of water for the Estate, used to take Uncle George a tin of butter drops – I can't remember the name now but it was extremely well-known at the time. This was always something of an event. He would offer me one or more and I would be told, "They're Uncle George's, they're not for you."

As a child I never enquired about Grandfather's early years: I suppose he was simply my grandfather and that was that, but I seem to think that when he first worked as a boy he lived in the farmhouse itself in the old-fashioned way. It was in the West Chilton/Thakeham district I was led to believe. Schooling was, no doubt, minimal. Certainly he couldn't read or write, but this didn't mean he lacked practical skills – quite the contrary. If Mr. Moase wanted to know the acreage of a field he'd simply get Edward to look at it.



Certificate for Edward Cooper 1912. Courtesy of Mrs Dorothy Wright.



Grandfather was famous for working sixty years on the same farm and he certainly worked well into the 1930s. I don't remember him actually giving up work, perhaps formally he never really did. He still pottered about with the animals even in later years. Wally Ball who was for so many years barber at Harpers in Saddlers Row, always said that Grandfather was the first person he met when he was walking up from the station for a job appointment with Mr. Harper. He started off up the hill and saw Master Cooper leading his horses down to the river. He asked him if he knew where Mr. Harper had his shop.

Edward Cooper was a gentle, kindly old man, a countryman of the old-fashioned kind.

I went to the East Street Girls' School, but my father died from cancer before I left. Dr. Kerr would come in every day to see him and administer an injection. One day, it was a Saturday, and I was at home making something in the kitchen, he asked me what I wanted to do when I left school. "Be a cook," I replied. "Do you?" he said and left it at that. Not long afterward when he was visiting he said, "Were you serious about being a cook?" And so I went to work for Dr. and Mrs. Kerr at Culvercroft. It was November 1934. Later on I lived in, but not initially. Kathy Harvey moved from kitchen maid to parlour maid and there was also a house maid. Kitty Stemp (later Mrs. Toby Balchin) was leaving to be married, and there was a full time cook. I prepared the vegetables and particularly the mayonnaise, something the cook very much disliked doing. It was difficult to get the eggs and olive oil to blend rather than curdle. It took me a long time to acquire the knack.

I remained with Dr. Kerr until I joined the W.R.E.N.S. during the war, much to Dr. Kerr's dismay, his wife having died soon after the beginning of the war, while he had come out of retirement to continue as a doctor. As for the cook, a Mrs. Napper, I hadn't been there long when she moved on. Her home was in Oxford and she had two sisters: she decided to go and live with them. At eighteen I was head cook. Dinner parties were a regular feature and I had some back-up from the other staff, while Kathy's mother Mrs Harvey would come in to help with the washing up and cleaning the silver.

Life was strictly regulated but the Kerrs were excellent employers. "You've one of the best jobs in Petworth" I was often told. On Sunday I went to church for 7 o'clock communion but I was supposed to be at work by 7.15. I had a special dispensation to come in at 7.30. 7 o'clock communion was said and was very much a service for the workers, 8 o'clock for slightly more leisured people with the more exalted attending at 11 o'clock.

When I first went to Culvercroft I was very fair but rather pale and Mrs. Kerr said to Mrs. Napper who walked the dogs as well as acting as cook, "Take Dorothy out and see that she gets some fresh air." I would walk all over the Gog and Flexham Park with Mrs. Napper and the dogs.

I shouldn't give the impression that we were pampered; we were expected to work hard and we did but the Kerrs really did take an interest in us. Every autumn they would go off to Scotland or Ireland on holiday and they'd always bring back a substantial present for each of the staff - it might be something like a length of tweed, very acceptable indeed in the mid-1930s.

Dorothy Wright was talking to the Editor.

## A Woman, a Dog, and a Walnut Tree....

I was born at Broadwater in 1915 and christened in the beautiful Saxon Church which stands at the heart of the old village. The youngest of twelve children, of whom only myself and a sister survive, I left school at the age of 14 and went to work as assistant to the professional at Ifield golf club. We were living at nearby Crawley at the time, though our cottage would later be demolished to make way for the new bypass. My duties at Ifield included helping to make the wooden golf clubs. I was there for a couple of years but sadly the professional was offered a job in Bermuda and my job disappeared with him. In those days golf courses were few and far between and there really was not another opportunity for me to continue as an assistant. I had to make a career change, became an apprentice bricklayer, and stayed in the trade for the rest of my working life.

It was 1938 and I was working for Fowler Bros. the Cowfold builders, we were building a new house at Bury and needless to say I would take an interest in the local public houses. The Black Dog and Duck was a very popular pub even though it only had a beer licence when I first knew it. It had a very small bar, with a window into the tap room where the dartboard was situated and where people could buy beer to take out. There was no cellar in the pub, and all of the beer was drawn from barrels that stood on stillages at the back of the bar. Mr. Henly, the landlord, knew when a barrel was getting low for the thickening ullage would start to appear and in order to get the best out of the barrel it was important to very gradually raise it without disturbing the ullage. The Dog and Duck was very popular with cyclists and hikers, even charabancs would call in on their way to the coast.

You could buy bread and jam and a piece of cake, all for 1s 3d, and could have as much bread as you could eat.

The Dog and Duck was a Tamplins house though I believe that at one time Constables of Arundel also supplied it. Anyway being a young fellow I became interested in the daughter of the landlord. Her name was Marjorie and her family had had the pub for almost a hundred years, since 1850 I believe, for it was Marjorie's grandfather Mr. George Henly who first opened the pub. He was a barge owner and opened the pub to offer refreshment to the workmen who were building Timberley bridge. Beer at that time was only 1d or 2d a pint and in fact by 1938 you could still get a pint for 4d.

Marjorie's father was Lindsay Henly and when we married in 1941 we moved into the pub. The Black Dog and Duck had a catering licence which meant that despite there being strict rationing at the time we were still able to have a reception which included a small cake which was a great luxury during the war. There was a man and his wife staying with us at the time who had evacuated from Worthing and they were kind enough to offer us their house for our honeymoon. The only trouble was getting to Worthing, you see there were no taxis or private cars and so we caught a bus from Bury to Arundel where we changed for Worthing. By the time we got to Worthing it had got quite dark, we knew we had to get off at a pub called The Bricklayers Arms, which we successfully did. Armed with a blackout torch we then tried to find the correct road, it was by this time pitch dark and our search was not helped by all the





*The Black Dog and Duck in the early century.*



*Cutting pyrethrum at Fittleworth in June 1937. See "M.T. Sacks and an old Broom Squire".  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.*





*Edward Cooper (right) at a ploughing match in the 1920s. I am not sure that the original negative of this Garland print survives. See "One of the best jobs in Petworth". Photograph courtesy of Mrs Dorothy Wright.*

street names being removed in anticipation of an invasion. Anyway after a couple of hours we found the house and stumbled in at about midnight totally exhausted. After a short stay at Worthing we went to visit my mother at Brighton and that was quite an experience for she had erected a Morrison shelter in her sitting room and insisted that we spent every night sleeping in it!

There was a fireplace in the bar of The Black Dog and Duck and an old regular named Sam Scutt would usually light the fire when he came in. One day my mother-in-law commented that the fire was smoking rather heavily and she directed 'Dabby' Penfold the local handyman to get up on the roof and fit a cowl on to the chimney pot. This didn't do a blind bit of good for the next time that Sam lit the fire the smoke was worse than ever and when Mrs. Henly came downstairs she looked into the bar and the smoke was so thick that she couldn't see Sam, she called out to see if the old fellow was alright and to put the fire out. Sam replied, "I'm alright mum, I'd sooner have a lot of smoke than a lot of cold air." 'Dabby' Penfold was also the village undertaker and his brother made the most beautiful coffins you ever did see. I remember Vicar Davies asking Dabby how business was and Dabby replied, "Not good Vicar, nobody bloody dies these days."

Talking of the Vicar reminds me that we used to walk the parish footpaths together every year, you see we were both on the parish council and it was important that we kept the paths open. Some of the paths would be lost if they weren't walked at least once a year and this included the old 'bier path' along which the coffins were carried from West Burton to Bury Church.

We had a gardener at the pub named Bishop. He was always moaning about feeling bad and nobody used to take a lot of notice of him. Sometimes he would go upstairs to the big room that was used for entertainments and lay down on the settle. One day I went up and he was on the floor and saying how bad he felt. I was a bit concerned and went back down to the bar where Horace the local coalman was sat having a drink. I said that Old 'Bish' was ill and would he come and have a look at him. When we got upstairs 'Bish' complained that he was feeling cold and so I took down off the wall a huge flag bearing the cross of St. George and wrapped the old fellow in it. Horace and I agreed that we ought to get 'Bish' home, and we carried him downstairs and out to the coal lorry. There were no sides on the lorry and in order to stop him rolling off we surrounded him with the weights which were used to weigh the full coal sacks and so, draped in the huge flag and some empty sacks, Horace took the old boy home to Amberley, it really was quite a sight as the lorry disappeared down Houghton Lane. Sadly old 'Bish' died that night from a twisted gut, no wonder the old boy had been complaining of not feeling well for ages!

Getting back to the pub, I can remember a huge walnut tree in the garden and Mrs. Henly would sell the fruit to make a bit of extra money. For some reason we had a bad crop one year and mother-in-law asked me to give the walnut tree a good thrashing. She gave me a stick with a chain attached, I climbed up the tree, and I must have cut a strange figure indeed, me up in the tree beating the branches with the chain. Anyway it must have done some good for the following year the crop was not only improved, it was better than ever! Thinking back to that time reminds me of the old rhyme



*A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree, the more you thrash them  
the better they be.*

I'm not sure about the woman but there is certainly some truth as far as walnuts are concerned!

I can remember the ferry well, it was operated by an old sailor named Bob Dudden who lived in the ferry cottage. I believe that the boat and house belonged to the Arundel estate and I've heard tell that they also owned the bottom of the river, for if anybody wanted to drive a post into the riverbed to moor a boat they had first to get permission from the estate office. Bob Dudden was the last ferryman at Bury and when I remember him he charged 2d for my bike and 1d for me. The ferry was an old flat-bottomed boat and he worked it with a large paddle that he moved from side to side. It must have been hard work getting that boat across the river for the Arun is one of the fastest flowing rivers in the country. You had to go upstream a fair way and then back down again to get to the Amberley bank especially if the tide was particularly strong. There was a lot of pleasure-boating before the war and Mr. Dudden would hire out skiffs which you could take down to Houghton Bridge to the tearooms. The trip back up to Bury was very hard work, especially if you were rowing against the tide!

John Galsworthy the playwright lived at Bury House, though this was before my time, for he died in 1933. Mrs. Henly used to keep two black dogs at the pub, one of them had learnt how to open the scullery door, and they would get out at night. Well it didn't really matter much for there was hardly any traffic about in those days and they would always come back when they were hungry. Anyway Mr. Galsworthy would often find the dogs and it didn't matter what time of night it was he would bring them home and invariably wake up the entire household in doing so. This used to rile Mrs. Henly something awful.

Mr. and Mrs. Henley died quite young and my wife's sister Doris took on the pub, though by the end of the 1950's she decided to give it up and The Black Dog and Duck passed out of the Henly family for the first time in well over a century.

'Ned' Pearce was talking to Miles Costello

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## 'He's a good rough carpenter .....

I was brought up at Buckfold, off the Horsham Road at Fox Hill. My father had farmed Bennyfold for years. Living on the farm I'd been used to farm work and particularly horses, working with them when I was only twelve. I left the North Street boys' school in the summer of 1942, being fourteen in the September of that year, and went to work for Mr. and Mrs. Hurley at River Hill. The Hurleys kept a small chicken farm but also two Dexter cows and a few pigs. I was paid 17/6d a week and looked after the chickens, did the garden, in short did whatever was to be done. I was a bit skinny and it might have seemed I wasn't particularly strong – but I was.

Hurleys had a donkey and cart and I made regular trips to Fittleworth Station carrying

day-old chicks, White Winedots, Rhode Island Red and Light Sussex. Sometimes I'd simply take them on a ladies bicycle with a basket in front. I'd go down to the station past Fitzleroi and if I had the donkey and cart, come back with chicken feed or whatever the Hurleys wanted to be collected.

The donkey was a good one, if he was something of a character. Once I had to go to Steyning Market with the donkey and cart. It took all day, leaving at seven in the morning and returning at seven at night. I was carrying young cockerels in crates too big to get into the Hurley's car. They drove the car to Steyning with me taking what they couldn't fit in. The chicks were hatched in incubators. Sometimes I'd take smaller orders by bicycle, going to places like Duncton. Most people kept a few chickens then. The donkey was pretty good but he didn't like steam-rollers or Canadian bren-gun carriers. Many a time I've taken him down the steep hill past Fitzleroi and up again. He would cheerfully haul seven hundredweight of potatoes up that hill. At the end of the day I'd turn him out in the big field across from the Welldiggers. He'd frisk about; he always liked being with the cows. When the halter was off I had to be careful for he had a weakness for pinching my arm. Occasionally I'd take him down to the smithy at Fittleworth. He would only be shod on the front hooves using tiny long shoes. The Parfoot brothers seemed quite elderly to me then and they expected Hurley's to send them a bottle of cider as a kind of "sweetener". I suppose making the donkey's shoes was a little out of the ordinary for them.

The two Dexter cows were difficult to milk; they'd be led on a halter and brought into the barn. With their little short legs you couldn't get the pail under them for milking and we made a concrete block so that they could stand on it and we could milk them from the side. They'd be held to a pole by clap ties. We were always improvising: Mr. Hurley had a relative who had a load of wooden tiles to spare and we used these to roof a new pig sty.

The Hurleys did a lot of work for the War Effort, holding fêtes at River Hill, or weekly knitting parties. Mrs Hurley and her friends would spend the afternoon knitting, helped with the occasional cup of tea, and during the war produced hundreds of items for the troops. For "dig for victory" we cultivated an acre of ground, digging by hand, and I'd bring the produce into Petworth in the donkey and cart. There was a weekly market in Archway House, presided over no doubt by Miss Maine. I'd back the cart in through the green wooden gates. The money went to the War Effort. On Friday nights I'd go into Egdean from River Hill with all the scrap iron, waste paper and other things – there was a collecting point there. Again it was to raise money for the War Effort.

Mrs. Hurley used to go round the area collecting National Savings; everybody saved in those days, even if it was only a small amount. There were too, as I have said, fêtes held at River Hill with proceeds going to the Red Cross and I used to make miniature trucks, even on at least one occasion, a child's wheelbarrow. After the war people would sometimes tell me they still had the things I had made for the fêtes. As a "rough" carpenter I was completely self-taught. I still like to work with wood, and not too long ago I turned my father's old bed into this table here. People would bring to the fête anything they didn't want – it had an element of jumble about it. It was surprising how many people you could attract to River Hill given its relative remoteness. Occasionally Stan Collins from the local cinema would



## RIVER HILL WAR COMFORTS PARTY.

August, 1945.

As the activities of the Party are in process of being closed down, it is thought that these few notes will be of interest to those who have helped to make this effort such a success.

The Knitting Party was started on 25th September, 1939, with the object of embracing all those outlying houses which were situated too far away from Village activities.

The Party met every Wednesday for knitting and making various articles which were subsequently sold at Sales of Work and Garden Fetes annually.

Altogether 3179 knitted garments were made and sent to the various Service comforts organisations and Merchant Navy.

The Party wishes to thank all those friends and neighbours who consistently supported the Sales of Work, Garden Parties and Whist Drives; especially do they wish to thank Mr. C. Powell who acted as M.C. at the numerous Whist Drives, and Mr. Yearman who kindly lent his lorry for carriage of chairs, etc.; also Messrs. Enoch & Latham, of Petworth, who made Donations from proceeds of Dances to the funds; to Messrs. Shoubridge and Tickner for many kindnesses; and to Mr. Stringer, of Chichester, whose invaluable assistance helped so largely to make the Garden Fetes a success.

It is proposed that a sum of money from the Balance in hand should be placed in the P.O. Savings Bank and drawn upon annually to entertain a party of Ex-Service wounded men from the "Not Forgotten" Association, and the remainder divided between the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund, King George's Sailors and Soldiers' Fund, and the "Not Forgotten" Association.

EXPENDITURE	£ s. d.
Materials for Sales of Work	121 1 1
Wool for Comforts	292 11 1
Carriage and Postage	19 1 0
Christmas Presents to local members of the Forces	20 14 7
Sundries, Hire of Crockery, Insurance Contributions made to—	10 9 8
Red Cross	195 7 9
Merchant Navy	147 17 0
R.A.F. Cigarette Fund	14 7 6
Mrs. Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund	15 0 0
Army "Salute the Soldier" Week	5 18 6
Sussex Welfare Association	5 2 0
Lord Mayor's Royal and Merchant Navy Fund	5 0 0
Balance in hand	198 4 10
	£1050 15 7

RECEIPTS	£ s. d.
Sales of Work	805 11 1
Whist Drives, Tombolas and Competitions	157 8 9
River Hill Library	8 3 1
Work Party Box	4 10 0
Messrs. Enoch & Latham (Dances)	20 19 4
River Hill Garden Produce	28 11 4
Salvage—Egdean and River Hill Donations	14 6 0
	11 6 0
	£1050 15 7

*River Hill War Comforts Party. Statement September 1939 to August 1945. Courtesy of Mrs B. Musson.*

come up with this mobile cinema and would attract a sizeable audience—a lot of people would come from Byworth, Rin Tin Tin I especially remember. Stan Collins had a van with a big screen on the back. The audience sat out in the open air. The Hurleys would do everything they could to help the War Effort. Mr. Thorn from Byworth also farmed at River Hill and the Hurleys offered to rick his oats. We carried them with the donkey and cart. George Garland, who was often at River Hill, took a photograph of us pitching up for the rick.

Mr. Hurley had a 2.2 rifle and was a member of Petworth Rifle Club. Once I went with him and his brother on to Bedham Common shooting squirrels. I didn't shoot of course. We were at it all afternoon and the meat was cooked for the dogs. It was a really dark meat rather like hare, the squirrels being skinned and cooked on top of the potatoes. Mr. Hurley was a retired World War I officer as was his brother who also lived at River Hill. They were both keen members of the Observer Corps, doing duty alternately. There was an observation post up where the Tillington Road allotments are now. A favourite cigarette of the time was Sweet Cabral—I think that was the name. They were huge cigarettes, bigger than Players. On the back they featured German and English planes, front view, side view and bottom view, and also a picture of the whole plane. Hundreds of empty packets were dumped in the Gog and I would test Mr. Hurley with the outlines so that he could recognise the planes, English or German, when on duty with the Observer Corps. The Gog woods were full of troops. There were R.A.F. personnel among others camped there. One of the R.A.F. men raided the farm, getting under the wire fence. When Mr. Hurley went to complain, the guard wasn't at all helpful—that is until Mr. Hurley pointed out the culprit slinking back over the fence! It turned out he was supposed to be in "clink" anyway. On another occasion a deserter was hiding in Flexham Park, he had a camp up in a tree but no one could ever find it. He'd take chicken from the farm and scatter feathers about as if it were a fox. I think he was something to do with the Canadians at Bedham. The authorities knew who he was but as far as I know they never did find him.

A rifle range was built in the woods with a range of half a mile, the trees, of course, being cut down. You could often hear the whistle of the bullets. The Home Guard also had a pit up by the Cottage Hospital which they used for practice. I always thought some of the bullets whistled overhead at River Hill, but Mr. Hurley doubted it, although he was persuaded eventually. I think these bullets perhaps were strays. When shooting was in progress, the lanes would be closed and a guard put on them.

Mr. Hurley had a nephew in the Fleet Air Arm who used to come up some weekends. He must have been stationed fairly locally because he took it into his head to do the occasional stunt over River Hill. He'd pick up by following the railway line along. He flew a Harvard, a Barracuda and another plane I can't remember. The Barracuda was a dive bomber with a big high tail and once he "dive-bombed" the house. I remember the plane climbing again with its high tail. It was certainly spectacular but someone reported his exploits and he was stopped. He used to carry out maintenance as well as flying—perhaps he was a test pilot.

Hurleys were nice people. The chicken farm was, looking back, I suppose fairly marginal. They weren't young in the 1940s, "scraping along" you might say. I think they came originally from Yorkshire. They rented the house from the Leconfield Estate and



sometimes I'd take the rent in for them, going into the Audit Room via Church Lodge. I imagine I brought back some sort of receipt, I don't remember.

Often on a Friday Lord Leconfield would go down to Little Bognor. I suppose to see his sister, Lady Maxse. He'd have his black retriever and come down through the Park, across Hampers Common and then either through the fields or by the road. He'd exchange a few words if you met him, ask me where I came from, or about the progress of the war. We'd never see him going the other way, I imagine the chauffeur picked him up. Once I was wearing an old army tunic left behind by the troops, anything like this was much appreciated. "You in the Army?" he asked.

I wouldn't have been quite sixteen when I left River Hill. I remember Mr. Hurley wrote me out a reference including, "He's a good rough carpenter." I think I've still got it somewhere. I saw very little of the Hurleys after I left River Hill.

Ron Purser was talking to Peter Howell and the Editor.

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## More Tales from Westlands

### *The Creamery*

I was 14 when I first went to Westlands. My mother was expecting my sister Daisy and Mrs. Duncton my future mother-in-law had heard that I had left school. She asked my mother if I could come and work for her at Westlands, Mother said I could but only when Daisy was six months old and she would then be able to manage things on her own. When Mother had Daisy I did everything around the house, made the bread, washed clothes. Mother took in washing that had to be done in the morning, starched, ironed, and sent back in the afternoon. I was only 11 or 12 when she took me out of school to mind the babies while she went down to Kirdford where she washed for the woman whose husband had just taken over the creamery.

Most of the local milk went to the creamery rather than to Petworth railway station. This made it much easier and quicker for the farmer. You see they would take their churns and just empty them into a great big tank. The man who owned the creamery was a very trusting man for he never checked to see how many gallons were in the churns and it would have been very easy to swindle him.

### *A Startled Horse*

My husband Joe had a tractor and one day he was moving it from Westlands to Montpelier Farm and was just about at Brinksole Heath when he came upon a horse being ridden by the groom who worked for Major Courtauld at Burton Park. For some reason the horse was startled and it reared up on its hind legs and came crashing down on the front axle of the tractor, which broke in two. The groom blamed Joe for being on the wrong side of the road, which he wasn't, and Joe reckoned that a groom ought to have been able to control a horse better than that. The tractor had to be towed to Carter Brothers for repair and Joe got old Mr. Lerwell from Kirdford to write a letter to Major Courtauld asking for compensation.

### *The 'Gorger'*\*

There was a woman who lived up the way from Westland. She was very fat and her neck was as big round as my waist, you see her 'gorgers' had grow'd out of her neck and she had trouble breathing or talking. When I was a child I got the 'gorgers', in fact everybody got them at sometime or another, and Mother gave both me and my sisters a piece of black velvet to put round our necks and it had a press-hook at the back to hold it tight. I think it was to stop our glands from growing out. I knew a great many people with the 'gorgers', and it grew out of the neck and these people used to breath ever so badly.

*[Gorger. Nellie may be referring to 'goitre', which of course is an enlargement of the thyroid gland. However it would appear that in this instance the remedy has become confused with the complaint, and while 'goitre' is indeed the ailment, a 'gorger' or collar would be worn round the neck in an attempt to hide the disfigurement caused by the 'goitre']* – Miles.  
*Pheasants.*

A chap named Thorpe who used to live down by Hilliers would come up and talk to Gran every Sunday morning. This fellow would shoot pheasants with a catapult and marbles. The pheasants used to roost on the low branches of a tree so it was quite easy to hit them. My Joe had a walking stick gun but he got rid of it because it was so dangerous and if you tripped when out walking you could easily blow a foot off. George Stillwell bought it from him and then Joe bought a folding gun which fitted into the inside pocket of his jacket. Goodness knows what they used to kill.

### *Bones*

Joe's father always kept dogs and he used to feed them bones. One day Gran came in to the house crying and in her apron she had a load of chickens and every one had had its legs bitten off. Joe's father took one look, fetched his gun, went straight outside, and shot the dog dead. You see that's what comes of feeding a dog bones.

### *Goats*

Joe's grandmother kept goats, which she killed for their meat and skins. She would soak the skins in a solution made from alum, and then she would scrape all the bits of flesh from the skin and then hang it out to dry. The goats ran all over the place and were a nuisance. The last two that she had were climbers and would get up onto the granary and even the house roof. She also kept a Bill goat on a chain in the garden. One day she was changing the goat's water when the animal butted her from behind and knocked her over. She picked up a brick and grabbed the goat by the horns and whacked it round the head with the brick. Her son shouted out not to kill the goat but she was really angry and said "I don't care if I do, no goat is going to butt me up the a—e."

### *Girls' Friendly Society*

When I was fifteen Gran said I had to belong to something and I said that I was a member of the Girls' Friendly Society, and I used to get books from Mrs Stapylton rather than go to Petworth. My sister Dorothy worked for Mrs Stapylton at Hilliers, after about a year she left and went to work for Major Mason the author. I don't know how long she was with Major Mason but she went back to Hilliers the second time as a between maid. She worked upstairs mornings and helped cook in the afternoon. Dorothy had something wrong with her feet and



the doctor said that she should go to the seaside for a while. The Girls' Friendly had a big house in Brighton and Mrs Stapylton arranged for Dorothy to stay there. It didn't cost Dorothy anything and she could spend all day on the beach just as long as she got back by 9 o'clock in the evening. The Stapyltons were very good to Dorothy and they were very fond of her.

#### *Twisted Entrails*

Joe had a horse which we thought had choleric. Well it was said that you shouldn't let a choleric horse lie down so Joe was walking it in the field in front of the house when it dropped down dead. I always remember it because there was an oak tree there and where the horse dropped dead the grass never did grow again. There was the shape of the old horse and the ground was covered in a rusty coloured moss but no grass. When the knackers collected the horse they paid us ten shillings for the carcass and later told Joe that the horse had had twisted entrails which is what had killed it.

#### *Potato 'Pie'*

Joe's granddad used to make 'pies' for keeping potatoes and mangolds from rotting during the winter. He would put wood on the ground then cover it with bracken, or fern as we called it, then on top of the fern he would put a great pile of many hundred weight of potatoes, these would be covered in a lot of bushes or hedge trimmings or anything that they could find to keep the 'pie' weather proof. If the 'pie' was built properly then the potatoes could be kept all winter without damage, however if the weather got in then the whole contents could be lost. He wouldn't open the 'pie' on a windy day even if somebody wanted to buy some. If he did take some out he would stack them in the barn and cover them with straw until they were used or collected by a customer.

Extracts made by Miles Costello from a tape recording of Mrs Nellie Duncton talking to Audrey Grimwood. For other recollections by Mrs Duncton see Magazines 53, 54, 81, 88, 89 and 90. *Incidentally Mrs Duncton will be celebrating her one hundredth birthday on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2003*

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## New Members

Mr. T. Chapman	38, Amberley Drive, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, BN12 4QQ.
Mr and Mrs. Clarke	Muttonchop Manuscripts, Playhouse Gallery, Lombard Street, Petworth GU28 0AG.
Mr. W. Jenman	2, White Hart Cottages, High Street, Petworth, GU28 0AU.
Mr. C. Leaver	River Hill Lodge, Fittleworth, RH20 1JY.
Dr. and Mrs. D. Parsons	Fairfield House, High Street, Petworth, GU28 0AU.
Mrs. C. Warren	292B, North Street, Petworth, GU28 0DN.
Mr. A. Wilson	High Hoes Barn, Hoes Lane, Petworth, GU28 0JB.
Mrs. S. Woss	21, Pix Road, Stotford, Hitchin, Herts SG5 4HY.



