

COUNTRY LIFE

JULY 22, 2015

EVERY WEEK

Flower power The plant collections of Britain



Why real men read maps
Plus: slow tortoises and speedy bikes

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A giltwood overmantel mirror after an original from our archives originating from Biggs of Maidenhead, run by our family. Entirely hand carved in mahogany with dutch leaf applied over red gesso with distressed finish.

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Oxfordshire

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Ideally positioned between the villages of Kirtlington and Bletchingdon, a short drive from the centre of Oxford. 4 reception rooms, 7 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. Extensive outbuildings including a self-contained apartment, stabling and garaging, well-maintained gardens and grounds and indoor swimming pool. EPC rating D. About 9 acres.

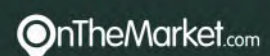
Guide price: £2,500,000

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West Dorset

A handsome and substantial Listed Grade II former rectory in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with the Jurassic coast at Burton Bradstock only approximately 5 miles.

- Reception hall ● 4 reception rooms ● 6 bedrooms ● 2 bathrooms ● 4 large attic rooms
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Guide price: £1,500,000

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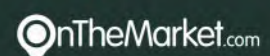
Kingsbridge 6 miles, Totnes 19 miles, Exeter 46 miles

One of the best sites in Salcombe in an elevated position above South Sands beach. The rare combination of stunning water views both up the estuary and out to sea, mature garden setting and adjoining private woodland makes this property very special. About 1.1 acres of gently sloping land with separate access from two lanes. There is planning consent for a striking new build house of approximately 6,993 sq ft with a detached annexe of approximately 1,792 sq ft.

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Grade II listed* HOUSE

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M6 (J15): 22 miles, Stoke-on-Trent: 25 miles,
Stafford: 27 miles

4 reception rooms, 8 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms,
garage, land and paddock, period (pre 1945), outbuilding/
office, swimming pool, tennis court and cottage, approx
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▮ about 64.5 acres ▮ EPCs: Cottages = B-F

Guide £2.75 million

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Cornwall, Roseland Peninsula



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Gloucestershire

Grade II listed first floor apartment overlooking the prestigious Montpellier Gardens

Montpellier, Cheltenham Spa station 0.5 miles, M5 (J11 north and south) 3 miles

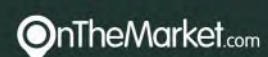
Situated within an impressive Regency terrace in one of Cheltenham's most desirable areas. The apartment occupies the first floor and benefits from marble fireplace, classical high ceilings and beautiful cornicing. The apartment offers 2 bedrooms, drawing room with balcony, kitchen and shower room. Within walking distance of both Cheltenham Ladies' and Cheltenham College.

Guide price: £300,000

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Guide Price £1,550,000



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Tennis court | Gardens | Paddocks



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Drawing of St Dunstan-in-the-West by SPAB Scholar Piolomy Dean

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MESSUM'S



Moment's Rest, 1933

oil on canvas 51 x 61 cms 19 7/8 x 24 1/8 ins

Lucy Elizabeth Kemp-Welch RI ROI RBA, 1869–1958

The foremost animal painter of her generation, Lucy Kemp-Welch trained with Sir Hubert von Herkomer at Bushey. She was president of the Society of Animal Painters and exhibited annually at the Royal Academy, where she became renowned for her spirited animal compositions, most notably of workhorses. She was often questioned for not painting thoroughbreds, which may have strengthened her position in a male-dominated genre. Yet Kemp-Welch believed that these refined, predictable animals left little for the artist to discover. Instead, she found workhorses fascinating, because their forms and movements were entwined with the ungovernable nature of the elements, landscape and other animals.

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COUNTRY LIFE

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Miss Sian Lloyd Jones

Sian, only daughter of Mr Gareth Lloyd Jones, of Great Bedwyn, Marlborough, Wiltshire, and Mrs Jason Lewis, of St Katharine's, Savernake, Wiltshire, is engaged to be married to Tim Crighton, only son of Mr Andrew Crighton, of Thetford, Norfolk, and Mrs Steven Gercke, of Collingbourne Kingston, Wiltshire. They will be married at St Katharine's Church, Savernake, on August 22.

Photographed by Chris Allerton



National Collections: Alamy, Gap Photos, Dreamstime, Marianne Majerus/MMGI, Richard Cannon/Country Life Picture Library

Maps

'Where other families pass down antiques or jewellery, ours passes down maps'

Why real men should read maps, page 56



Tortoises

'They alternate a surprisingly impressive pace with thoughtful pauses'

Come out of your shell, page 52



National Collections

'My mother named them after her friends'

Ursula Key-Davis inherited a passion for pelargoniums, page 66



Three-year-old Loveday Durham took the prize at last week's Great Yorkshire Show for the best-dressed sheep with her parents' Lincoln Longwools

Wayne Hutchinson/Alamy; Feng Yu/Dreamstime; Tui de Roy/naturepl.com; Richard Cannon/Country Life Picture Library

This week

26 Parish Church Treasures

John Goodall investigates the vibrant Roman pavement at the Church of St Mary, Meesden, Hertfordshire

29 Una Stubbs's favourite painting

The actress and artist chooses a work capturing 'everyone's dream to sit reading all day with their dog'

30 Visual treasure: meadow grasshopper hopping

34 Genius is absolutely necessary

In the first of two articles, John Martin Robinson explores Broughton Hall in North Yorkshire and discovers how one family transformed its medieval seat into a fashionable home

44 This green and pleasant land

Kathryn Bradley-Hole visits a remarkable modern landscape garden in which a Horatian ideal appears to have been a presiding subliminal message about English landscape

52 Cover story Dear old fossils

Devoted owner Caroline Jackson celebrates the extraordinary charms of the tortoise

56 Cover story Putting Britain on the map

Forget satnavs and GPS: when it comes to finding your way, there's nothing quite like a paper map, says Jonathan Self

61 Kitchen Garden Cook

Summer means strawberries, suggests Melanie Johnson

62 Back to black

With the barbecue season in full swing, Julie Harding meets the men who make the charcoal

64 I must go down to the sea again

Nick Fisher never tires of getting away from the madding crowd and going small-boat fishing off the Dorset coast

66 Cover story I lost my heart to a hosta

Jane Wheatley meets the flower champions behind the UK's 600-plus national plant collections, preserving species from acers to zelkovas

74 Cover story I want to ride my bicycle

Mark Hedges revels in the opportunity to overtake Lycra-clad cyclists without breaking sweat

Every week

18 Town & Country

Charities face a volunteer crisis

22 Notebook

24 Letters

25 Agromenes

33 My Week

Nigel Farndale faces the bald truth

51 In The Garden

Charles Quest-Ritson's adventures with agapanthus

76 Property Market

Penny Churchill finds substance and style in West Sussex

78 Property News

Arabella Youens finds out why there's much ado about Great Tew

80 Books

The Mistresses of Cliveden

84 Exhibition

Do paintings need a soundtrack? Huon Mallalieu doesn't think so

86 Performing Arts

No gimmicks required in dance, says Barbara Newman

88 Art Market

Huon Mallalieu assesses the market for Bacon, Freud and Warhol

90 Bridge and Crossword

91 Classified Advertisements

96 Spectator

Things not to tell Lucy Baring

96 Tottering-by-Gently



Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Telephone 020 3148 4444 www.countrylife.co.uk

The cost of independence

SCHOOL'S out and all roads lead to Cornwall, a holiday destination that takes on a new exoticism now that the county, which has its own language, is to be guinea pig for the Government's election commitment to devolve EU spending decisions to local authorities.

How using such a far-flung, distinctive and predominantly coastal region will work as a model remains to be seen, but Cornwall certainly deserves help. When visitors leave, the feeling can be one of desolation rather than peace. Behind the cheery surfing schools, cream teas, crowded lobster shacks, verdant gardens, romantic churches and Arthurian legend, public transport is poor and its young people disenchanting.

The county council will have to rise to the challenge of spending money imaginatively yet appropriately on ways to make life easier and promote natural assets. Local people know better than Whitehall where bus and health services are sketchy, where flooding is a risk and roads are falling to pieces. They can choose energy

projects to support and gaps in education and training to fill.

This heady new independence is, however, a huge responsibility that local politicians must respect. It was the unattractively ambitious lust for power that proved the downfall of the Yes team in the Scottish Referendum. Devolution means that the calibre of a county may now rely on that of its councillors and they must listen to locals.

Nature and geography

One area in which local logic is urgently needed is that of wildlife law. In the West Country recently, gulls pecked to death two small dogs and a pet tortoise. Gulls are an unavoidable fact of seaside life, but removing their nests is against the law and, as house guests, they hardly have the charm of swallows.

Nature unchecked is only lovely until it suddenly isn't: when a mink decimates the ducklings on the village pond, a bat leaves its corroding calling card on a church altar, deer trash a bosky woodland or

a cornered urban fox bites a toddler. This is why the SNP's interference in amending the Hunting Act 2004 was so irresponsible: don't they have sheep in Scotland, too?

The retirees are retiring

It's intriguing that the National Trust is witnessing a fall in volunteer numbers when it offers such tempting places—Stowe, Hidcote, the Lake District—in which to spend time. Retirees have long constituted the bulk of volunteers, but cultural shifts could soon be more widely felt (*Town & Country*, page 18).

A longer-living population has higher expectations of stimulation in retirement and many people need to earn money for longer in the face of diminishing pension values and can no longer lend expertise free of charge. We live in a more litigious climate, which can also be off-putting.

Although a healthy appetite remains for volunteering, the long-term contribution of retirees is likely to decline, taking with it a vital pool of experience. We would do well to watch developments closely.

PPA Specialist Consumer Magazine of the Year 2014/15
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Charities must 'wake up' to volunteer needs

VOLUNTEERS are the lifeblood of British culture, manning rooms in historic houses, fence-judging at horse trials, litter picking and bird counting, but recent reports suggest that the pool of those willing to give up their time for free is diminishing. One reason for this is the need for people of pensionable age to keep working, but there are also changes in attitude.

A Government evaluation one year after the London Olympic Games, which succeeded largely thanks to the courteous army of Games-makers, highlighted the 'challenge' to create a legacy of volunteering. A report published this year by the Commission on the Voluntary Sector & Ageing (CVSA) warns that charities need to 'wake up'.

Chairman Lynne Berry says: 'Charities now face considerable competition from people working longer, needing to care for grandchildren or simply having fun. There is no longer a reserve army of little old ladies for them.'

The National Trust's force has declined from 70,500 to 62,000 in three years, although the situation varies from property to property. A letter to *The Times* highlighted the need for a radical review: 'The time when volunteers sat passively and told visitors not to touch is long gone... Volunteers today need to be nurtured, challenged, stimulated involved and their contribution recognised.'

At Hever Castle in Kent, Edward Hodgskin, who is trying to recruit volunteers for the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum, which opens there in September, admits that the situation is a worry. 'People are busier than ever and the difficulty lies in finding volunteers who are able to commit to giving up regular hours, which is what we need,' he says.

Conversely, David Horton-Fawkes, estate director at Holkham Hall



Helping hands: National Trust volunteers re-lay a footpath in the Brecon Beacons National Park

in Norfolk, a member of the Historic Houses Association, reports that he has been 'pleasantly surprised' by the amount of interest: 'We do offer them a great time and they're very much part of the team, which is important. Last week, we organised a big barbecue for everyone.'

Alan Murray, head of volunteering at the RSPB, which is reliant on public support for its surveys and nature reserves, says some roles are easier to fill than others: 'Outdoor, hands-on roles, which are probably perceived as "sexier", are far more popular than administrative roles such as computer technicians and legal help, which we struggle to fill.'

The CVSA report recommends that charities experiment with new ways of providing incentives: '[Charities] should think about what they can offer their volunteers in return for their help—learning opportunities, for example.'

A National Trust spokesman says the body is adopting a more flexible

Amateur archaeologists no problem

The Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA), which relies on a volunteer workforce to help its two professionals record the archaeology of the foreshore of the River Thames for its Thames Discovery Programme, ensures that they receive 'added benefits'.

'We have no trouble recruiting help; we even have a waiting list,' reports Nathalie Cohen. 'We are totally flexible about when and where people volunteer and we give everyone a logbook, which they can use to document the skills they've learned. Several have gone on to be professional archaeologists.'

Helen Johnston works full-time as a volunteer coordinator for the Royal National Institute of Blind People, but spends her spare time on her hands and knees piecing together fossils and relics.

'Charities are being forced to follow the lead of bigger companies that allow volunteers to work flexible hours and allocate roles depending on expertise and MOLA is doing this,' she comments.

'I can choose my projects and commit as much or as little time as I want. And I love the fact that I'm constantly learning.'

approach: 'We are looking at how we can continue to be attractive to new volunteers, taking on people for shorter periods of time and placing them in specific projects that interest them.'

Ellie Hughes

On the trail of blood hounds

A CANINE-BLOOD-BANK charity is urgently appealing for owners to donate their pets' blood to save other dogs' lives. Pet Blood Bank UK is asking owners of the bigger breeds to register them as donors as, due to summer holidays, the charity experiences a shortage of blood, which can make a crucial difference for dogs injured in accidents, going through surgery or battling auto-immune diseases.

'Summer is a challenge because peoples' diaries fill up,' explains Wendy Barnett, founder of the charity that, since its launch in 2007, has registered more than 6,500 donors and supplied just under 19,000 units of blood to veterinary practices. 'We're asking all owners of large dogs to schedule just one hour during these holidays to help save a life.'

Doggy donors need to be fit and healthy, between one and eight years old, weigh more than 55lb—terriers and other small dogs are excused—and not have put a paw abroad. The painless procedure entails the extraction of about 450ml (just under a pint) of blood, depending on the dog's weight, plus a physical examination, a free microchip if needed and plenty of fuss.

To register, telephone 01509 232222 or visit www.petbloodbankuk.org *Katy Birchall*

Could your dog save a life?



Good week for

Postboxes

The Royal Mail has pledged to preserve the character and heritage of its 115,300 letterboxes

Pine martens

The Shropshire Wildlife Trust has confirmed the first sighting of one in England for more than a century; it's thought to have come from Wales

The Whitworth

The Manchester Gallery is shortlisted for the prestigious RIBA Stirling Prize for new buildings, along with a school and a cancer centre

Bad week for

Loch Ness intrigue

After a 24-year vigil, Steve Feltham has concluded that the 'monster' is only a giant catfish, to the annoyance of some locals

Corgis

It's been reported that The Queen doesn't plan to take on any more puppies; the characterful breed is on the Kennel Club's vulnerable list

A drunken squirrel

The rodent caused havoc in the bar of a Worcestershire railway club, smashing bottles and turning on a beer tap, after which it was spotted looking 'worse for wear'

Cricket for heroes

THE former England cricket captain Andrew Strauss (*left*) will lead a Help For Heroes XI of international players in a Twenty20 game featuring some of the biggest names in the sport at the Kia Oval, London SW8, on September 17 to raise funds for wounded servicemen. Sir Ian Botham will manage the charity's XI and Graeme Swann, Simon Jones and Darren Gough are playing. The Rest of the World XI, managed by Sunil Gavaskar and coached by Gary Kirsten, will include Brian Lara and Scott Styris.

There will also be a match between the Help for Heroes Cricket Club and the England Physical Disability side. Barrie Griffiths, one of the former team, explains: 'Cricket has liberated me, changed my life mentally and physically.' The event is sponsored by Old Mutual Wealth. Tickets cost £20 for adults and £1 for children (020-7871 3870; www.cricketforheroes.com).

Roderick Easdale



Hunting vote delayed

A FREE Government vote on amending the Hunting Act 2004 has been postponed after the SNP threatened to scupper it, even though the measure—to allow the use of more than a couple of hounds to flush out foxes to a gun to make fox control more efficacious—would bring English and Welsh hunting law in line with Scotland (*Town & Country*, July 15).

In February, Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: 'The SNP have a longstanding position of not voting on matters that purely affect England—such as fox-hunting south of the border, for example—and we stand by that.' Last week, in a *volte face*, she said that voting down the hunting amendment was 'a good opportunity to remind the Prime Minister how slender his majority is' (*Agromenes*, page 37).

In a poll conducted for the Countryside Alliance (CA) last week, 68% said farmers should be allowed to control foxes and only 40% said hunting should remain a criminal offence.

New chairman for Georgians

THE GEORGIAN GROUP, which aims to protect some 200,000 buildings and reviews about 6,000 planning applications a year, has a new chairman: Christopher Boyle QC will succeed Sir Mark Lennox-Boyd. Mr Boyle specialises in planning, compulsory purchase, infrastructure and environmental law and is chairman of the advisory board for The Prince's Foundation for Building Community. He farms in Cumbria where he is currently restoring Kirklington Hall, a 1680s country house.

'Without always realising it, many of us across the country are lifted up each day by our experience of Georgian design,' says Mr Boyle, who adds that having great places to live and work 'comes with a price tag—eternal vigilance'.



Farmland is back on the market

THE amount of farmland coming on the market is finally inching upwards after an extreme shortage last year. Strutt & Parker estimates that some 52,346 acres came to the market in the first two quarters of this year, against 24,370 in 2014. Mark McAndrew puts this down to investors cashing in on their profit and, in the case of smaller blocks, to the poor performance of commodity prices, which has led some farmers to retire or to take advantage of high land values.

The total amount for sale remains limited, however, says Andrew Shirley of Knight Frank: 'I wouldn't say we are going back to anything normal—we are still quite behind from a historical viewpoint. There is more demand than supply.'

Consequently, prices per acre remain strong. Knight Frank reports that values of bare agricultural land have risen by 2.6% since the end of March and have almost trebled in the past 10 years to reach a record £8,265 per acre. Strutt & Parker puts arable land in England

at an average £10,463 per acre, with pasture at £6,851.

The huge premiums of 2014, with sales easily reaching £15,000 per acre, are rarer, but, says Mr McAndrew, 'the market has condensed and, with greater volumes sold at £9,000 to £11,000, the average has still gone up. There's a good trade out there.'

Both believe that the market is entering a period of consolidation. 'We aren't going to see prices fall back, but caution will continue for another couple of years,' notes Mr Shirley. However, he adds, with land values so high and commodity prices showing no sign of rising, the quality of land, location and competing buyers can have a massive impact on the price of individual parcels. Enquiries received by Knight Frank for two blocks of land either side of a country lane in southern England indicate that a few yards can make a staggering difference of £4,000 per acre.

Carla Passino

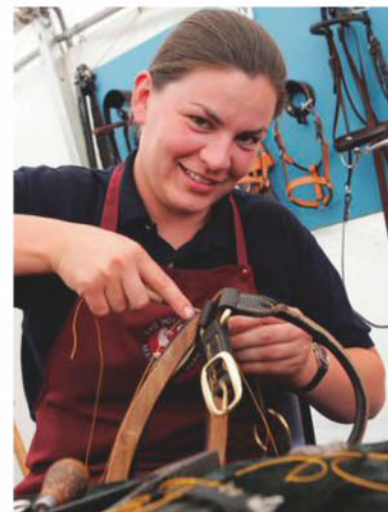
Reliving Montmartre

THE open-door tradition operated by members of the mid-20th-century arts circle at Great Bardfield, Essex, is remembered in an exhibition at The Fry Art Gallery in Saffron Walden, 'The Art of Acquisition' (July 26–October 25). The artists, who counted Edward Bawden as their spiritual figurehead, first invited the public into their homes as a way of celebrating the Coronation in 1953. The venture was a success and further summer open days caught the attention of the press, who dubbed this eccentric creative colony 'the Montmartre village'. The artists saw the open days as an opportunity to sell paintings and the public enjoyed seeing how they lived.

Exhibits include watercolours of rooms in Bawden's house done by his son Richard, marbled wallpaper designs by Sheila Robinson and John Aldridge—whose home was noted for its draped mantelshelves, Victoriana and cottage furniture—weavings by Marianne Straub and a re-creation of the dresser owned by Eric Ravilious and his wife, Tirzah Garwood (01799 513779; www.fryartgallery.org). *Jack Watkins*



**Eric Ravilious Wedgwood
Coronation mugs will be on show**



Helen Reader has trained in saddle-making thanks to a QEST scholarship

The QEST for knowledge

FROM heraldic embroidery to saddle-making, QEST (The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust), which provides a significant leg-up to people training in the traditional crafts industry, is now accepting applications for this year's scholarships. The charitable arm of the Royal Warrant Holders Association has provided bursaries worth up to £18,000 to more than 350 craftspeople across 130 different skill sectors.

Kate Montagne, a 2013 scholar, worked with renowned architectural sculptor Geoffrey Preston, who has since offered her a full-time job, which has led to her working on the award-winning ceiling of the great drawing room at Great Fulford in Devon. 'It really has been a life-changing opportunity,' she states.

Painting conservator Caitlin Dowse was able to undertake an unpaid placement at the National Museum of Wales thanks to a QEST bursary: 'Learning how to overcome the challenges thrown up by contemporary pictures will be invaluable. My ultimate aim is to work at a national museum.'

Welder Alan Floyd thought that his age—55—would preclude him from funding, but he's secured training with master coachbuilder Jeff Moss. 'I love coachbuilding too much to retire—I hope I've got another 30 years left in me,' he says. To apply for funding, visit www.qest.org.uk

EH



The path to trouble: old rights of way often pop up in inconvenient places

Lost-path nightmare looms

LANDOWNERS may have to open impractical and long-out-of-date rights of way in the wake of a recent Court of Appeal ruling. Lord Dyson, Master of the Rolls, found that authorised inclosure commissioners did have the right to set out and appoint bridleways and footpaths when making an inclosure award in the 1800s. There are an estimated 500–1,000 cases pending in England and Wales where such rights of way are not recorded on definitive maps.

The case was brought by John Andrews, a former Ramblers area footpath secretary, who fought for 22 years to get two sections of 200-year-old bridleway reinstated on farmland in Crudwell, Wiltshire, belonging to Jonathan Blanch, who says the route is unworkable.

'I'm trying to get it changed because the path runs diagonally across three 60-acre fields and splits them. For cultivating and spraying, that is difficult,' Mr Blanch explains. 'In theory, I will lose out by two

to three acres of land and will receive no compensation.'

CLA solicitor Andrew Gillett predicts a long period of uncertainty over commissioner-appointed rights of way. 'These claims can rattle around for decades and the stress for landowners is huge,' he points out. 'For instance, due to budget cuts, Somerset Council's rights-of-way department processes three to four cases a year, meaning a backlog of 100 years.'

Mr Gillett adds that the uncertainty of a potential 200-year-old right of way on your land is likely to impact dramatically on a property's selling price.

Marlene Masters, a rights-of-way consultant, believes that using evidence not previously relied upon to alter definitive maps has led to unnecessary disputes: 'Confrontation relating to claims when public paths pass along private-access roads, gardens or through potentially dangerous farmyards is rife. The ruling is wrong for this reason.' *Julie Harding*

Honey helps the bees

ROSEBUD PRESERVES, a company founded in 1989 in Masham, North Yorkshire, by Elspeth Biltoft, has launched a new honey to be sold in aid of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Yorkshire Honey (*right*) is from local hives, whose residents have collected nectar from blossoms including sycamore, lime and water balsam. The illustration on the jar lid is a bee engraving by the renowned Northumberland illustrator Thomas Bewick. Jars cost £4.95 (01765 689174; www.rosebudpreserves.co.uk).



Tim Ganeley/Alamy; Cotswolds Photo Library/Alamy; QUEST Leathersellers' Company Charitable Trust

Country Mouse

Fantastic Mr Foxglove



JUNE might be peak foxglove flowering season in England, but here in Scotland, swathes of the majestic magenta spires are just coming into their own. I have long loved these most beguiling—and deadly—of wildflowers that rise like skyscrapers from acidic soil.

Since the sheep have been removed from the fields around our house, all the wildflowers have been spectacular. The golden display of buttercups was astounding, fragrant meadowsweet is frothing to great heights, tiny purple and yellow petals of various vetches peep through the carpet of grasses and a mere glimpse of the dishevelled beauty of the delicate ragged robin, with its pretty pink finger-lobed petals, is enough to brighten anyone's day.

But there's nothing quite like *Digitalis purpurea* in a dappled wooded glade or on a moorland fringe. There's something about the bells that droop from slender stems—with their speckled interiors beloved of bumblebees—that makes me want to stop and stare, as well as the magic of their name. First known by the Anglo-Saxon *foxes glofa* (the glove of the fox) and forever associated with fairies (fairy finger, fairy bells and fairy thimbles), I like to believe the northern folk tale that the bad fairies gave the bells to the fox to put on his toes, to muffle his footfalls when hunting for prey. **PL**

Town Mouse

The new face of Cambridge



WE had power cuts in South Africa last week. Load shedding, as the euphemism goes, is a fact of life in a country where energy planning has gone awry. My mind reverted to Cambridge days in the 1970s, when we stockpiled candles. Cambridge, then no more than a market town with a university attached, has changed since then; friends at Bidwells say that house prices rival London. Academic salaries have been outstripped.

This hasn't gone unnoticed by the university. It's worried, particularly about the increasing body of post-doctoral researchers who won't come if they can't afford accommodation. As a result, the authorities are developing 346 acres in north-west Cambridge, master-planned by AECOM. It's intended to create a new quartier, with public spaces, communal buildings, cycle ways, gardens, green energy (no power cuts) and 3,000 new homes. The last have been divided into lots, each of which will be designed by a major architect such as Wilkinson Eyre. The primary school—run by the university and looking, from its circular design, as though a spaceship has landed on what is otherwise a huge building site—is already nearly finished and will open in September. North-west Cambridge could become as talked about as Poundbury. **CA**



Quiz of the week

- 1) In which Shakespeare play is the character Diana described as 'an easy glove'?
- 2) In 1553, which British monarch was only on the throne for nine days?
- 3) One of the Labours of Hercules was to acquire what from the Hesperides?
- 4) The ballet term pas de deux means what?
- 5) In the role from 1963 to 1966, which actor was the first to play The Doctor in *Doctor Who*?

100 years ago in COUNTRY LIFE July 24, 1915



Sir—the British soldier is naturally a mascot lover and the list of creatures which have been adopted by the different regiments is both long and varied. Perhaps one of the prettiest of them is the Jay which is being trained for foreign service by the B Company of the 12th Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters. It is on very friendly terms with the men and is said to know all those of its own company. It is almost omnivorous and takes its fill from the rations of its favourites as fancy dictates. The diet suits it very well and it seems to be, as one of the men put it, 'in the pink'. It is allowed its freedom and is usually to be seen on the shoulders or hands of one of the men. Corporal Buton is regarded as its friend-in-chief and it is on his hand that the bird is standing in the photograph. Everyone will wish both the bird and its gallant masters all the luck which the men believe that it will bring to them—R. R.

Words of the week

Picaroon (noun)
A vagabond

Unguligrade (adjective)
Walking on hoofs

Teleophobia (noun)
A morbid dread of definite plans

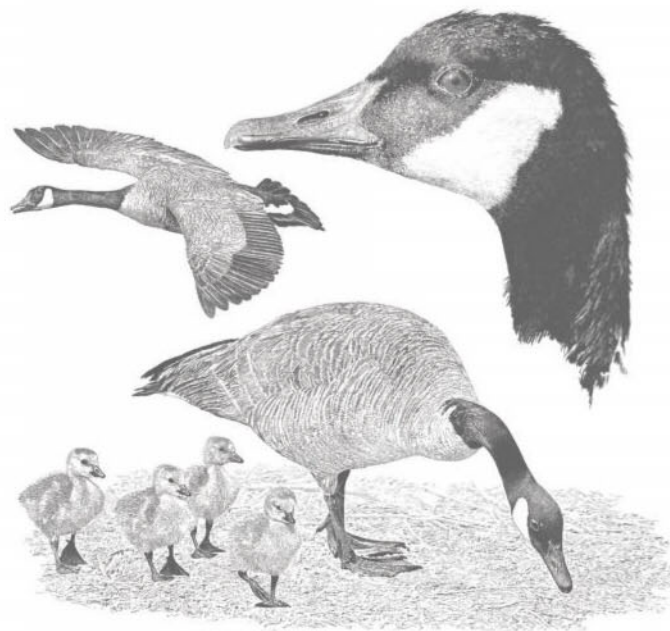
1) *All's Well That Ends Well* 2) *Lady Jane Grey* 3) *Golden apples* 4) *Dance for two* 5) *William Hartnell*

The nature of things

Canada geese

THE tide was half out and my eye was caught by the sight of fawn-grey goslings tumbling down the riverbank, into the water. Not an unusual sight in itself on a summer's morning, but they just kept coming, out of the herbage of nettles and burdocks above. Eight, nine, 10... 14... 15... 17... 18! Plus an adult pair keeping a close eye on their charges. Is this a record for one brood? I have the photos and, thanks to the wonders of smartphone technology, the movie clip, just in case. A gang of boys entertained themselves on the strip of tidal beach, skimming stones across the water, so I hung about to ensure the convoy's safe passage, although I needn't have worried.

Geese are remarkable creatures, pairing for life, travelling in family groups and making extraordinarily arduous migrations. Yet for many people—groundsmen, gardeners, farmers—*Branta canadensis*, the now resident Canada goose, is beyond the pale, feeding on grains and grasses and excreting a lot of sludgy guano in the process. The first in Britain arrived in St James's Park in the



late 17th century, having been added to the wildfowl collection of James II. Bodily brownish, black-necked with a characteristic white chinstrap, Canadas thrive equally in town and country, ensuring their ubiquity. **KBH**

Illustration by Bill Donohoe

Time to buy



**Edition 1
shave oil,**
£30, Bamford
(01608 731713;
www.bamford.co.uk)

Stirrup clock,
£108, Joanna Wood
(020-7730 5064; www.joannawood.co.uk)



**Butterfly Bloom
tea caddy,**
£70, Wedgwood
(01782 282651; www.wedgwood.co.uk)



The Hardwick, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire

Although it's based on a pub, with local real ales and perry served from a corner

counter in a simply furnished bar that's open all day, this is best thought of as a restaurant-with-rooms. Outside Abergavenny on the Old Raglan Road, it has won a national reputation for its food, which takes pride of place. Carefully chosen seasonal produce is treated lovingly to produce delicious flavours—not cheap, but rewarding. It has a good, wide-ranging wine list. Service is friendly and informal and you can choose between beams, bare boards, a pleasant mix of furnishings and an enormous fireplace in the original building and the extension's crisper, more contemporary feel, with bigger windows for the relaxing country views. Bedrooms are comfortable, the breakfasts superb.

(01873 854220; www.thehardwick.co.uk)
Alisdair Aird is co-editor of 'The Good Pub Guide 2015', out now from Ebury (£15.99)

Unmissable events

Exhibition

Until July 30 'Lost in the Dust', Bonhams, 101, New Bond Street, London W1. In conjunction with Investec, Bonhams presents a series of narrative paintings of the Anglo-Boer War by South African artist John Meyer (*right*, 020-7447 7447; www.bonhams.com)

Until August 31 'Roy Strong at 80: Photographs by John Swannell', National Portrait

Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2. Celebrating the 80th birthday of former director Sir Roy Strong, the gallery hosts an exhibition of portraits reinventing him as various historical characters (*below*, 020-7306 0055; www.npg.org.uk)

Flower festival

July 24-26 Festival of flowers, St George Church, Dunster, Somerset. Beautiful displays plus stalls, music and refreshments, with all proceeds going to church funds (www.stgeorgesdunster.co.uk; 01643 821812)



Horse show

July 28-August 2 Longines Royal International Horse Show, Hickstead, West Sussex. One of the biggest outdoor shows in the country, with international showjumping, scurry driving and showing (01273 834315; www.hickstead.co.uk)

Folk festival

Until July 26 Warwick Folk Festival, Warwick School, Myton Road, Warwick. Celebrating traditional and contemporary folk arts, with leading names in folk music from around the world as well

as workshops and *ceilidhs* (02476 678738; www.warwickfolkfestival.co.uk)

Country fair

July 25-26 Holkham Country Fair, Holkham Hall, Holkham, Norfolk. Enjoy countryside pursuits, a fine food village and displays, including the Stampede Stunt Company and an RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flypast, all set in the beautiful Holkham estate. Tickets from £15, admission free for children 14 and under (www.holkhamcountryfair.co.uk; 01328 821821)

ngs gardens open for charity

The Old Rectory, Pulham, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7EA

July 26, 2pm-5pm. £5, children free. A beguiling country garden around a Georgian rectory (not open), set in some of Dorset's most gorgeous countryside. The four-acre ensemble—including curving borders, clipped yew hedges, a bog garden, circular pleached hornbeams and woodland walks—seems to flow effortlessly, making a visit sheer delight, especially when completed with homemade teas and the purchase of a plant (www.ngs.org.uk)



THESE tasty, triangular treats date back several centuries and are a tradition unique to Coventry. Originally, they would have been made by godparents as a gift to their godchildren on special occasions, but newspaper recordings suggest they were being sold freely on the city's street in the mid 1800s.

A true Coventry godcake is an isosceles triangle, with the three corners said to represent the Holy Trinity—although some people also think they may be linked to the three spires in the city.

Production of the cakes was halted in 2008 when the city's oldest family bakery business—and the main purveyor of the speciality—Pails and Son, closed its doors. Luckily, the cake's demise was short-lived;

Buns (and cakes) of Britain

Coventry godcake



two years later, Leigh Waite, a Blue Badge tourist guide and baking enthusiast, was handed a 200-year-old recipe by a local historian. She tested it, liked what she tasted and sold the results at the city's annual heritage open weekend. The revived godcakes were a roaring success and prompted Miss Waite to open her own artisan bakery business.

As a symbol of Britishness, it's probably fair to say that Coventry godcakes live in the shadow of the scone and the Chelsea bun, but they're beginning to gain international recognition—apparently, they were a big hit at a function held at the British Embassy in Thailand earlier this year.

Ellie Hughes

Illustration by Fiona Osbaldstone

What to drink this week

Tokay



Unique and eccentric, the intensely sweet wine Tokay is out to regain its former glory, says Harry Eyres

Tokay, made from partially shrivelled Furmint grapes in the remote north-east of Hungary, has long been one of the world's legendary wines. The greatest vintages, intensely sweet and able to age not just for decades, but for centuries, used to find their way to the imperial cellars in Vienna and St Petersburg.

Then came Communism and a decline in quality as the wine was standardised. Since the early 1990s, private investment—from the Royal Tokaji Company, Oremus, and others—has come into the region, bringing a determination to match the magnificence of the past.

Why you should be drinking it

The taste of Tokay is difficult to describe—it's like a loft full of drying apples, pears and quinces, perhaps more complex and spicy than that of any other wine. There is also a combination of great sweetness and intense acidity, which gives the wine its ability to age.

What to drink

Eccentric in many ways, Tokay is graded by the number of *puttonyos* or baskets of botrytis-shrivelled grapes that are added to the fermenting wine. Five *puttonyos* means a wine of great richness and sweetness. Royal Tokaji's Blue Label 5 Puttonyos 2009 (£12.29; Waitrose stores) is greenish-gold in colour and has wonderful fresh flowery aromas as well as intense spiciness and huge intensity on the palate.

Furmint from Tokay also makes fascinating dry wine: Royal Tokaji Mézes Mály Dry Furmint 2010 (£28.70; www.hedonism.co.uk) has intense saltiness and big body—smoky, spicy, fiery in the best Hungarian tradition.



John Meyer courtesy of Bonhams; Marek Kasula/Alamy; Lavendertime/Dreamstime.com; John Swannell



Letter of the week

Let's mop up the blots



WOULD it not be a good idea to establish a fund (or perhaps segment the Heritage Lottery Fund) for the sole purpose of rectifying blots on the landscape—small developments that are the consequence of planning ‘mistakes’ or pre-date the planning Acts. What I have in mind are redundant roadside garages located in beauty spots, alongside roads long superseded by motorways and the like, that have since morphed into car-display yards or worse. Planning consent produces a ratchet effect of continual development of the countryside. Can we not reverse the tide in some small way?

David Starkie, London

The writer of the letter of the week will win a bottle of Pol Roger Brut Réserve Champagne



Giving a fig

REGARDING Jeremy Godwin's letter (*July 8*) identifying the fruit that tempted Eve as a quince, may I refer you to the Cripta Del Peccato Originale, about 30 minutes' drive from Matera in Basilicata, southern Italy? I have recently returned from this area and was fascinated to visit these ancient Benedictine monastery caves, which have only been discovered by accident in recent years.

On the superb original rupestrian wall paintings, the story clearly indicates that the fruit of temptation was not the apple nor the quince, but, in fact, the fig. This does make great sense, bearing in mind the references to fig leaves Adam and Eve used to preserve their modesty.

Dr David Landsberg, by email



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(photographs welcome)

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(with a day time telephone number, please)

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Dealing with the conkerquences

I WONDER if any of your readers know of a scheme whereby you can donate a tree? I only have a small garden and, a number of years ago, I planted a conker, not really thinking of the consequences. I'm now faced with a thriving 10-year-old horse chestnut tree that's growing in completely the wrong place.



I feel it would be a shame to have to cut it down and therefore hoped it might be possible to donate it and have it moved to a more suitable place, so it can grow into a fully mature tree and have a healthy life for many hundreds of years to come. Can anybody help?

John Morris, South Yorkshire

Where's the British sense of humour?

ALTHOUGH laudable for encouraging caution, Adrian Shawcross's letter 'No laughing matter' (*July 8*) displays a lack of that nuanced humour we English pride ourselves upon. I knew a delightful man who paid the ultimate price for failing to undertake the sensible precautions any tradesperson would when using a ladder. However, the pleasure in our humour (I always read *Tottering-by-Gently* first) should not be proscribed by good intentions. To paraphrase, 'the road to hell is paved with them'.

Tim Thornby, by email

I HAVE read few more depressing letters than that of Mr Shawcross criticising the *Tottering-by-Gently* cartoon of June 24. I think we should defend with pride the right of any owner of a large house to go up on his own roof to repair tiles, clean out drains or simply admire the view. It is the basis on which many houses survive to the benefit of all of us. A print of this strip would make a great present to any friend or relation in such a situation—indeed, I have already ordered one.

Matthew Dobbs, London



Jersey shore is swept clean

PATRICK BARKHAM'S article celebrating the beauty and preservation of Britain's coastline (*'The tide waits for no man'*, *July 8*) included a wonderful photograph featuring the dramatic north coast of Jersey. I am sure that your readers would be delighted to discover that this area of coastline, known as Plémont, has had a makeover during the past six months, with the former derelict Pontins holiday camp having been demolished and the land returned to a natural state (*above*).



To get to this point took 14 years of campaigning by the National Trust for Jersey and £8.15 million of fundraising, but, hopefully, everyone will agree it's worth every penny for the peaceful exhilaration and sense of wilderness it will deliver for generations to come.

Charles Alluto, National Trust for Jersey

Paws for thought



JAMES JENKINS warned of the threat yew needles can pose to pets (*Letters, June 10*). As part of this year's Chelsea Fringe, MORE TH>N created The Poisonous Pawtanical Garden (*above*) in collaboration with RHS Chelsea gold-medal-winning designer Ian Drummond, highlighting the common or garden plants toxic to cats and dogs. From daisy to marigold and wisteria to asparagus fern, some 30 plants commonly found in any home garden, park or horticultural centre could lead to an upset tummy or even death. *Dominic Pinto, London*

Baby's first heirloom

AS the current custodian of our family christening robe, I was fascinated by Angela Lynne's article (*'Baby's first party dress', July 1*). Our robe—a miraculous and beautiful if mildly impractical garment—is cloud-like, embellished with countless lace insertions and frills. It was first used for a baptism in 1871 and has been worn by a further 74 babies since. We still use it with great pleasure and, now, with great caution as it's very fragile.

Penelope Wrong, Hertfordshire

COUNTRY LIFE JULY 29

Game Fair number: tearaway terriers, smoking guns, lightning rods and fancy pheasants; plus how Prince Albert changed British taste

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Transparency is key to democracy

AGROMENES doesn't hunt, but that doesn't stop him supporting country sports and the right of country people to enjoy them. Like so many of his neighbours, he welcomed Liz Truss's decision to bring the English law more into line with the Scots, so that farmers dealing with vermin could use the necessary dogs. It wasn't the repeal that many would have expected, but it did provide a sensible improvement on the present anomalous situation.

It also provided the SNP with a perfect opportunity to uphold their much-vaunted promise not to vote on purely English matters. What, after all, could be less controversial than allowing the Sassenachs to bring their law up to the standard of the Scots? Not a bit of it. Instead of civilised accommodation, we got a modern replay of a 15th-century border skirmish. Overnight, the party's website was altered, the promise about English laws removed and Nicola Sturgeon broke her word, manned her ambush and forced the English to retreat. Perfidy is too good a word for it. How can anyone trust a gang like this? Suddenly, down south, we got a whiff of the dishonest bully-boy tactics of which so many Scots complained during the Referendum.

Of course, it wasn't really about hunting. The SNP was flexing its muscles and trying to make the demand for EVEL (English Votes for English Laws) even more insistent. Miss Sturgeon knows that the greater the backlash against the Scottish Home Rule policy, now espoused by all three unionist parties, the more likely independence will be won. If England gains the right to decide on English matters in Parliament without any Scottish intervention, she has the next referendum sewn up. You can only admire the brass neck of it.

Yet that wasn't the full extent of the perfidy. The behaviour of some Conservative MPs was

pretty suspect, too. Agromenes is wholly supportive of those who made their opposition to hunting clear at the election and before. We may think Sports Minister Tracey Crouch is wholly wrong in her opposition to country sports, but we should defend absolutely her right to her opinions. She has levelled with her Association and her constituents and they knew what they were voting for.

Contrast that with the actions of a small minority of MPs. Local hunting people helped in the election campaign of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich's MP Dan Poulter on the clear understanding that he was supportive of the hunts that operate in his constituency.

MPs have an absolute duty to make their views on issues such as hunting clear

They were, therefore, astonished to wake up and read in their local paper that he wasn't going to support the hunting amendment. Not a word on the subject had reached his Association or his voters previously.

MPs ought to be able to use their judgement on issues such as hunting, abortion

or capital punishment, but they have an absolute duty to make those views clear on selection and before an election. It may well make no difference to their votes, but it makes a world of difference to their credibility and their integrity.

We all understand that there are many, particularly those who are not country people, who dislike hunting in any form and some campaigners, such as the League Against Cruel Sports, fight hard on the issue. It is, therefore, not surprising that country sports raise strong emotions on both sides. Even so, in a democracy, our representatives should be clear and forthright in telling us the truth about their opinions and their policies. The SNP and a minority of MPs clearly cannot be trusted to act in good faith.



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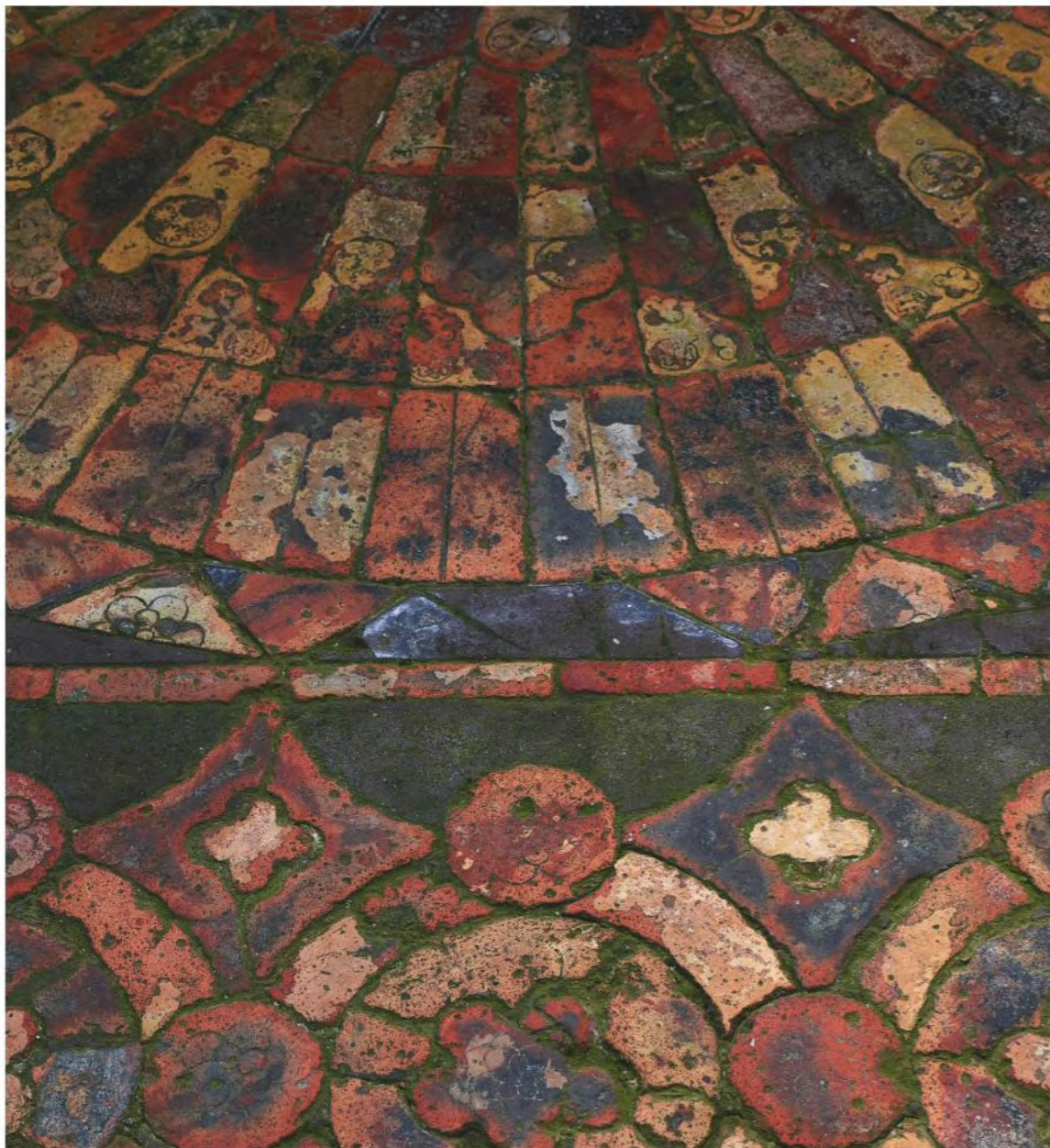
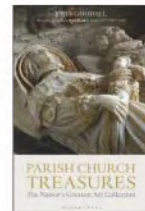
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Parish church treasures

Roman pavement

Photography by Paul Barker and text by John Goodall

A book of the series will be published in October




AROUND the high altar of Meesden is this sweeping semicircle of early-14th-century tiles. These are cut into shapes to form patterns and their upper surfaces are glazed. The intended original effect was of a mosaic floor made from coloured marbles. Four colours—rather than the more usual two—are used in the design (now badly abraded): yellow, brown and two shades of green.

Another rare detail is that some of the tiles bear impressed or incised patterns. These include numerous types of flowers and, in the corners of the innermost rectangular frame, two shields emblazoned with the Monchensey arms; the family owned the manor from 1265 to 1313.



The Church of St Mary, Meesden, Hertfordshire

To judge from its closest surviving parallels, notably the splendid 1324–5 pavement in Prior Crauden's Chapel at Ely, the floor must date to the end of this period. The present configuration and position of the tiles at Meesden are the result of modern relaying, probably in about 1877. As originally conceived, the floor would have described a full circle and would have been set further from the altar (probably in the body of the chancel).

Mosaic floors were first introduced to England in the late 12th century and several early examples—without impressed decoration—are known from Cistercian monasteries, as, for example, at Byland Abbey, North Yorkshire. 



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My favourite painting Una Stubbs

A Classic by Gary Bunt



A Classic
by Gary Bunt
(b.1957),
16in by 20in,
Private
Collection



Una Stubbs is an actress and painter. Her watercolour *Grayson and Measles* is in this year's Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (until August 16)

My favourite is Hogarth's *The Shrimp Girl*, but Stephen Poliakoff has already chosen that, so I've gone for a Gary Bunt, having discovered naïve art 20 years ago at Kettle's Yard in Cambridge. They're so childlike and seem to grab the heart. Gary's paintings make you laugh or weep; at his exhibitions, you see people grouped around them giggling and they always sell out. The first of his shows I visited included a painting of a dresser with a miniature depiction of one of my own paintings. Since then, I've got to know Gary and he's encouraged me greatly with my own painting. The scene here looks utterly perfect—it's everyone's dream to sit reading all day with their dog on their knee. And, with just a couple of lines, he's caught so skilfully the dog's adoration!


John McEwen comments on *A Classic*

AMONG his listed achievements, which include the births of a son and daughter, two marriages and one divorce, Gary Bunt provides the following: '1967 20 yards Swimming Certificate—Doggy paddle; 1972 Mr Howard, 6 strokes; 1987 Absolute discharge from bankruptcy; 2003 Baptism & Confirmation Certificate; 2005 Parking ticket Tonbridge & Malling District Council.'

Mr Bunt was a successful painter of conventional nudes and Venetian and London views, but, in 2001, he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. 'I lay in bed wondering if I'd make it to the end of the year. The next morning I woke up and painted *My New Wallpaper*, a memory of myself as a boy in bed with measles reading *Prince Caspian*. I didn't plan it, but it was completely different in style to the paintings I'd been doing, which I never felt were really me.'

Since 2008, he has had regular exhibitions at London's Portland Gallery and become a best-selling artist. Mary Miers wrote: 'What is it about his work that has struck such a chord with his growing fan club? Certainly, he has an ability to make people smile. Quaint, almost childlike, his familiar scenes, each with its own poem, express a nostalgic view of England that radiates warmth and human sentiment' (*COUNTRY LIFE*, December 1, 2010).

The 'antithesis of pretentiousness', he lives in Kent with his parents, wife and daughter in his mother's childhood home. This picture's poem is:

The sound of the sea
My dog next to me
There's nothing more that I need
Life seems complete
With the weight off my feet
And a Penguin classic to read. 

Visual treasures

Meadow grasshopper hopping

Photograph by Stephen Dalton

Aesop had the grasshopper as the dilettante of the insect world, bouncing around irresponsibly all summer with nary a thought to the looming harvester's scythe or winter's privations. Cavalier poet Richard Lovelace described the cheery creature swinging on ears of corn: 'Drunk every night with a delicious tear.' Grasshoppers also symbolise wealth—a gold one sits atop the Royal Exchange (and is on the coat of arms of its founder, Thomas Gresham)—yet the giggly chirrup of wing cases rubbing against legs to attract a mate suggests lazing in long grass, staring dreamily up at the sky, not counting money in a musty bank vault

Stephen Dalton/Nature Picture Library





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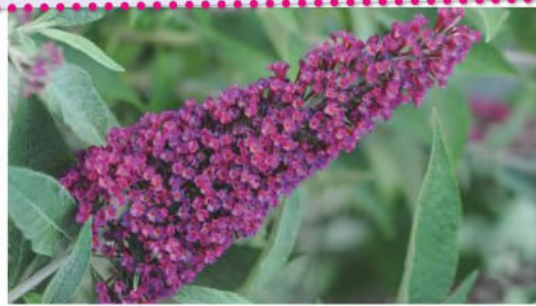


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Welcome to the real world

ON the same day that a friend of mine, Nick Cooke-Priest, was in the news because he's the captain of HMS *Bulwark*—the Royal Navy flagship that has been rescuing migrants from the Mediterranean—it was announced that another friend, Joanna Waddington, was to be awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for devoting her life to helping orphans with HIV and AIDS in Africa (she founded the charity Ace Africa).

What hair you have left on top has to be tended with the subtlety of a Japanese gardener

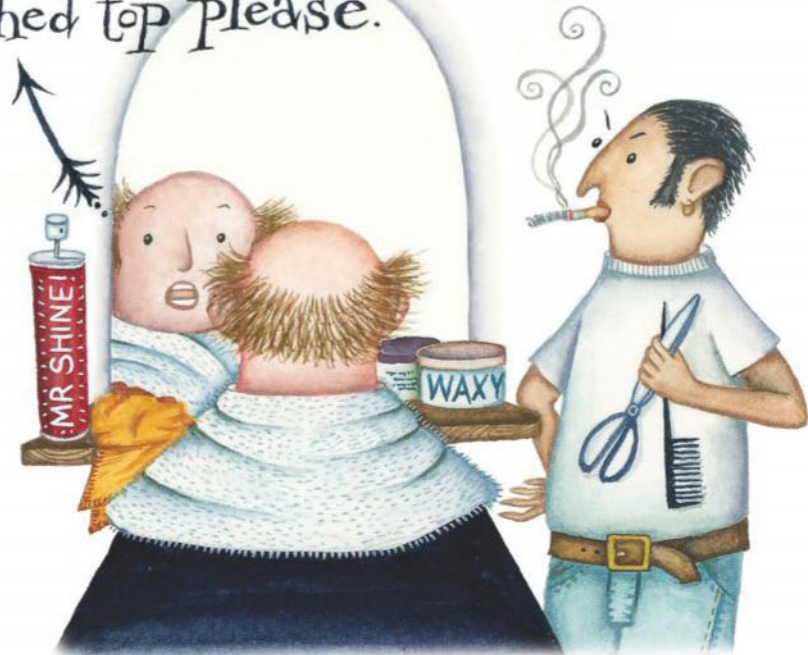
I, meanwhile, was doing stuff that actually mattered: the gritty, thankless work that is interviewing celebrities. You have no idea how tough it can be out there in the air-conditioned hotels of Park Lane and Mayfair. That same day, I found myself in Covent Garden interviewing Sir Antonio Pappano, the music director of the Royal Opera House, and, due to an administrative cock-up, I had just come from doing another interview, with Sir Trevor Nunn, former artistic director of the RSC.

How confusing was that, potentially? Both grew up on council estates and both are Sirs. I could easily have ended up asking: 'Tell me, Sir Tony, did Laurence Olivier really have a tattoo of Princess Margaret on his left buttock?' Or: 'Am I right in thinking, Sir Trevor, that you once mistakenly sent Plácido Domingo a bouquet of flowers intended for Dame Kiri te Kanawa, with amusing consequences?'

But I didn't. Both interviews passed without incident. All that happened that day was that I got a sense of perspective.

Illustration by Clare Mackie

Short back & sides with
a polished top please.



Little barbershop of horrors: a good barber is hard to find and will be forgiven a multitude of sins

Like the ingredients of Chinese food, nothing in a writer's life is wasted. A little later, I went along to the controversial first night of the Royal Opera's interpretation of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, the one that made the headlines because of all the nudity and booing, not least around a rape scene.

When a representative of the Fourth Estate finds himself at the heart of a news story, there is only one honourable course of action: I duly knocked out 1,200 words, although not without a nudge from a commissioning editor at the *Telegraph*, who gently reminded me I had been there.

I have form when it comes to not realising that stories are newsworthy. The most shaming is when I came back from Malaysia on a flight that was forced to do an emergency landing in Madras because one of the passengers, a tennis star, had been taken ill. It was only three days later when the *Telegraph* allocated the whole of page three to the incident that I realised this was newsworthy.

A man's relationship with his barber is complicated, especially when the man in question has less on top each time he goes for a haircut. That's what people with luxuriant hair don't appreciate: it still grows vigorously at the back and sides, but what you have left on top has to be tended with the subtlety of a Japanese gardener. There is trust involved, which is why when you find a Zen barber, you stay loyal, however much sadomasochism is involved.

Mine is an Italian called Paolo, who has patchy English, an earring and a gambling habit that leaves him in a permanent grump. He plays a terrible radio station far too loudly and he stops every few snips to go for a cigarette. He used to have one sticking out of the corner of his mouth for the duration, before the ban.

Worse, he's always late for work in the morning. I could go in the afternoon, but I like to combine my visits with the school run. Sometimes, he's half an hour late and, once, it was an hour. On one occasion, I sat down and, as soon as he'd

tucked the apron into my collar, he said he needed to nip home to let the boiler man in. After waiting for about an hour, I gave up and left.

There's usually a queue of men outside his shop, all of them complaining about him, but we keep coming back because, annoyingly, Paolo is very good at his job.


My son played cricket against the great Charlie Allison the other day, in a Hampshire v Essex under 10s match. Master Allison became an internet phenomenon when he was six, after being filmed giving a batting masterclass in the nets. He was given a sponsorship deal and, now, every schoolboy in England wants a crack at him.

He scored a comfortable 50 with the bat for Essex and then took five wickets, including a hat-trick, for just three runs. My son felt vaguely proud that he contributed to this little piece of history.

Nigel Farndale's most recent novel, *The Road Between Us*, is available now

Next week: Jonathan Self





Genius is absolutely necessary

*Broughton Hall,
North Yorkshire, part I
The seat of the
Tempest family*

From the 1750s, a long-standing Catholic family transformed its medieval seat into a fashionable home.

Their work was studied and sympathetically augmented by a later chatelaine of the house, as John Martin Robinson explains

Photographs by Paul Barker

THE Tempests have lived at Broughton and nearby Bracewell since the early Middle Ages, for 33 generations in the direct male line. They held to the Old Faith after the Reformation and thereafter kept an enforced low profile during the 17th and 18th centuries. Like many northern Catholics, however, they were encouraged by the gradual relaxation of the penal laws and general prosperity to rebuild their houses in the late-Georgian period on a scale to rival the seats created by their Whig neighbours earlier.

At Broughton, in North Yorkshire, three generations of the family transformed the compact Elizabethan manor house into a spreading Classical mansion faced in golden ashlar stone and set in a park romantically landscaped ➤

Fig 1: The main front of the house, with the 1838 clock tower to the right



by John Webb and W. E. Nesfield (*Fig 1*). The result is, today, one of the finest examples of late-Georgian Picturesque taste, perfectly preserved in all respects, including its extensive Gillow furnishings and Grand Tour picture collection.

The architectural transformation of the house is extremely well documented, thanks to the cataloguing and interpretation of the family papers at the end of the 19th century by Eleanor Blanche Tempest (1853–1928), talented wife of the then squire, Maj Arthur Cecil

Fig 2: The splendidly restored interior of the Red Drawing Room. It is divided from the larger drawing room beyond by a sliding partition inserted in 1838

Tempest. Her work made it clear that the gabled Elizabethan house with its mullion windows was first substantially altered in the 1750s by Stephen Tempest VI (nicknamed *Religio Laici* after a book he wrote). He made the Elizabethan centre block into an up-to-date Palladian villa, with Georgian sashes, a continuous parapet, central canted bay on both fronts and a pedimented stone doorcase.

His work can be dated exactly: the canted bays do not appear on a survey plan of 1754, but do on one of 1756.

Detailed costs for the work, moreover, are recorded on the front cover of one of the Accounts Books. Here, there is reference to vaulting the cellars, creating sashes and laying new floors in the hall and dining room in 1755. He also added a service wing on the west side and built the chapel behind it.

Stephen was his own architect and commented in *Religio Laici* that Classical architecture was part of a gentleman's education, like music or fencing, in both of which he was proficient. He even recommended architecture



as a paid occupation that 'I have often thought might employ a Gentleman's younger son agreeably, become profitable before he was thirty... A proper Education to these need not be very expensive, and consequently more suitable to men of small fortunes; but a Genius is absolutely necessary'.

In 1742 Stephen bought a copy of Batty Langley's *The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Design* (1741). The volume remains in the library at Broughton and retains loose interleavings in his own



hand, including specific instructions for the new dining-room chimneypiece. All this is fascinating evidence of how Georgian amateur architects used Langley as their guide, but there is evidence as well of another important influence on the work.

Tempest had lived in York as a young man and subscribed to the Assembly Rooms there designed by Burlington. The 'Architect Earl' died in 1753, but his widow Dorothy, Countess of Burlington, gave Tempest the fine ashlar stone for the new bay windows from her quarry at Embsay Moor on the adjoining Bolton Abbey estate. It is, therefore, possible that Tempest had discussed his architectural dreams with his neighbour Burlington before he embarked on them.

The main internal change in 1755 was

Fig 3: A detail of the large fireplace in the larger drawing room. The flock wall-paper has been renewed

the subdivision of the old Great Hall into a central transverse entrance hall (**Fig 8**), with a dining room on the right. The latter was remodelled again in the early 19th century, but the Burlingtonian architecture of the hall survives, with canted ends screened by Palladian Ionic columns, a handsome modillion cornice and well-carved doorcases and chimneypiece typical of the York School.

The hall was redecorated and more amply furnished by Eleanor after she and her husband came to live at Broughton in 1895; she painted the walls pale pink and marbled the columns. Her work was sympathetic to the Georgian character as she was fully aware of the history of the room. It makes a fascinating introduction to the house, in which her hand and informed eye can still be detected ➤





in the Georgian rooms, contributing a special later historical dimension.

Eleanor's arrangements, additional acquisitions and colour schemes still determine much of the character of the house. This can be seen especially in the beautiful neo-Classical rooms added in the early 19th century by Stephen VI's grandson Stephen VIII (the 'Traveller'), who inherited his grandfather's love of 'bricks and mortar'. He started work, while still a bachelor, the moment he inherited in 1784.

Three generations of Tempests transformed a compact Elizabethan manor into a spreading Classical mansion

In his first phase, he built new stables and walled garden, Gothicked the interior of the chapel (*Fig 5*), added a kitchen with a little library over it in the west wing and created a neo-Classical drawing room to the left of the hall, described by his mother as 'your new elegant room' (*Fig 6*).

His architect was John Foss of Richmond, County Surveyor to the North Riding, who was contemporaneously working for Stephen Tempest's first cousin, Sir John Lawson, at Brough Hall. Foss was paid £33 for his designs in September 1787 (Account Book 39). In 1786, Mr Atkinson was paid £42 for the chimneypiece of white marble and Sicilian jasper, which is still there, although Stephen later transformed the room into a library. The elegant stucco ceiling survives from the Foss work.

A second and more ambitious series of alterations was carried out between 1807 and 1814, following Stephen's marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Blundell of Ince near Liverpool, the collector of Classical marbles who was then building his famous Pantheon to house them. Elizabeth brought a dowry of £6,000 and eventually also inherited Blundell's Heaton

Fig 4: The shallow-domed ante-room at the base of the main staircase was created by William Atkinson, a pupil of James Wyatt





estate near Bolton, with a substantial income from coal and building.

Stephen additionally inherited, thanks to brilliant advice from his lawyer Frank Witham, the Coleby estate in Lincolnshire from a distant, childless Scrope relation. This increased his income to more than £10,000 a year and enabled him to build on a grand scale to accommodate house parties in an appropriately fashionable setting.

Elizabeth herself played a strong role, having inherited from her father a taste for art, travel, architecture and collecting. She brought several portraits of her father to Broughton, including a Gavin Hamilton pastel of him done in Rome on his fourth visit there, in 1790, and a plaster of the George Bullock bust.

Blundell gave the Tempests pictures and plants and corresponded with them about their improvements. In December 1804, Blundell wrote: 'I much like the chairs in your Drawing Room and wish you could sketch out in your next letter one side view of them... My Pantheon goes on well, but the Plasterers don't get on with their work.'

‘Eleanor Tempest’s hand and informed eye can still be detected,’

Stephen and Elizabeth chose as their architect for the new phase at Broughton William Atkinson, a pupil of James Wyatt, then based in Manchester. The additions took the form of a pair of pedimented wings with Ionic columns in antis. They are among Atkinson’s finest work in the Wyatt-Classical manner. The east wing contained a larger drawing room or ‘music room’ (*Fig 3*) with a segmental coffered ceiling and a small drawing room; the west wing held a servery and breakfast room.

A ‘processional route’ was formed from the new drawing rooms to the dining room via a shallow-domed ante-room and the main staircase (*Fig 4*). The dining room itself was

Fig 5 facing page: The interior of the Gothic chapel, viewed from the family galley. It was remodelled in the late 18th century by Stephen the ‘Traveller’. The present interior decoration is late 19th century.

Fig 6 above: The ‘new elegant room’ created in 1786–7 by the architect John Foss of Richmond and later converted into a library. The plasterwork and fireplace belong to the original work

also remodelled in Regency taste to match, with masks of Ceres and Silenus by George Bullock on the doorcases and a naturalistic foliage frieze. All the rooms were furnished by Gillow at a cost of more than £4,000.

The small drawing room is the finest of the Atkinson interiors, delineated by sleek pilaster strips with Grecian ornament, shallow-pedimented doorcases and an Egyptian Revival chimneypiece of green-and-white marble, supplied by John Webb in 1810 for £52 10s. It is now called the Red Drawing Room after the striking colour scheme of oxblood walls with gilt ornament devised by Eleanor. She also made the window in the east wall, framing Nesfield’s box parterre, which she restored to the original design. She was responsible for the present arrangement of the furniture in the room and the carpet with matching hearth rug woven in Vienna.

The Red Drawing Room (*Fig 2*) is typical of her heightening of the original effect throughout the house. She enlarged the adjoining ante-room by throwing in the old Lamp Room to the north and introducing ➤



Fig 7 above:
The back of the house is built into the hill. Its conservatory, built by Andrews and Delaunay of Bradford after 1838, and drawing rooms overlook a formal garden by W. E. Nesfield

a pier table copied in Leeds from a late-18th-century Gillow original.

In the staircase, she introduced the Ionic screen at first-floor level (*Fig 9*) and installed heraldic glass by Burlison & Grylls of Lancaster into the window, displaying the Tempest descent, which she had researched herself. The Turkey rugs in all these spaces and the apple-green and white colours were also her choices.

In the dining room, she introduced an elaborate carved white marble 'Georgian' chimneypiece in place of Atkinson's severe dark-marble affair and substituted 'Chippendale' chairs for plain Regency ones. In the chapel, she commissioned a Belgian artist, Anton Wybo, to add elaborate painted and stencilled decoration to

Foss's Gothick plasterwork. In other rooms, she installed her own wood carving, including the oak panelling in the Victorian Billiard Room and the Jacobethan overmantel in the Breakfast Room.

Her all-pervasive and scholarly touches are unique for a late-Victorian chatelaine of an English country house, as was her professional cataloguing of the family archives, including the architectural drawings and building accounts, which illuminate the house's architectural evolution.

The final touches to late-Georgian Broughton were made by the son of Stephen VIII and Elizabeth, Sir Charles Robert Tempest, who was created a baronet and was the first Catholic High Sheriff of Yorkshire

after Emancipation. The latter event inspired him towards additional grandeur. His architect was George Webster of Kendal, who he employed in 1838. Webster's masterstrokes were the giant Ionic *porte-cochère* added to the entrance front and the asymmetrical domed Grecian clock tower on the west wing. These brilliant additions helped tie the whole façade together, creating a subtly balanced, Picturesque Classical composition, comparable to Wyattville's Chatsworth.

Internally, the two drawing rooms were connected by a sliding partition. Charles Robert also extended the Skipton drive with lodges by Webster and made the formal Italian garden on the east, with architectural details by Andrews and Delaunay



of Bradford and Nesfield's parterre. He also added the central south domed and iron-framed conservatory by Andrews and Delaunay (*Fig 7*).

By 1855, all was complete. The house was let in the second half of the 19th century, during which the place remained undisturbed. The principal late-19th-century tenant was Charles Robert's nephew Sir Charles Henry Tempest (also created a baronet), who brought some of his own paintings to Broughton.

These were inherited by his daughter Ethel, Lady Beaumont, but have recently been bought back for the house by Roger Tempest as part of his current restoration programme, which will form the subject of next week's article.



Fig 8 above:
The entrance hall was created in 1755 within the volume of the subdivided Great Hall. Its pale-pink decoration and marbled columns are the work of Eleanor Tempest after 1895



Fig 9 left:
A screen of columns at the head of the main stair inserted by Eleanor Blanche Tempest (1853–1928). Her research into the family papers also informed the display of heraldry in the window, which traces the descent of the Tempests, by Burlison & Grylls of Lancaster





This green and pleasant land

Brockhampton Cottage, Brockhampton, Herefordshire

Kathryn Bradley-Hole explores a remarkable modern landscape garden in which a Horatian ideal appears to have been a presiding subliminal message about English landscape, now fully interpreted by its owner

Photographs by Clive Nichols



THE idea of spirits or ‘genies’ inhabiting special locations occurs in cultures across all continents and down many thousands of years. Thus, when Alexander Pope (1688–1744) advised garden makers to ‘Consult the genius of the place in all’, his reference was understood among contemporaries to echo the Roman belief in the genius loci: the protective spirit or god presiding over a locality (the Green Man archetype has similar roles).

Down the ages, most gardenmakers have not consulted the genius and the majority of gardens have been discrete—often high-walled—for economic, protective or aesthetic reasons. What is exciting about the garden



featured here is that it's a modern garden fully connected with its surroundings and so subtle that I can't presently think of anywhere else quite as harmoniously and sensitively executed.

It has been made in stages since 1998 by Peter Clay, creative co-director of the online garden centre crocus.co.uk, who was a high-flying advertising executive at the time when he inherited—most unexpectedly, he says—his grandfather's Herefordshire estate in 1997.

By any measure, it's in a remarkable landscape. An extended Victorian house built of the local pinky-brown sandstone sits on a hilltop facing a panoramic sweep, particularly south- and westwards, over the gently fold-

Preceding pages: **Looking across streamside plantings in the lower garden. Numerous trees have been planted since the late 1990s. Left: Voluptuous herbaceous beds near the house bubble up in clouds, echoing the landscape beyond. Above: The garden has been made to fit with its bucolic landscape**

ing hills typical of the county. Mature oak woods bubble up in dark cumulus clouds here and there and the fields retain their old names, many of which reach back down the centuries.

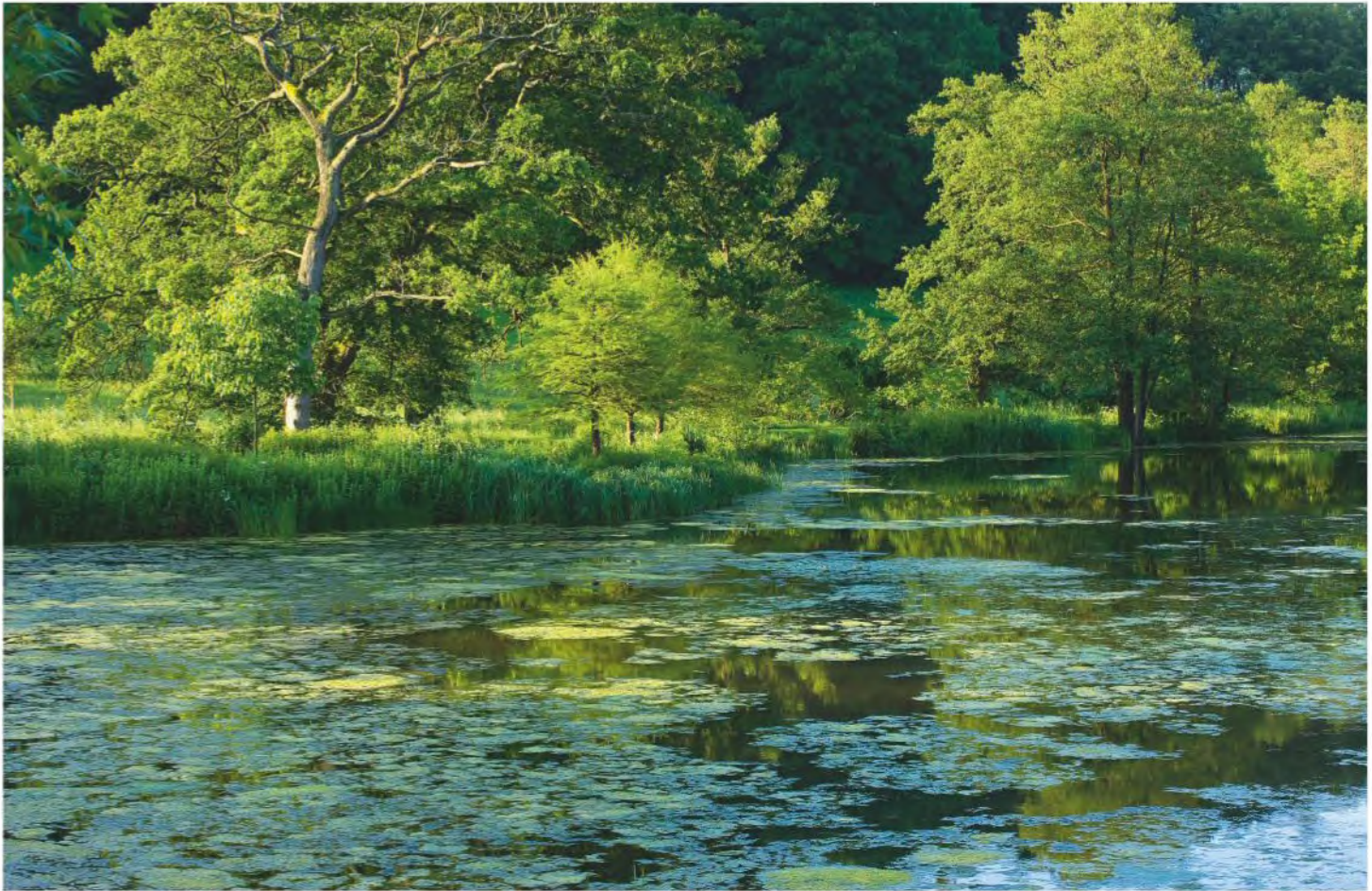
When Peter's family arrived, the great views of Brockhampton had long been shut out by high conifer hedging near the house and the southwards slope now awash with meadow flowers was merely a bare field with one or two trees for cattle to take shade under.

Finding himself suddenly back at the place where he had spent much of his childhood, and which held a special place in his affections, Peter first grubbed out the all-screening hedge and then shaved off part of the

hill to enable full immersion in the views from the house down to the valley bottom. Consultation with the *genius loci* had commenced.

It's tricky, however, when you have a huge landscape vista, to know exactly how to stitch the little house on the hilltop into the folds of the county's largesse. Without some form of visual anchorage, it might appear about to float away. Peter called in the landscape designer Tom Stuart-Smith, to help him realise his singular vision of Arcadia and, together, they embarked on the sympathetic approach that we see captured in these photographs.

Go back a century or more and, without a doubt, a leading designer ➤



in the Arts-and-Crafts aesthetic (such as Harold Peto or his friend Harry Tipping), would have carved terraces and steps into the hillside, after Italian precedent—and they did so in numerous places. Plenty of today’s clients and their designers would be tempted to do the same. So, how refreshing that Messrs Clay and Stuart-Smith chose an approach that has more in common with William Kent (who ‘leaped the fence and saw that all nature was a garden’) and the master who followed him, Capability Brown.

Yet there is nothing Brownian and bare in the vicinity of the house. For much of its curtilage, voluptuous herbaceous borders ebb and flow in curvaceous waves. This is really original thinking in how to make a house ‘grounded’. The default conventional approach to gardening around a house has long favoured squared-off borders and/or sequential garden ‘rooms’. Brockhampton’s example instead suggests a tuning fork, pitch perfect with the surrounding landscape, or even what Carl Jung referred to as *anima*.

Looking in further detail, the garden plants chosen reinforce the broader vision that is a predominantly green, bucolic setting. As a result, apart from a few seasonal fireworks, such

as the briefly arresting June spires of foxtail lilies, the massed herbaceous plantings comprise species with plenty of foliage, but relatively small flowers. These are in calm crimsons, purples, blues and whites, shaken up here and there by the chartreuse hues of herbaceous euphorbias.

Cranesbill geraniums, amsonias, astrantias and persicarias jostle in large, billowy drifts highlighted by starbursts of sibirica irises and pink pincushions of rugosa roses. Species roses clamber into old fruit trees and the estimable *Rosa chinensis* Mutabilis sways wands of its sunset-coloured, simple flowers for months on end.

On the west side, there is a nod towards formality in a small area of levelled lawn and border, below a dining terrace. Beside it, the ground drops dramatically to a secondary valley—now planted with a collection of Herefordshire perry pear trees.

But this is only the beginning. A key embellishment below the house has been the creation of a perennial wild-flower meadow on the south slope, cut through with mown paths. Although it seemed counterintuitive to strip the hill of its super-fertile topsoil, it had to be done to achieve the low fertility required by the wild species. ➤

Above: The lake is home to swans and one side of it has now been planted with an arboretum. *Below:* Spike, Peter Clay’s Jack Russell, directs his master’s planting in the water garden, where they’re both dwarfed by *Gunnera manicata*. *Facing page:* A more formal area west of the house. Herbaceous planting is subtle, including repeated groups of crimson astrantia and pale blue amsonia, illuminated in June by wands of *Eremurus* Joanna







Orchids now flourish in the meadow, these ones being the common spotted, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*

By midsummer, it's awash with tapestries of knapweeds, buttercups and moon daisies; recent years have seen orchids establishing themselves, this summer's orchids having been especially noteworthy, with pink and purple rashes of *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *D. majalis* and *D. maculata*.

Mr Stuart-Smith also advised on how to bring the rolling pastoral views up the bare hill to the house, by planting clumps of trees and cloud-mounds of box, echoing the spinneys and game coverts across the valley. Peter says his main interest these days is focused in the valley and the environs of the swan-paddled lake, which was dug out by his grandfather after the Second World War.

Various serpentine routes lead down to the valley bottom, where a stream that feeds the lake is overhung by some of the huge old oaks for which the county is famous, along with ash and field maple. On an adjacent linear area is a fledgling arboretum featuring, particularly, American and Far Eastern species and an understorey of ornamental shrubs.

As a garden is never finished and the true gardener is always planning refinements, there are further developments east of the meadow, where bosky glades of young trees are giving dappled shade to a new woodland garden featuring azaleas, rhododendrons and hydrangeas.

From the woodland garden's southern edge emerges a 'spring' com-



Rock of ages

'It has been my tragedy that I abominate the English countryside. I suppose it is a disgraceful thing to inherit great responsibilities and to be entirely indifferent to them.' Fortunately, not everyone takes Lord Marchmain's view in *Brideshead Revisited*. The landscapes of the Marches have inspired more than average numbers of poets and composers and, for many of us, the region appears to possess the epitome of English pastoral beauty.

Yet the vegetative eiderdown of tranquil farms, cider orchards and proper hedgerows with shady trees covers what was, for many centuries, a fiercely disputed territory between the former occupants, the tribal early Britons ('the Welsh'), and subsequent all-comers to these isles, from the Romans to the Normans, who now constitute 'the English'. Vestiges of early settlement, ancient kingdoms and bloody conflicts therefore pepper the region with earthworks, Roman forts and numerous castles so that the layers of human occupancy lie like geological strata to be searched out by the enquiring visitor.

Aware of the rich history, and with the Roman hill fort of Capler Camp atop a steep incline north of his house, Peter commissioned his carved chunk of rock, inscribed with lines from Horace, with the idea, he says, 'that the Romans who occupied that site might have left that fragment of stone. That thought by Horace could refer to England's identity, although it echoes what all mankind thinks; it also embodies a spirit of gardening in England which so often does embrace this sense of stream and forest and meadow. It's part of our psyche and, I suppose, a vision of the Garden of Eden that we all aspire to'.

‘The plants chosen reinforce the broader vision that is predominantly bucolic’

pleted a few months ago. Its pumped water gurgles musically downhill over steps and stones, between ferns and azure pools of *Iris sibirica*, to feed into the lower water garden. It was a crucial element to bring into the garden, says Peter, for it completes a scene described 2,000 years ago by the Roman poet Horace, which has been etched into his memory since schooldays and Latin classes:

Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus,
Hortus ubi et tecto vicinus iugis aquae fons

Et paulum silvae super his foret

(This was what I had prayed for: a small piece of land
With a garden, a fresh-flowing spring of water at hand
Near the house, and, above and behind, a small forest stand)

The Latin version is handsomely inscribed into a big, rough chunk of local stone to be chanced upon when you walk through the meadow. Read it, look up, and its example is all around you. The tuning fork hums. Pure genius. 🐦

Brockhampton Cottage, Brockhampton, Herefordshire. The garden is opened once a year in June for the National Gardens Scheme charities (www.ngs.org.uk)



Adventures with agapanthus

OUR new garden is on a chalk hillside above the River Itchen and I remembered that Lewis Palmer, raiser of the famous *Agapanthus* Headbourne hybrids, lived a couple of villages along the valley in the 1950s and 1960s. Agapanthus are amaryllids with narrow, strap-like leaves and most have alluring blue flowers on stems of anything from 6in to 6ft in height, in July and August. Tough, unfussy and drought-tolerant, they are perfect plants for chalky soils.

If Palmer raised agapanthus from seed, I reckoned, so could I. I looked at the cultivars we grew in France and decided that the best were Loch Hope and *Agapanthus praecox* Albiflorus. I made no effort to cross-pollinate them, but the bees must have had their way with the flowers because both plants set seed that I gathered in autumn.

Palmer wrote that it would germinate if sown in pots in March, which is what I did, using old clay pots filled with John Innes compost and extra grit for drainage. Then, having as yet no greenhouse, I put them in the warmest place I could think of, against a south wall of the house.

Nothing happened, so, last month, I concluded that that the seeds needed higher temperatures and more humidity. The answer was to cover the pots with clingfilm to replicate the ideal conditions for germination and, sure enough, the little black seeds turned into little green blades that filled the pots like newly sown grass.



Agapanthus produce alluring blooms on stems of 6in to 6ft in height

Next March, I shall pot them up individually and grow them on. I used to grow agapanthus only in pots, but the flowers were smaller than I expected, so I planted them all out in the garden. I found that they were slow to flower generously, but a high-potash fertiliser (I use last year's Tomorite)

‘Unfussy and drought-tolerant, agapanthus are perfect for chalky soils’

in late April greatly increased the production of flower-spikes.

The first of my seedlings should flower in three years' time, so I have grand visions already of beds filled with hundreds of young plants, each unique, from which I shall select the best for further work. Breeding new agapanthus brings quicker results than do the other things I've hybridised in the past; roses, apples and cherries take up to 10 years before you know

whether or not you've produced a winner, but sowing open-pollinated seeds is a hit-and-miss approach to plant-breeding.

That said, it's how Alan Bloom, our greatest introducer of new herbaceous plants in the 20th century, raised many new plants—simply sowing the seed and seeing what Nature could offer.

One of the good things about having no real garden as yet is that I can slip away to visit nurseries and look at other gardens, so now I'm off to see three National Collections of *Agapanthus*: at Fairweather's Garden Centre not far away in Beaulieu, followed by the Hoyland Plant Centre in South Yorkshire and Pine Cottage Plants in north Devon (where Dick Fulcher raised the brilliant blue Northern Star). A friend also told me that Graham Gough at Marchants Hardy Plants in East Sussex 'is breeding some crackers', so, by the end of the month, I shall have visited all four points of the compass.

And, if the agapanthus-breeding bug really bites me, I shall be more professional about creating my crosses and transferring the pollen. There is quite a lot of colour variation from which to choose, both in the wild and in cultivation. I have great plans for dark-purple Midnight Cascade and white Double Diamond, which is semi-double, but I prefer the true blue shades.

Some breeders, however, are now selecting agapanthus seedlings for longer flowering: the Australian-raised Blue Storm flowers for nearly 10 weeks. Actually, Australia is one of those countries in which agapanthus have naturalised quite widely. I was once leading a party of Australians round the gardens of Insel Mainau in Germany and pointed out some striking clumps of agapanthus, only to be told 'like, they're weeds with us'. Now, I hope they will soon be like weeds with me, too.

Charles Quest-Ritson wrote the *RHS Encyclopedia of Roses*

Next week: Theatrical planting

Marianne Majerus/MMG; Dreamstime.com

Horticultural aide memoire

No. 30: Summer prune pears

Those who indulge in the special luxury of wall-trained pear trees should now permit themselves the nice refinement of summer pruning. You need to be careful, as the tree can be tall, but, otherwise, a lot of the work can be done from *terra firma* and the rest from a short fruit ladder. Firstly, go through and remove any vigorous upright shoots altogether. Then, look patiently along each branch and note each new sideshoot longer than your secateurs. Prune the new growth on each of these shoots back to three buds. This will encourage fruit buds to form, rather than mere leaves. **SCD**



Dear old fossils

The tortoise has gone out of fashion as a pet, yet this ancient creature that so delighted Darwin has inspired since time immemorial. Devoted owner Caroline Jackson celebrates their extraordinary charms

IN tortoise time, 180 years—the age of Jonathan, who lives at the Governor’s residence on St Helena in the South Atlantic—is a mere blink. Tortoises (*Testudinidae*), which evolved from their water-dwelling ancestors more than 200 million years ago, are the planet’s oldest species. Sadly, all species of these so-called living fossils have become endangered during the past 40 years yet, within living memory, pet tortoises were both common and garden.

Timothy endured a dunking in a water butt to confirm that tortoises breathe air and cannot swim,

Our understanding of these intriguing animals still stems from the work of an 18th-century Hampshire curate. The Rev Gilbert White published *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* in 1789 at a time when anatomical observation and taxonomy were in their infancy. Continuously in print, as loved as it is admired and notable for identifying the hitherto ‘non-descript’ harvest mouse, willow warbler, wood warbler and chiffchaff, the star is his tortoise, Timothy.

In 1740, Henry Snooke, White’s uncle and the vicar of Ringmer, West Sussex, bought a Mediterranean tortoise from a sailor in Chichester for half a crown. White observed this curiosity for 40 years before inheriting it. ‘The most abject reptile and torpid of beings distinguishes the hand that feeds it, and is touched with the feelings of gratitude!’ he writes. ‘I was much taken with its sagacity in discerning those who do it kind offices.’

Timothy became the object of respectful scrutiny, not least because ‘if attended to, it becomes an excellent weather-glass’, with his ‘arbitrary stomach, able to fast almost at will’, and preference for ‘milky plants, such as lettuces, dandelions, sow thistles’. He also endured a dunking in a water butt to confirm that tortoises breathe air and cannot swim.

White, who was prescient in suspecting that swallows migrated south for winter, was nonetheless perplexed by hibernation: ‘It is a matter of wonder to find that Providence should bestow such a profusion of days, such a seeming waste of longevity, on a reptile that appears to relish it so little as to squander more than two thirds of its existence in a joyless stupor.’ However, having built one of the country’s first ha-has, he marvelled at Timothy being ‘much too wise to walk into a well’.

Timothy, whose shell is at the Natural History Museum, was subsequently found to be female, as was another tortoise of the same name that lived for more than a century at Powderham Castle in Devon until her death in 2004. After periods on board ship, including HMS *Queen* during its bombardment of Sebastopol in 1854, she arrived in England during the late 19th century having been plundered from a Portuguese privateer by Capt John Courtenay Everard, a relative of the Earl of Devon.

Longevity apart, these two Timothys reflect another tortoise-aficionado tendency: the temptation to alliterate. Beatrix Potter could not resist Ptolemy for Jeremy Fisher’s salad-eating dinner guest and my own tortoise, Tommy, has numerous namesakes.





Looking after your tortoise

Hermann's and spur-thighed tortoises, which originate from the Mediterranean, are the simplest to look after as pets. They usually grow to about 8in in length (measuring the plastron, or underside, of the carapace)

When kept in the UK, Mediterranean tortoises require a combination of indoor and outdoor housing and, when outdoors, protection from rats, foxes, dogs and raptors

Many owners provide their tortoises with 'conservatories' or mini-greenhouses in their enclosures, like a cloche or a cucumber frame, that are up to 10°C warmer than the temperature outside and help with Mediterranean tortoises' health

Always buy a UK-bred tortoise—many pet shops sell licensed specimens imported from Eastern Europe that are likely to have been illegally captured from the wild. In 2002, a Defra report revealed that the illegal trade in smuggled tortoises has largely met the increasing demand. For a list of authentic UK tortoise breeders, visit www.tortoise-protection-group.org.uk

When strong and healthy, tortoises usually hibernate for four months during the winter

It's best to feed them a wide range of edible flowers and green leaves, dusted with a calcium supplement (severe deformity can be caused by a lack of calcium and vitamin D3)

For more information on diet and husbandry, visit www.tortoisetrust.org

In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the Mock Turtle's teacher, an old sea turtle, was named Tortoise 'because he taught us' and there's fun to be had with ponderous gait, too: Gerald Durrell immortalised an Achilles in *My Family and Other Animals* and I've encountered more than one Mercury and several Speedys, plus Roger (Bannister), Rocket and Fangio.

It seems presumptuous to describe oneself as a tortoise owner when there's every chance of predeceasing one's charge and fancier doesn't seem quite respectful for these charismatic, enigmatic creatures. Doubtless, we enthusiasts, brilliantly caricatured by Roald Dahl in his children's novel

Esio Trot—read that backwards—are, to our pets, ships that pass.

No one who has lived with one (the collective noun is a 'creep') can be cold-blooded about the experience. They instinctively navigate perimeters and explore circumferences, giving the impression that they encompass our limited world, not vice versa, as they accumulate fluff from skirting boards or trample weeds along boundaries. The least reptilian of reptiles, they alternate a surprisingly impressive pace with thoughtful pauses.

From the late 15th century, European explorers began to bring back tortoises

Slow and steady: can you resist adoring this creature from the Galapagos? The tortoise is the oldest species in the world—and still winning

as curios and pets, pre-dating what's often mistaken as a Victorian fashion—Archbishop Laud kept a tortoise at Lambeth Palace which, in living to at least 1730, fared rather better than its episcopal host, who was executed in 1645. The confusion probably arises from the profusion of 19th-century bibelots—ear trumpets, hair combs, fans and, later, cigarette holders—made from 'tortoiseshell' (usually, in fact, the shell of the Hawksbill sea turtle) and the work of Charles Darwin.

Darwin wrote of his first encounters with the Galapagos Islands' giant tortoises in *The Voyage of The Beagle* (1839): 'These huge reptiles... seemed ➤



RESURREXCHLOMÖTE (TESTUDO VOSMAERI)

ZOOLOGIE.
ERPÉTOLOGIE. Chéloniens.



Peirre pinx. Turpin del. David sculp.

1. TORTUE géométrique.

2. CHÉLYDE Matamata. a. Le prolongement de son museau.

6 The least reptilian of reptiles, they alternate a surprisingly impressive pace with thoughtful pauses,

Above: Testudo vosmaeri, now extinct. Right: The endangered geometric tortoise and the mata mata turtle. Below: 'Tortoiseshell' accessories became popular in the 19th century, but they were usually made from the shell of the Hawksbill sea turtle. Facing page: 'We called him Tortoise because he taught us,' said the Mock Turtle angrily: 'really you are very dull!'

to my fancy like some antediluvian animals'. He reported: 'We lived entirely upon tortoise-meat... the young tortoises make excellent soup.' After some of the largest individuals were ridden on, up to 40 were stowed aboard the *Beagle*, for food, specimens or souvenirs. Darwin's deductions on tortoises were central to his theories on evolution in *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

With its apparent ability to confound both chronology and climate, the tortoise recurs across cultures and down the ages as a symbol of resurrection as well as upholding the world in various creation myths (an image exploited by the late Terry Pratchett for his 'Discworld' novels). The paradox of Achilles and the tortoise—which the hero could never overtake—is referred to in *War and Peace* and there's some irony that the Greek tragedian Aeschylus was killed when a tortoise was dropped onto his bald head by an eagle. The pet tortoise's association with academia lives on at Christ Church, Oxford,



where an annual Tortoise Fair is held—some 10 Oxford colleges have one. The tortoise's reputation for achieving slow-burn success stems from Aesop's famous fable of the patient tortoise and the smug hare, although in Anita Brookner's 1984 Booker Prize-winning novel *Hotel du Lac*, her love-lorn heroine says cynically: 'In real life, of course, it is the hare who wins. Every time... it is my contention that Aesop was writing for the tortoise market... hares have no time to read.' In Tom Stoppard's 1993 play *Arcadia*, an ever-present tortoise symbolises constancy and continuity (wittily referenced by a urinating tortoise in the chaotic,

threatened Arcadia of Jez Butterworth's play *Jerusalem*). As for the poor animal presented to Julia Flyte in *Brideshead Revisited*, once lost, it becomes a perfect metaphor for the vanishing, degenerate yet beguiling world of the novel: 'It was a small tortoise with Julia's initials set in diamonds in the living shell, and this slightly obscene object, now slipping impotently on the polished boards, now striding across the card table, now lumbering over a rug, now withdrawn at a touch, now stretching its neck and swaying its withered, antediluvian head, became a memorable part of the evening, one of those needle-hooks of experience which catch the attention when larger matters are at stake.' It's a near-perfect description of the abiding allure of the tortoise. 🐢



Putting Britain on the map

Forget satnavs and GPS: when it comes to finding your way, there's nothing quite like a good old paper Ordnance Survey map, says Jonathan Self

THEY spill out of cardboard boxes, tumble off shelves and fill every spare drawer in the house. The oldest examples belonged to an 18th-century ancestor, but the vast majority span the period from 1840 to 1960. Where other families pass down, say, antiques or jewellery, ours passes down maps. Not the sort of maps you would find displayed on walls or in museums, either, but practical, working maps. Maps created with the single purpose of taking you from place to place.

From my great-great-great-great-grandfather, for instance, I have inherited several of John Ogilby's road maps, which were republished in pocket form in 1757. These were the first real (although never completed) guides to all the major routes in the country, with directions, landmarks (including, rather gruesomely, gallows) and distances. Judging from the tears and stains, he and succeeding generations appear to have pressed them into frequent use.

Indeed, all our maps have a well-travelled feel to them and many have their own, not unpleasant, smell: leather (my grandfather's), pipe tobacco (my uncle's) and Kendal Mint Cake and oranges (my father's). None of my empire-building, explorer relatives contributed

to the collection, which is wholly British and almost entirely compiled of maps produced by Ordnance Survey.

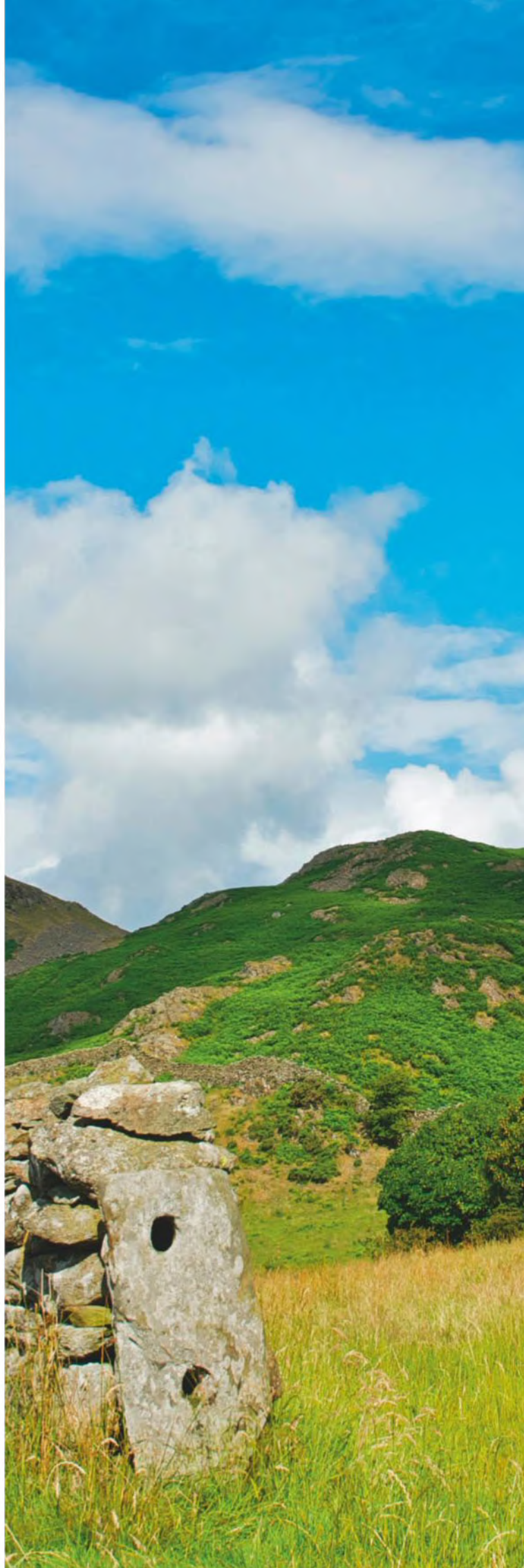
That there should be a national agency creating highly detailed, perfectly accurate maps indicating the location and nature of every significant feature of the British landscape, visible and invisible, together with useful information such as accessibility and the nature of the terrain is, strangely enough, the result of an attempt by the Scottish to gain independence.

It was during the Jacobite rising of 1745, when the Hanoverian troops struggled to find their way around the Highlands, that the English government first recognised the need for a complete and reliable map of the whole country. As Thomas Burnet had put it some years earlier: 'Every Prince should have a Draught of his Country and Dominions. Such a Map or Survey would be useful both in time of War and Peace.'

The task of making a Military Survey of Scotland fell to the Board of Ordnance, which had wide-ranging duties, including

Right: A walker navigating the Lickle Valley in the Lake District. Below: Traditional maps 'encourage imagination and exploration', rather than just providing a route from A to B

Images courtesy of Ordnance Survey. Crown copyright, 2015, studiomode/Alamy, John Morrison/Alamy





Five Great British maps



Methwold Warren, Norfolk, 1580 (above)

Having once lived near Methwold by Thetford Forest, I was delighted when I found this map of its medieval rabbit warren in the National Archives. Created by a professional surveyor at a time when map making was starting to become popular, it includes pictures of 16 rabbits and was probably commissioned to show the boundary of the warren, rented from the Duchy of Lancaster. Doubtless, there were border disputes: the warrener concerned about poaching, his neighbours afraid for their crops.

Sussex, 1778 (page 59)

Thomas Yeakell and William Gardner, the two young surveyors who created this map of Sussex, sponsored by the 3rd Duke of Richmond, were among the first cartographers to be employed by the Board of Ordnance in 1790, when it started the great Ordnance Survey. Goodwood, the Duke's seat, features predominantly, as does Chichester. This was the first engraved map of Sussex and employed many of the techniques (such as shading for higher ground) later adopted by Ordnance Survey.

Glandore, 1862

In 1824, Thomas Colby, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, was sent to Ireland to conduct a complete survey of the country on the scale of 6in to the mile. The purpose was to ensure a fairer property tax, which was based on information gathered up to 200 years previously. Surveying was done using a system of triangulation requiring good visibility, but perpetual fog made this difficult. Thomas Drummond, a young officer attached to the survey, came up with the idea of employing lime-light to indicate reference points. His invention, the Drummond Light, found other uses, including in the theatre.

The Geographer's A-Z Street Atlas, 1936

In 1935, the most recent Ordnance Survey map of London was out of date, inspiring Phyllis Pearsall, a Roedean girl and the daughter of a cartographer, to create a new version. She corrected the names of hundreds of streets, added the new suburbs and made other improvements such as house numbering. By 1938, the map was a bestseller.

Bomb Census, 1940

During the Second World War, Ordnance Survey produced some 342 million maps as part of the war effort. Special maps of London, with a secret system of grid references, were used during the Blitz to record where every bomb fell. Bombsites were marked on these maps by hand with circles and crosses representing the locations of unexploded bombs. The Bomb Census was later extended to the whole country.



Ordnance Survey databases are updated up to 10,000 times a day to keep its maps accurate

“ [Maps] make the landscape fit indoors, make us masters of sights we can't see ”



the management of the country's forts and the supply of munitions. And it was the Board that, after a 36-year gap, was eventually given the authority to conduct a national survey. Again, the motivation was defence, but the maps quickly proved their value in everything from the building of roads to the laying of drains and from establishing the ownership of land to the assessment of taxes.

We read maps, like we read books, and both can involve the distillation of vast amounts of information into a pure, concentrated form. Early British cartographers simply drew everything they wished to represent—sometimes from

a bird's-eye view, sometimes in perspective—in whichever style they (or their patrons) chose. Gradually, however, a sort of cartographical shorthand grew up: lines, grading, shapes and initials, with each symbol having a meaning.

Some, such as the blue line of a stream or the cross of a church, are self-evident. Other space-saving devices and abbreviations are puzzling. Who would ever guess that 'san' meant a sanatorium or that a single W could stand for walk, wall, water, watershed, way, weir, well, west, wharf or wood?

As a result of satellite navigation, sales of printed and folded maps have

The first engraved map of Sussex, created in 1778, was sponsored by the 3rd Duke of Richmond

plummeted. But the comparative advantage of a physical map cannot be overstated. It doesn't just show you how to get from A to B; it provides a raft of supplementary information, reveals how places are connected and serves as a historic record. Unlike GPS, a traditional map encourages imagination and exploration.

Robert Harbison puts it best: 'To put a city in a book, to put the world on one sheet of paper, maps are the most condensed humanized spaces of all. They make the landscape fit indoors, make us masters of sights we can't see and spaces we can't cover.'

How Britain was mapped out

Mappa Mundi, about 800 (below)

The earliest-known, relatively accurate map of Britain is created in about 1025. It is based on a map from 800, which was probably based on a Roman map.



Matthew Paris's Map of Great Britain, about 1250 (right)

The 13th-century historian Matthew Paris, a monk, produces one of the earliest attempts to show the physical appearance of the country.

The Gough Map, about 1355

The oldest-surviving route map of Great Britain is produced.

Saxton's Atlas, 1579

Christopher Saxton surveys 34 English and Welsh counties and his maps set the standard of cartography for the next 100 years. It includes no roads, as his customers are more interested in physical features and country estates.

Britannia, 1675

John Ogilby's new road maps are unique in that they included distances, landmarks and routes. Each route is measured on the ground with a wheel.

Military Survey of Scotland, 1747–55

Conducted by the Board of Ordnance and the forerunner of Ordnance Survey. Drawn ➤





During the Blitz, some 342 million maps were created recording where each bomb fell, initially in London and then nationwide

to a scale of 1in to 1,000 yards for surveying, with the artist Paul Sandby as chief draughtsman. Incidentally, in the latter half of the 18th century, cartography and the instruments required both see huge advances. It becomes fashionable to commission maps.



Anglo-French Survey, 1784–90

An argument about the relative positions of the Greenwich and Paris observatories leads to a precise survey being conducted on both sides of the Channel.

Ordnance Survey, 1791

The Trigonometrical Survey of the Board of Ordnance purchases a theodolite (used for surveying) and the first national survey of Britain begins.

First Ordnance Survey map published, 1801

The first map is published: Kent (left), shown at 1in to the mile.

Survey of Ireland, 1827–46

The Irish survey sets new standards, being 6in to the mile

Photography introduced, 1855

Photography is introduced into map production at Ordnance Survey

Greater detail and greater choice, 1892

Ordnance Survey decides to produce maps



of 1:500, 1:2500, 1:10560 and 1:63360 scales (examples above)

First official tourist map, 1920

Ordnance Survey publishes its first tourist map

New grid and new system, 1938

A new national grid is applied to Ordnance Survey maps. A process of continuous revision is agreed

Metrification, 1969

Ordnance Survey introduces metrification

Digitalisation, 1997

Ordnance Survey becomes the first national mapping service to go digital

Images courtesy of Ordnance Survey. Crown copyright, 2015



More ways with strawberries

Strawberry choux buns

Preheat your oven to 210°C/425°F/gas mark 7 and line a baking tray with parchment. Heat 80g butter with 180ml water in a pan until the butter has melted. Remove from the heat to add 90g plain flour before continuing to heat for a few minutes. Take off the hob to slowly mix in 2 beaten eggs. Using a piping bag, create balls on the baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce the temperature a little and cook for a further 10 minutes. Allow to cool on a wire rack and make small incisions to release steam. Once cooled, slice openings in the sides to fill with whipped cream and strawberries. Finish with a dusting of icing sugar.

Strawberry mille feuille

Take 2 sheets of pre-rolled puff pastry and cut each sheet into 6 rectangles. Place them on a parchment-lined baking sheet and sprinkle with sugar. Cover with a sheet of parchment and add a baking sheet on top of that, to weigh it down. Bake for 15 minutes, then take the pastry out of the oven, removing the top baking sheet and parchment paper before returning it to the oven for a few minutes. Allow to cool. Whip 300ml double cream with 50g caster sugar and mix in 200g chopped strawberries. Place four rectangles of pastry onto a board and spread the cream over them. Top with a layer of pastry and repeat. Smooth out the sides and press the pastry lightly down before dusting with icing sugar to serve.



Strawberry and chia-seed jam

Gently heat 500g strawberries with 100ml maple syrup in a pan until the strawberries release their juices. Add 2 tablespoons of chia seeds and heat for a couple of minutes. Remove from hob and allow to sit for about 10 minutes, by which time it will be thick. Transfer to a jar and keep in your fridge.

Melanie Johnson

As the strawberries begin to ripen in the kitchen garden, I know summer has arrived. This is the perfect afternoon-tea tart, full of flavoursome spices offset by the delicious sweetness of English garden strawberries—definitely one to be enjoyed outdoors. If you don't have the time to make the ice cream, mix cinnamon into whipped cream for a similar effect. Delicious!



Sun-blushed strawberry and nut tart with cinnamon ice cream

Serves 6

Ingredients

For the strawberry and nut tart

250g plain flour
150g ground almonds
100g ground hazelnuts
1tspn baking powder
250g caster sugar, plus more for sprinkling
1tspn cinnamon
Half a tspn ground cloves
Juice and zest of half a lemon
2 egg yolks
250g butter, unsalted, plus more for greasing the tin
500g strawberries
2 egg yolks for brushing

For the cinnamon ice cream

300ml double cream
250ml full-fat milk
15g ground cinnamon
80g caster sugar

Method

To prepare the ice cream, mix the double cream, milk, cinnamon and sugar together. Ideally, mix in an ice-cream machine or, alternatively, pour the mix into a dish and freeze for a minimum of six hours, stirring every 15 minutes until it starts freezing.

For the tart, whisk together the flour, baking powder, sugar, ground almonds, ground hazelnuts, cinnamon and cloves in a bowl. Tip the dry ingredients out onto a clean work surface and make a well in the centre of them, adding the egg yolks, lemon juice and zest to mix in. Cut the cold butter into cubes and drop those into the well, then use your fingertips to rub the butter into the mixture until it comes together as a smooth ball. Wrap the dough in clingfilm and refrigerate it for at least an hour.

Preheat your oven to 170°C/340°F/gas mark 3. Wash and hull the strawberries, lining them up on a baking sheet. Sprinkle a few spoonfuls of sugar over them and roast them for about 15 minutes or until juicy. Remove the strawberries from the oven and stir them in a bowl.

Take the dough out of the fridge and roll two-thirds of it to the thickness of a £1 coin, refrigerating the unused third. Press the dough into the base of a greased, 9in spring-form tin so that it comes an inch or so up the sides before spreading the strawberries across the dough. Roll the remaining third of dough to the thickness of a £1 coin and slice into strips that will create the lattice top—or other shapes if you'd prefer—and drape them over the strawberries.

Put the tart in the fridge for half an hour, then brush with egg yolk before baking for about 45 minutes or until golden. Take from the oven and allow to cool before gently removing the tart from the tin. Serve with fresh strawberries on the side and a scoop of cinnamon ice cream.



Back to black

With the barbecue season in full swing, Julie Harding goes down to the woods to meet the woodcolliers pursuing an art that's almost as old as Man

A WREN'S intense chirping fills the airwaves, a clouded yellow butterfly drifts across the glade, long-tailed tits flit along the wooded rides and, close to the mossy banks, lie neat piles of uniformly cut, silvery hazel branches. This ancient woodland near Blandford Forum in Dorset is the 'office' of woodcollier and coppicer Terry Heard and he wouldn't exchange it for one with four walls.

'I'm my own boss, plus I'm as close as you can be to Nature,' rhapsodises the former butcher and council worker, who has been making charcoal and wood products for nearly four decades. Today, Mr Heard is chopping wood into same-size blocks ready to fill his nearby kiln. The rusted-iron cauldron is almost brimful with rectangular shapes of pre-dried ash and hazel and soon the fire is lit inside. Smoke then billows from the initially unsealed lid and, as the white veil floats skywards, we might be in any other century than the 21st.

Charcoal-making is almost as old as Man. The first evidence of charcoal's use can be found in 30,000BC cave paintings and, between the 14th and the 20th centuries, it was big British business, not least in the smelting of metals. But its use and production declined dramatically with the development of coke and, by the 1980s, when just a few thousand tons were produced, it hit rock bottom.

Since the early 1990s, however, there's been a resurgence, with many eschewing cheaper foreign imports due to concerns over deforestation, carbon footprint and the volatile chemicals added to assist burning.

'The barbecue is easier to light with British-produced charcoal and it burns better,' explains Mr Heard, who also carves the hazel into items such as tent pegs to supplement his income. 'The process of cutting and

filling the kiln [with about 3½ tons of logs] takes a day. If the logs are too big, they have to be split.' He will arrive at 5am the following day to light the fire with an oily rag—the only non-ecological part of the process—and then read the smoke signals as they turn from thick white to thin blue.

Inside, unseen, there is no air and the heat can be an intense 500°C. Water is driven off the wood, pyrolysis takes place and, about 18 hours later, the process should be complete. 'I hold a shovel over the top of one of the four chimneys and if it comes away dry, I know the charcoal is ready,' he says.

Cooling takes 24 hours, at which point the woodcollier will tentatively remove the kiln's lid to see his wood charred (hopefully) and now two-thirds of its original volume. 'I love opening the kiln, but I do so with trepidation. It's always a challenge to get it right,' admits Mr Heard, who concedes that freezing weather and increasing numbers of deer, which eat the buds of regenerated hazel, are drawbacks. Even when deer

don't destroy new growth, it takes seven years for a coppice that's been carefully managed to be ready to produce charcoal or wood products again.

It often rains around Lake Windermere, but Ian Taylor of Lakeland Coppice Products loves the way precipitation magnifies woodland smells. 'When I started as a woodcollier, I would stand around not doing much and thinking how wonderful the place was,' says the former Axa Insurance employee, who decided to become a woodcollier after being made redundant in 2000.

Fifteen years down the line, Mr Taylor is more productive, clearing up to four acres of woodland each year with his apprentice, Jack Holden, and making about two tons of charcoal, spending long days lugging wood to his three kilns. 'Although it's arduous, it's a marvellous job and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else,' he enthuses.

Mr Taylor works mainly with oak in the Rusland Valley, as well as in woods with atmospheric names such as Cat Crag Wood, Craggy Wood and Dalton Crag. Like all woodcolliers,

Ashes to ashes

Britain's charcoal industry took off in the 1300s when the product became a constituent of gunpowder

Woodcolliers once lived alongside their kilns in woodland when making charcoal to prevent any outbreaks of fire

Charcoal's absorbent properties were put to great use in gas masks during the First World War, saving many lives

Today, besides being a barbecue staple, charcoal is employed in the medicine, cosmetics, soap and horticulture sectors, as an animal-feed supplement, as an art material, for purifying air and water and, in powder form, for theatrical pyrotechnics

There are some 200 to 500 woodcolliers in the UK today, compared with 900 in four demesne woods in the Forest of Dean alone in 1282

Britain imports a hefty 90% of its barbecue charcoal

To find your local charcoal supplier, visit: <http://ncfed.org.uk/public/charcoal-suppliers/>





‘Smoke billows and the white veil floats skywards—we might be in any century other than the 21st,’

Mr Taylor moves his kilns to the wood where he’s working, which is easier said than done in Cumbria. ‘I once had to transport a couple of kilns up a steep hill and over two dry-stone walls,’ he recalls. ‘It was one of the most extreme places I’d ever been to and I ended up using a rope, a pulley and my Land Rover. When I pulled on the rope, the kiln shot up in the air like a pole vaulter.’

Today, Mr Taylor is increasingly turning to producing firewood, which is currently attracting good premiums, and has scaled down his charcoal production from the heady days when he did six ‘burns’ a week to supply the northern supermarket chain Booths. However, he has no plans to give up completely and his

charcoal is so sought after that one customer travels from the Scottish Borders to buy in bulk. ‘I just love making charcoal. It has a very primeval feel to it,’ he adds.

The mortar applied to the walls of Windsor Castle during its mid-1990s restoration contains powdered charcoal from Jim Bettle’s Dorset Charcoal Company. This is only one of the myriad uses for the 35 tons of this ebony product churned out every year by one of Britain’s biggest producers. ‘I wouldn’t be in business if I only made barbecue charcoal,’ admits Mr Bettle.

Although he and his three employees now source their annual 17,600 cubic feet of English hardwoods from local foresters, the former Thatcher, who learnt his woodcollier skills from ‘old

Jim Bettle learnt his woodcollier skills, thought to have been in practice since 30,000BC, from ‘old boys’. His Dorset Charcoal Company produces an impressive 35 tons of charcoal every year

boys’, relishes the cooking process as much as any Michelin-starred chef. ‘It stretches your brain, plus, of course, dealing with fire is elemental. By using English timber, you’re also helping with the management of our sustainable woodlands,’ he eulogises.

Mr Bettle combines oak, ash, beech and birch timber in each of his six kilns, ensuring that the denser oak is placed at the hottest, central core of the giant pot. ‘You need skill to blend the timber,’ he clarifies. ‘There are also different stages to the burning and you can’t rush it. Having said that, I must dash. I’ve got some kilns on the go—I don’t want the charcoal burning away.’ And, with that, he walks swiftly out of his office, jumps in his 4x4 and heads off back to the woods. 🐾



I must go down to the seas again

Nick Fisher never tires of small-boat fishing off the Dorset coast

WHENEVER I chug out of my local harbour of West Bay in Bridport, Dorset, I feel a thrill, even after decades of doing it, that I have suddenly opened a door to so much space. Space where practically no one else ever goes. Even when the beach is rubbing-shoulders crowded with holidaymakers and their clobber, I can motor for five minutes due south, no more than a mile out to sea, and not be able to see another human being.

Often, there's not even another boat in sight, only herring gulls, gannets, terns, guillemots, occasional pods of dolphins and the odd lone sunfish splashing the surface like a one-flipperd seal.

It's not just about solace and escapism: there's something fascinating about seeing where we live from the water. My home fishing ground, along the Jurassic Coast between Lyme Regis

and Portland Bill, lies just offshore of my favourite dog-walking ground: Golden Cap, Eype Beach, Codgen, Bexington, Seatown and the long, flat shelf of Chesil Beach.

I have trudged it countless times with my family and dog, Spike, yet there's something inexplicably exciting about seeing the place you know so well from the perspective of the sea. It's like being on a train and passing your own house; suddenly, you see it with detached, slightly alien eyes.

The sea offers excitement in the slippery, streamlined shape of fish and food. All my voyages into the wet stuff revolve around trying to tempt my dinner out of it, either by rod and line or by hauling crab pots. Going home with fresh mackerel, a silver-minted sea bass, pan-sized finger-fat fillets of black bream or huge family-feeding pollock or cod makes me tingle with pride. My hunter-gatherer gland pulsates with

manly satisfaction, as fresh life-giving omega-oil-rich nourishment is served up to my crab-claw crunching tribe.

The unlikelyst of people have been in love with the sea. Nina Simone, blues singer and civil-rights black activist, who spent much of her life in the *mien* of New York nightclubs and recording studios, lusted for the sea more than anything. 'I would like a man now who is rich, and who can give me a boat—a sailboat,' she once said. 'I want to own it and let him pay for it. My first love is the sea and water. Not music. Music will always come second.'

John F. Kennedy mused in 1962: 'I don't really know why it is that all of us are so committed to the sea. Except I think it's because in addition to the fact that the sea changes, and the light changes, and ships change, we all come from the sea. In our veins we have the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean. We are

‘All my voyages into the wet stuff revolve around trying to tempt my dinner out of it’



Fishing off the coast of Lyme Regis, Dorset, isn't just about the catch—it's good for the soul, too

tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea, we are going back to whence we came.'

When I'm drifting along, a couple of hundred yards out to sea on a warm summer's evening, watching my wife or one of my four children cast a silver spinner into a biblical shoal of migrant mackerel morphing its way eastwards from the Atlantic towards France, chasing sprays of tiny sprats out of the water and into the sunset, my heart melts.

An oft-used saying about boat ownership goes along the lines of: 'You only get two good days when you own a boat: the day you buy it and the day you sell it.' The more pessimistic will mutter about how you might as well stand under a cold shower ripping up £50 notes.

Having ploughed hard-earned cash into several leaky examples of wood, fibreglass

and aluminum craft over the past 20 years, I can confirm there is a deep seam of truth in both those comments. And yet boat ownership is not about logic, sensible finance or even sense. It's about romance, a quest for something indefinable, unquantifiable and unpurchasable. It makes you feel alive in a way that no other experience does.

In West Bay, you don't have to own a boat—you can book a one-hour mackerel trip on one of the local charters. It may not be guaranteed to fill your frying pan, but it will top up your soul. And, if you're still hungry for more when you step, wobbly-footed, back on *terra firma*, you can always go to Rachel's Hut on the harbourside or the Watch House Café on the east beach to fill your face with fresh scallops, fat Billy Winter prawns, scarlet-shelled lobster and more. 🐟

Nick's favourite local fish places

Rachel's Hut
Harbourside,
3, The Mound,
West Bay
(07974 314277)

Watch House Café East Beach, West Bay (01308 459330)

Olive Tree 59, East Street, Bridport (01308 422882)

Crab House Café Ferrymans Way, Portland Road, Wyke Regis (01305 788867)

The George Inn Main Street, Chideock, Bridport (01297 489419)



Feast on fish at the Watch House Café

I lost my heart to a hosta

From acers to zelkovas, behind each one of the UK's 600-plus national plant collections is a dedicated horticulturist ensuring the preservation of a precious species. Jane Wheatley meets the flower champions

Photographs: Richard Cannon

“ People think hostas are boring and get eaten by slugs, then they come here and see how beautiful they are ”



IN the snowy winter of 1984, Sarah Cook was working in a border at Sissinghurst when she came across a plant label printed with the name Benton Nigel. She recalled that the artist Cedric Morris had bred beautiful bearded irises at his Suffolk farmhouse, Benton End, prizing them for their soft, bruised, painterly colours, and, when she retired 20 years later, she decided to embark on a search for survivors.

‘There were 90 varieties originally, yet only four appeared in the *RHS Plant Finder*,’ explains Mrs Cook, who was brought up in Suffolk. Her searches unearthed 25—‘plus 10 more I think I can identify’—and she is now the holder of the National Collection (*COUNTRY LIFE*, July 6, 2011).

6 Holders ensure they grow “heirs and spares” of rare plants for safe-keeping 9

The Morris irises are an example of how frighteningly fast plants can vanish and yet they’re a vital part of our social history. Plant breeding was at its height at the turn of the 19th century. ‘Every nurseryman had his own breeding stock,’ points out David Goodchild of the conservation charity Plant Heritage, ‘but, after two World Wars, knowledge had died with those men, many of the great gardens were abandoned and thousands of plants had disappeared.’

Formed in 1978 to arrest the depletion of Britain’s biodiversity, Plant Heritage now licenses more than 600 National Collections, in locations ranging from National Trust properties to private gardens—the euphorbia collection flourishes on a parish council allotment in South Yorkshire. Holders ensure they grow ‘heirs and spares’ of rare plants and share them with fellow members for safe-keeping.

Plant Heritage: 12, Home Farm, Loseley Park, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1HS (01483 447540; www.nccpg.com)



Preceding pages: It's a jungle out there: June Colley among her hostas

Above: There are four chest freezers of sweet-pea seeds at Roger Parsons' home

Happiness is a hosta

June Colley keeps many of her 3,000 hostas in pots hung at eye level, the better to appreciate their charms. In lush profusion under dappled shade are tones of blue, yellow and green and foliage rippling like Fortuny pleats.

‘People think hostas are boring and get eaten by slugs, then they come here and see how beautiful they are,’ enthuses Mrs Colley, adding that she has no truck with slugs and operates a strict regime throughout the year involving Epsom salts, boiled garlic and eternal vigilance at her Lindford, Hampshire, garden.

Like many collection holders, Mrs Colley’s affection for her plants was a slow-burn affair. ‘In 1988, I picked one up at a car-boot sale and put it in shade behind the



house,' she recollects. 'It grew well, so I bought another two. Then, I went to Chelsea, saw the enormous variety and got hooked. The next thing I knew, I'd bought 60 of them. Then, I started going to the Netherlands, buying 100 at a time.'

A botanist by training, she keeps detailed records and became collection holder in 2013. The hostas are displayed in several settings (visits by appointment only), including an Islamic garden, and Mrs Colley ensures a continuous supply of flowering companion plants. 'Each month looks different—we grow them in a field and bring them in as they're ready to flower.'

National Hosta Collection (European and Asiatic)
(01420489186; www.hostahem.org.uk/nchosta.shtml)

Seduced by sweet peas

There are four chest freezers containing thousands of sweet-pea seeds at Roger Parsons's Chichester, West Sussex, nursery. 'They'll be safe for posterity long after I'm gone,' he says proudly.

Mr Parsons established his seed bank some years ago after becoming concerned about the loss of cultivars. 'Sometimes, they deteriorate and you have to re-select—by going back to a single plant that has all the desirable qualities and saving the seeds from that.'

His sweet-pea love affair began at the age of six, when he purchased his first seed packet from Woolworths with sixpence pocket money. 'Then, after I retired, I had time to indulge my passion and start to grow them all.'

Nowadays, Mr Parsons collects seeds from around the world—eight varieties that had vanished from Britain 40 years ago were discovered in a nursery in the Himalayan foothills and are now safely in his seed bank—and is growing more than 240 varieties this year. 'They're very addictive—my wife would say I think about sweet peas all the time.'

Does he admit to a favourite? 'Albutt Blue,' he states firmly. 'It's white with a blue edge, flowers not too clumsy, extremely prolific and very decorative, with the most wonderful scent.'

Roger Parsons Sweet Peas (01243 673770; www.rpsweetpeas.com)

‘They’re very
addictive—my wife
would say that
I think about
sweet peas
all the time ;



‘ We tell people to look at it like a French Impressionist painting—better from a distance ’

Ravished by rambling roses

A profusion of pink and white rose petals covers the stone façade of Moor Wood, Henry Robinson’s glorious Gloucestershire home in the village of Woodmancote. ‘That’s Apple Blossom,’ he tells me. ‘It reached the gutter in three years.’

He continues: ‘When I inherited the garden, it was desperately rundown and we had no idea what to do, then someone said we should have ramblers—there was a gap on the rose collection list. A man came down from Plant Heritage and said “Excellent, you’ve got lots of walls, good luck, carry on”. It gave us a focus.’

Mr Robinson, a farmer and president of the CLA, adds: ‘I haven’t picked up a trowel in years—I do roses and destruction.’

His wife, Susie, an interior designer, comments: ‘Henry’s mother had full-time gardeners, but I have one man, one day a week,

so it’s landscape we go for.’ Her husband nods. ‘We tell visitors to look at it like a French Impressionist painting—it works better from a distance.’

There are 150 roses, tumbling, scrambling, cascading. ‘We learnt the hard way that ramblers don’t like growing up, they like hanging down,’ explains Mr Robinson, pointing to a billowing mass of green with tiny white buds just unfurling. ‘That’s *Rosa Wickwar*, it’s planted 12ft below on the other side of the wall and falls over this side—that’s what they like.’

Some years ago, Mr Robinson was sent some unnamed rambler-rose seeds from China, one of which has become a top favourite. ‘We might call it *Rosa Moorwoodii*,’ he says.

Moor Wood Rambling Roses (www.moorwoodroses.co.uk; 01285 831692)



Above left:
Henry Robinson surrounded by a riot of rambling roses

Above right:
Linda Heywood has managed to get her echiums to thrive in the East Midlands

Excellent echiums

Echiums are half-hardy plants, supposed only to flourish in the south-west of England, yet Linda Heywood has managed to grow them in the East Midlands, over-wintering the more tender ones in a greenhouse. If her current application to Plant Heritage is successful, she will soon be the holder of the National Collection of these extraordinary plants.

'I've always grown them, but only started building the collection three years ago,' Mrs Heywood tells me. 'They're fantastic for the environment—among the top five nectar plants.'

Most exotic is the tree echium, *E. pininana*, which can grow up to 14ft tall. 'In its second year, it develops a crown 3ft in diameter and, in the third year, shoots up into a tall spire with thousands of florets. Then, it dies.' Like a rocket, I ask. 'Yes, indeed—but it will have shed its seeds,' she replies.

One of the requirements of a holder is that the collection should be accessible to view by the public and Mrs Heywood showcases her collection in a courtyard behind a business centre in the village of Edwinstowe, home to the great oak of Robin Hood legend. 'There are 17 species planned for the collection—one lady donated two, which is an example of the sharing ethos of Plant Heritage.'

Echium World (07957 602073; www.echiumworld.co.uk)



‘My mother named them after her friends. Rosemary Rebel, for example, was my father’s sister.’

Preserving pelargoniums

Hazel Key adored pelargoniums, growing them as a hobby while she raised her children. ‘She had six of us, so she was obviously good at propagation,’ her daughter Ursula notes with a smile. The resulting National Collection was opened in 1987 by The Queen’s gardener Ashley Stevenson, himself a fan of pelargoniums. ‘We’re about the last place in the world where you can get old varieties,’ explains Mrs Key-Davis. ‘My mother would never give one up, even if it had no commercial value.’

For a winner of countless awards, including gold again at Chelsea this year, Fibrex Nurseries in Warwickshire isn’t a bit grand, the scruffy glass-and-concrete sheds giving little hint of the glories contained inside. ‘We are off the beaten track here,’ admits Mrs Key-Davis. ‘If we

waited for passing trade, we’d die of starvation, so we do all the shows.’ I find her sister, Helena Hall, watering the collection. ‘My mother named them after her friends,’ discloses Mrs Hall. ‘Rosemary Rebel, for example, was my father’s sister.’

It was always a family enterprise—‘I did my first Chelsea at 13,’ recalls Mrs Key-Davis—and four of the siblings now run the business. ‘We moved nurseries several times as we outgrew them: my mother would say “what we need now is ...” and Dad would build it.’

When Hazel died, she left the collection to her daughter Ursula, which, I suggest, must have been something of a double-edged sword. ‘Indeed, it was,’ she concedes. ‘Fortunately, it’s my hobby as well.’

Fibrex Nurseries (01789 720788; <http://fibrex.co.uk>)

Ursula Key-Davis inherited the National Collection of pelargoniums from her mother, Hazel Key, who established it. Fortunately, it’s a passion that runs in the family

More National Collections

Lewisia

Dr G. Mawson,
Dronfield,
South
Yorkshire
(01246
415097)

Visiting By
appointment,
April to June



Anemone japonica

Hadlow College
(Miss M.
McKendrick),
Sevenoaks,
Kent (01959
522703)

Visiting Best time is
between September and the first frosts



Clematis viticella

Mr R. Hodson,
Hesketh
Bank,
Preston,
Lancashire
(01772 812379;
www.hawthornes-nursery.co.uk)

Visiting Best in July and August



Primula auricula (alpine)

Dr Alison
Goldie and Mr
Mark Hutson,
Menmuir, By
Brechin, Angus
(01356 660280;
www.angusplants.co.uk)

Visiting By appointment



Buddleja

Longstock Park
Nursery, Stockbridge,
Hampshire (01264 810894;
www.longstocknursery.co.uk)

Visiting By appointment on
some weekends



Nymphaea Kenchester Water

Gardens,
Lyde,
Hereford
(01432 270981;
www.kenchesterwatergardens.co.uk)

Visiting Best from June to October

Magnolia

Crown Estate
Commissioners
Savill & Valley
Gardens,
Windsor Great
Park, Berkshire
(01753 860222; www.theroyallandscape.co.uk)

Visiting Best from March to June



Pittosporum

Bicton
College,
Budleigh
Salterton,
Devon (01395
562353; www.bicton.ac.uk)

Visiting Group visits
only, by appointment



Daphne

Mrs D. Field,
Hartford,
Northwich,
Cheshire
(01606
75642)

Visiting In April
and May, by
appointment



Lavender

Isle of Wight Lavender,
Newport, Isle of Wight
(01983 825272; www.lavender.co.uk)

Visiting Open daily
(except Wednesdays)



Wisteria

Mr C. G. Lane, Witch
Hazel Nursery,
Sittingbourne, Kent
(01795 843098; www.witchhazelnursey.com)

Visiting By appointment,
best in May



Philadelphus

Leeds City
Council, Leeds,
West Yorkshire
(0113-395 7400)

Visiting In Hollies
Park which is
open all year

Osmunda

National Trust at
Sizergh Castle,
Kendal, Cumbria
(01539 69813; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sizergh)

Visiting Best from May
to October



Tilia spp.

Viscount
Devonport,
Peasmarsh
Place
Arboretum,
Rye, East Sussex
(01797 223398)

Visiting Tours
available for groups



Viola odorata cvs. and Parmas

Mr Clive
Groves,
Groves
Nurseries,
Bridport,
Dorset (01308 422654; www.groves-nurseries.co.uk)

Visiting Open all year





AS I tootle gently along the A272 in Hampshire on my bicycle, through the village of Langrish and past the newly cut hay field that's being picked over by the rooks, a group of Lycra-clad cyclists zips past me, a kaleidoscope of dash and vigor. At the end of the village, this swarm of colours starts pumping its legs up the long climb to the hill hamlet of Bordean. Halfway up the steep incline, to the group's utter amazement, I sail past them. I'm no athlete, corpulent in the manner of a partridge, but I do have a secret weapon: an electric bike.

At the press of a button, my leisurely pedalling is boosted and the South Downs feel like Holland. There are four settings: eco, sport, power and, for those who don't want to cheat, normal. The battery lasts for about 100 miles, which, if I ever get that ambitious, could take me to London and back.

I've always been full of admiration for my colleagues who cycle to work

I want to ride my bicycle

Only the brave and the Lycra-clad bold would ordinarily tackle the steep inclines of the South Downs on two wheels—or so you might think. Mark Hedges revels in the opportunity of overtaking them without breaking sweat

in London and, when I lived there, the Tube in rush hour was the single worst aspect of my daily life. A bicycle seems to be the best way to beat the cattle crush of the commute and the clogged streets of the capital. An electric bike is simply a bicycle made better.

Now living in the South Downs, I had given up riding a bike because I'm not tempted to join the 'Mamil' (middle-aged man in Lycra) world of the post-Olympic cycling heroes nor, in truthful sadness, do I have the oomph required to negotiate the steep climbs of the chalk hills.

However, it has always nagged me that I pay £1,200 each year just to leave my car in the station car park—bikes, on the other hand, are free—and it's also frustrating that I have to get into a car to go to the local shop for sausages, papers and bread on a Sunday morning or to the pub that evening, both of which lie four miles away.

The answer, certainly for half the year, is an electric bike. It may



‘Halfway up the steep incline, I sail past the Lycra-clad cyclists’

not change the contours of my body, but it beats the contours of the Meon Valley.

The battery charges in about five hours and is just a question of plugging the pack into a wall socket. It's astonishingly simple to use, but backed up by fabulous German technology. The bike itself is designed in a thrillingly robust manner. It looks like something your grandparents might have ridden, with sensible chubby tyres and a proper seat. It has a gentlemanly feel to it, with a luggage rack to hold some groceries or a briefcase.

Facing page:
If the village shop is just that bit too far to walk or cycle, an electric bike could be the solution.

Above: **Mark Hedges enjoys the view across the South Downs after a little 'assistance' up the hills**

But the marvel of the electric bike goes beyond being just a cheaper (and healthier) way to get to the train station or the village shop. My son Charlie has recently failed his driving test and was dreading the long summer holidays as, with both his parents working, he often finds himself stranded at home. Not now. Not only has the bike enabled him to get a job at the pub, he can also visit his friends without relying on the parental taxi service.

With the wicked lack of rural public transport, an electric bike could open up a whole new world for those of us living in the countryside. 🐦

History

Although they've been in use on the Continent for some time, they've only recently become more commonplace on UK roads. 'We started importing electric bikes in 2003, when my brother decided he'd had enough of the Northern Line, but couldn't quite face the long hill climb home,' explains Scott Snaith of 50 Cycles. 'At the time, I was based in Tokyo, where electric bikes were taking off.'

After experimenting with brands and designs, the brothers decided on the German-designed Kalkhoff range. Today, they're the UK's leading distributor and have 15,000 customers. The popularity of electric bikes is burgeoning: sales so far this year are already up 50%.

Who rides them

According to Scott, the appetite for electric bikes is largely dictated by geography. 'They work well in particularly hilly places, such as Devon and the Scottish Borders, as well as Sheffield and north-west London.' The age range is typically between 50 and 80: 'Although customers are getting younger, they've typically appealed to people who would struggle on an ordinary bike because of bad hips or knees. The great thing about electric bikes is that they level the playing field: everyone loves cycling, but not everyone loves the hills.' *Arabella Youens*

The bike

Mark rode an Agattu Premium Impulse 8 (*right*), which is part of the Kalkhoff activity range—essentially the mid point between the sportier performance range and the commuter options. This all-rounder is good for hills, trails, national parks, country roads and city streets.

The cost

Electric bikes cost between £1,000 and £4,500. 50 Cycles says its average sale price is about £2,000 and the model Mark used is £2,395. And regular cyclists needn't worry—electric bikes qualify for the Government-backed Cycle to Work scheme.

Running costs

To charge the battery from empty to full costs 20p and takes five hours, so is typically done overnight. However, for the average seven-mile cycle ride, you would only need to charge the pack for an hour, so it's a matter of a few pence. Otherwise, it's treated as a normal road bike and it's a good idea for a local shop to give it an annual safety check.

Contact

0333 900 5050; www.50cycles.com AY





Style and substance in West Sussex

These historic properties in the county have been lovingly restored and fitted with all the comforts a 21st-century buyer could desire

HISTORIC links with some of the great West Sussex estates of which they were once part provide an intriguing backdrop to the sale of several good family houses currently on the market in the county, although one or two have been renovated in ways that traditional country-house buyers may find challenging.

It has been restored with some flair

According to local records, ownership of Grade II*-listed The Old House (Fig 1) at Lodsworth, four miles from Midhurst, for sale through the Haslemere office of Knight Frank (01428 770560) at a guide price of £3.85 million, can be traced to the early 1500s, when John Hollist inherited lands in Lodsworth. The family gradually increased their holdings and, by the early 1700s, were among the largest landowners in the parish. In 1701, the lands passed to another John Hollist, who, following his marriage in 1727, rebuilt the existing house, but retained the south-west corner with its massive chimney stack.

He and his wife had 13 children, but no grandchildren, and the line died out in the next generation. The estate then passed to a distant relative, who assumed the name of Hollist. In 1836,



Fig 1: The Old House at Lodsworth is one of the best village houses in the South Downs National Park. £3.85m

his son, Hasler, inherited the property and immediately set about improving it. He built a new family seat, Lodsworth House, designed by the country-house architect Edward Blore, and his 113-year-old former seat became known as The Old House.

In the early 20th century, The Old House was leased to a succession of tenants before being bought, with the rest of the Lodsworth estate, by the then tenant of Lodsworth House, who sold The Old House on in 1937. Listed Grade II* in 1959, it was known as The Dower House for several decades,

during which time it was apparently altered in a number of 'inappropriate' ways. Many of these were rectified by Mr and Mrs Barry Whitaker, who owned The Old House from 1995 to 2007, when it was bought by its present owners, Mr and Mrs Tim Rodber.

One of the best village houses within the picturesque South Downs National Park, The Old House, set in almost an acre of immaculate landscaped gardens, has been restored with some flair by its cosmopolitan owners, who have managed to stamp their evidently lively personalities on the house, despite its formidable listing.

Notable additions include the spectacular orangery (Fig 2), a luxurious first-floor master suite with his-and-her dressing rooms, and two American-style second-floor bedrooms, all designed to make the most of the views.

The rejuvenated 6,000sq ft house now boasts four main reception rooms, a splendid kitchen/breakfast room, a wine store, a gym, eight bedrooms and five bathrooms. Other goodies include a recently renovated two-bedroom cottage, a traditional barn with lapsed planning consent for conversion and a secluded swimming pool area with a large terrace area and—oh, joy!—a pizza oven.



Fig 2: One of the current owners' stylish additions is this spectacular orangery

Also for sale through Knight Frank (01428 770560), at a guide price of £2.5m, is pretty Heytotts Farm (**Fig 4**) at nearby River, a quintessential West Sussex hamlet within the sought-after Lodsworth-Lickfold-Lurgashall ‘golden triangle’, nine miles from Haslemere mainline station.

A Grade II-listed, 17th-century building with unusually good ceiling heights for a house of its period, it stands in 1½ acres of beautifully maintained gardens with glorious views over the national park.

The beautifully renovated, 3,130sq ft house has three main reception rooms, a large kitchen/breakfast room, four/five bedrooms and two bath/shower rooms. It comes with a one-bedroom cottage and an array of traditional farm buildings with obvious potential for conversion. The vendors have already secured planning consent to add an orangery leading out from the kitchen/breakfast room.

Also located within the South Downs National Park is Lower Farm (**Fig 3**) at Madehurst, near Arundel, an impressively-restored Arts-and-Crafts gem, once part of the important Dale Park estate—one of a series of historic landed estates between Chichester and Arundel that includes Halnaker, Goodwood, Eartham and Slindon. For sale through the Chichester office of Strutt & Parker (01243 832600) at a guide price of £3.75m, Lower Farm has been the much-loved family home of Jane Thorp and her husband, an architect, for the past 32 years.

The house, which sits in a forgotten valley on the edge of the tiny village of Madehurst, had been split into two when, in 1983, they bought half the house, expecting the other half to follow it onto the market. ‘In fact, we



Fig 3: An Arts-and-Crafts gem: charming Lower Farm, at Madehurst near Arundel. £3.75m

had to wait 11 years to acquire the rest of the house, after which we set about putting it all back together again,’ reveals Mrs Thorp, for whom the process has been a painstaking labour of love.

Built in the early 1900s of knapped flint with brick quoins and part-timbered façades under a clay-tile roof, the house has been refurbished with the conservation of its many original features always in mind: one of the most striking is the carved Arts-and-Crafts oak staircase in the hall. The attention to detail is also evident in the three main reception rooms, especially the large panelled dining room, with its window seat overlooking the garden, and the bright and cheerful morning room next door.

Upstairs, the generous landing space has been used to create a library and a music room. The master bedroom suite, which also has views of the



Fig 4: Boasting unusually good ceiling heights for its period, Heytotts Farm at River has wonderful views over the national park. £2.5m

grounds and surrounding woodland, has been cleverly modernised to provide maximum space and comfort. Lower Farm’s 8,730sq ft of living space includes four further bedrooms, two bathrooms and a shower room on the first floor and a second floor comprising a self-contained flat, with an open-plan kitchen and living area, and a large bedroom with a bathroom en-suite.



Through the looking glass

THE last time Grade II-listed Naldrett House near Rudgwick, on the Surrey/West Sussex border, was seen on the open market was in 2005, when the former home of legendary cricket correspondent, the late Christopher Martin-Jenkins, matched its owner’s elegant, laidback style in almost every way. Ten years on, following a remarkable programme of renovation, extension and refurbishment, the handsome Georgian front façade looks much as it did then; not so the interior, described in an online property journal as ‘a modernist party palace’ with ‘a vast glass-walled contemporary kitchen/family room and

entertaining facility—all opening onto a minimalist-style courtyard and fabulous swimming pool area’. Reactions so far have been ‘interesting’, says Michael Parry-Jones of joint agents Grantley (01483 893939), who with Hamptons International (01403 211766) quotes a guide price of £4m for this one-off, 8,000sq ft, hybrid set in 45 acres of gardens, grounds and pasture.

The accommodation—probably not for the faint-hearted—includes three main reception rooms, a kitchen/family room, an entertaining suite, a wine cellar, seven bedrooms, six bath/shower rooms, an office and a gym.



Much ado about Great Tew

The classic Cotswold village is home to a new members-only country club—how is this affecting the appetite for property in the area? Arabella Youens finds out

MOVE over Daylesford, there's a new pretender to the Cotswolds on-trend throne.

August 3 will see the opening of Soho Farmhouse, a cross between a members-only country club and a hotel, which is the latest in a long line of ventures from the hand of the entrepreneur with the seemingly Midas touch, Nick Jones. He began 20 years ago with Soho House, his first members' club, in Greek Street, W1, which soon became a magnet for London's media, arts and film world.

Fourteen 'houses' later—half of which are scattered throughout cities worldwide from Los Angeles to Istanbul—this time, the chosen location is the north Oxfordshire village of Great Tew. Location-wise, it's a clever choice: the village is picture-perfect pretty, it's 90 minutes from central London (even less from Notting Hill), only a 20-minute drive from north Oxford and an easy distance from the new Oxford Parkway station, which is due to open in September with direct services to London Marylebone.

The project is a collaboration between the Soho House team and the Johnston family who own the Great Tew estate—the same family who bought the Bantham estate in Devon last August (*COUNTRY LIFE*, May 28, 2014). Together, they've converted an existing farmhouse and farm buildings into a 100-acre playground for the creatively minded well-heeled. It's designed to appeal to long-distance members, who can rent one of the 40 one-, two- and three-bedroom wooden cabins that have been built along the edge of a lake.

Locals with families can, for an annual fee, make use of the heated indoor-outdoor pool, have a pint in the on-site, dog-friendly pub, use the Cowshed gym and spa, set up a game of five-a-side football or rounders, ice-skate in the winter, ride out on one of the 11 horses or have their hair styled by the team at Josh Wood, whose main salon is in—you guessed it—Notting Hill.

'The impact of the opening is definitely being felt in the local property market,' says Adam Buxton of Middleton Advisors, who has been monitoring the situation for the past two



A skip from Soho: six-bedroom Magdalen Lodge in Hook Norton is a pretty Grade II-listed house standing in 4.8 acres. £1.85 million through Strutt & Parker (01295 273592)

years. 'It used to be a case that clients would ask "How far is it from Daylesford?", but, since January this year, that's changed to "How far from Soho Farmhouse?" That means that the search focus, which often used to be on the classic north Cotswold villages of Stow-on-the-Wold, Chipping Norton and Burford—the so-called 'Daylesford Triangle'—is now shifting to Hook Norton, the Rollrights and Charlbury.'

Whatever you think about Daylesford, Soho Farmhouse has a lot more entertainment to offer than, in the words of one local, 'a double-shot mochaccino, a Thai massage and a pretty plant—plus it's a members-only club, which adds that extra element of exclusivity'.

Luke Morgan of Strutt & Parker agrees that the impact of the opening on the local market is already tangible and likely to grow stronger. 'These days,

the types of people who can afford the most expensive country houses are increasingly less inclined to buy somewhere isolated from any action—they want to be able to walk to the pub or have things to do close to hand. That's where Soho Farmhouse will work so well: it'll appeal to those buyers moving full-time with their families as well as the west London-based weekend buyer who'll jump on the A40 every Friday night.'

A point made by all the agents is that Great Tew, and the surrounding villages of Hook Norton, Swerford and Stamford St Martin, are already on the radar of buyers either looking to do the 'big move' out of London or just in search of a weekend house and the supply of houses coming to the market is already tight, keeping prices higher than in other parts of the country. 'It's a lovely part of the world anyway,' says Damian Gray of Knight Frank in Oxford, whose children went to the Great Tew Primary School, 'but this is a bit of a game changer for the area.'

His colleague, Harry Gladwin, agrees: 'It just ticks so many boxes: pretty, accessible countryside with plenty of fun things to do and the area is also well placed for a number of good schools, including Kitebrook, Bloxham and Tudor Hall, as well as the perennially popular Oxford schools such as the Dragon and Summer Fields.'

Need to know: Soho Farmhouse

- Already in 'soft launch', formally opens on August 3
- Membership (to Soho Farmhouse only) costs £1,200 (plus a £200 registration fee)
- The site is car-free (wellies are provided)
- On site will be a deli, wine cellar, 'pickle room' and 'curing cave' in which home-cured *charcuterie* will be made
- Milk floats have been converted to serve as mobile fry-up carts and cocktail bars
- The Electric Barn (sister to Portobello Road's Electric Cinema) is a 60-seat cinema

Property news



Walking distance from the coast

Dorset, £1 million

Grove House, Burton Bradstock

6 bedrooms, Aga, outbuildings, garden

Jackson-Stops & Staff (01308 423133)

This Grade II-listed village house dates back to the 18th century and is on the market for only the fourth time since it was built. It enjoys a secluded but central location within this popular coastal village along Chesil Beach and has a pretty garden with a conservatory and greenhouse.



Splendid sea views

Devon, £1.25 million

Combe Wood House, Salcombe Regis

3 bedrooms, detached thatched study, 1.3 acres

Humberts (01404 42456)

Overlooking the combe to the sea and adjoining National Trust land, this charming farmhouse comes to the market in excellent condition. Salcombe Mouth beach is just 700 yards away and the small town of Sidmouth is two miles away. The gardens are particularly attractive and provide colour throughout the year.

Near Great Tew



Oxfordshire, £1.6 million

Grange Farm, Swerford

Knight Frank (01865 790077)

This five-bedroom farmhouse, which stands on the edge of the village, has 11 acres of gardens and grounds. Among the range of outbuildings are a professional kitchen and farm shop and there is a separate one-bedroom holiday cottage.



Oxfordshire, £1.8 million

Cold Norton Priory, Heythrop

Knight Frank (01865 790077)

This idyllic five-bedroom house, which dates from the 16th century, has a secluded position at the end of a drive in 3.43 acres. Outside is a courtyard of outbuildings and a recently constructed garage with a partly glazed room above.



Oxfordshire, £700,000

Holm Cottage, South Newington

Hamptons International

(01869 876245)

This house is the result of a cottage that has been extended to incorporate a barn. There are four bedrooms, a study, a kitchen/breakfast room and a cottage garden.

Public pomp and private circumstance

Teresa Levonian Cole reviews a fascinating journey through English social history, with Cliveden at its heart

Biography/history

The Mistresses of Cliveden

Natalie Livingstone (Hutchinson, £25 *£22)

THREE centuries of scandal, power and intrigue' runs this book's subtitle and, for these attributes, the name Cliveden resonates like no other. With its disparate cast of characters, from politicians and royals to poets and courtesans, this extensive account of five remarkable women who presided over England's most notorious country house promises to be a page-turner. It doesn't disappoint.

Begun in 1676 for George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, a close friend of Charles II, Cliveden was conceived as a bolt-hole for the Duke and his mistress, the Countess of Shrewsbury. This, however, was never to be. Reputedly 'one of the most licentious wicked women in Restoration history', the Countess was forcibly separated from her lover by the House of Lords in 1674.

Not until the arrival of a new chatelaine—Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney, who had had a scandalous affair with William of Orange—did Cliveden come into its own as a political setting. Elizabeth 'brought a sophisticated and worldly touch... setting the tone for centuries to come'. By 1729, when George II visited, her rehabilitation from 'royal whore' to royal hostess was complete.

For all the fascination her characters hold, Natalie Livingstone's work ranges far beyond their lives. Cliveden is the ship on which she navigates the choppy waters of history, through 'Restoration and Glorious Revolution, aristocratic rise and fall, two world wars and the Cold War', to shed light on the changing



Portrait of Augusta, Princess of Wales by Jean-Baptiste van Loo

cultural, social and political mores of the times.

We learn of Alexander Pope's influence on the creation of English-style gardens as expressions of anti-Napoleonism, of the 17th-century beauty ritual of 'gluing black taffeta spots onto their faces' and of the 18th-century fashion for collecting porcelain. We hear of Thomas Arne's masque, *Alfred*, which was inspired by the tension between George II and his eldest son, and premiered at Cliveden under the auspices of Augusta, Princess of Wales, and we learn of the popularisation of the smallpox vaccine, which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had come across, in Constantinople, in 1717.

In 1795, Cliveden suffered the first of two devastating fires. It was Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland—close confidante of Queen Victoria and mistress of Cliveden from 1849—who presided over its resurrection on both occasions, with Charles Barry's 'palazzo-style' rebuilding of the 1850s surviving today.

Active in politics and a vocal abolitionist, she would draw charges of hypocrisy from Karl Marx. Her friendship with Gladstone conflicted with the Queen's predilection for Disraeli, 'and yet,' the author writes, ending the chapter in best thriller style, 'it was not Gladstone or Disraeli, but another more exotic leader [Garibaldi], who threatened to drive a wedge between Harriet and the Queen.'

To Queen Victoria's dismay, the house was sold to the American Astor family in 1893, to be run by the formidable Nancy: Christian Scientist, devotee of icy baths, the first woman to take a seat in Parliament and the last great chatelaine of Cliveden. Her flamboyant, complex personality is brought to life in what are perhaps the most riveting chapters, charting her social and political rise to her fall from grace, in 1945, amid allegations of anti-semitism and Nazi appeasement.

By the end of two World Wars, crippling taxes obliged Waldorf Astor to offer Cliveden to the National Trust, with the family living on in the house. It was during the time of Nancy's son Bill Astor that the ill-fated meeting between the Secretary of State for War and the call-girl would take place. The ensuing Profumo Affair of 1963, now indelibly associated with Cliveden, cemented the house's reputation as 'an emblem of elite misbehaviour'.

Cliveden finally ceased to be a private house in 1968, to be reincarnated in the 1980s as a hotel, in which Nancy Astor, immortalised in Sargent's portrait, once again welcomes guests.

The author of this fascinating book wears her scholarship lightly, her love for her subject heightened, perhaps, by her husband's purchase of Cliveden in 2012.

Fiction

The Dust that Falls from Dreams

Louis de Bernières (Harvill Secker, £18.99 *£15.99)

LOUIS DE BERNIÈRES'S new novel opens with the death of Queen Victoria, before a sweep around the Edwardian age—'years that would forever be remembered as golden'. Clearly, this will be a tale about the times, as well as the characters. And so it proves. The large cast revolves around the well-to-do McCosh family. Rosie McCosh and Ashbridge Pendennis are childhood sweethearts, although the fearless Daniel Pitt quite likes her, too. How will the protagonists survive the coming war?

Ash, it's clear, won't: a gypsy has to stop abruptly when reading his palm. By the time he goes to the Front, he and Rosie are engaged and his death in 1915 is mourned by everyone who knew him. Devastated, Rosie becomes a nurse. Daniel, meanwhile, has joined the Royal Flying Corps. He becomes an ace, but this doesn't help him when he falls in love with Rosie, whose emotions have been cauterised.

The story continues into the 1920s, when Rosie befriends the housemaid, Millicent, because social barriers have become permeable and the ex-serviceman Mr Wragge, who becomes the gardener, is found sleeping in a storeroom because he can't afford a house.

These are living characters. Mrs McCosh, a Lady Bracknell-ish personality, becomes odd after a Zeppelin raid during which a friend was blown to smithereens. She is an exasperation to her family, led by Hamilton McCosh, who requires a variety of (unseen) mistresses to preserve his equilibrium. The descent of Mrs Pitt, Daniel's mother, to put Rosie (who has married Daniel) right about sex provides a dramatic turning point.

For me, the novel fails as a portrait of the age. Too much of the conversation seems designed to convey information about social change: telephones, motorcars, the servant crisis. But the characters and their dilemmas are compelling: they live on after the book has been closed. *Clive Aslet*



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Countryside

The Last English Poachers

Bob and Brian Tovey
(Simon & Schuster, £16.99 *£13.99)

AT MY PREP school, in the 1960s, we had sing-songs, accompanied by a master on the piano. A ditty we belted out with gusto was *The Lincolnshire Poacher*, whose delight it was, 'on a shining night, in the season of the year,' to do the sorts of things of which our fathers would have deeply disapproved. Oddly, the song was said to have been a favourite of George IV.

Since then, I've met a number of poachers and heard tell of many more. Almost without exception, they have been great characters, fine naturalists and experts in fieldcraft. The Toveys, the father and son co-authors of this book, are no exceptions to this rule. That, however, would be the only rule to which they conform and, let it be said now, that they have the very lowest opinion of anyone who might have been to a prep school.

The landowners of south Gloucestershire, the Toveys' chief area of operation, are poached rotten and ridiculed mercilessly in their tales over a period of 70 years. Their gamekeepers, in particular, are blasted. But such are the charm and humour employed, and so lyrical is the Toveys' love of the natural world and outdoor life, that it's difficult to condemn them utterly.

Their belief that they have a right to the plentiful wildlife of the English countryside, that it belongs to everyone and not just the privileged few, is a specious argument. If followed to its logical

conclusion, there would be nothing left to poach. And, anyway, much of the game they've taken has been expensively reared and is not wild.

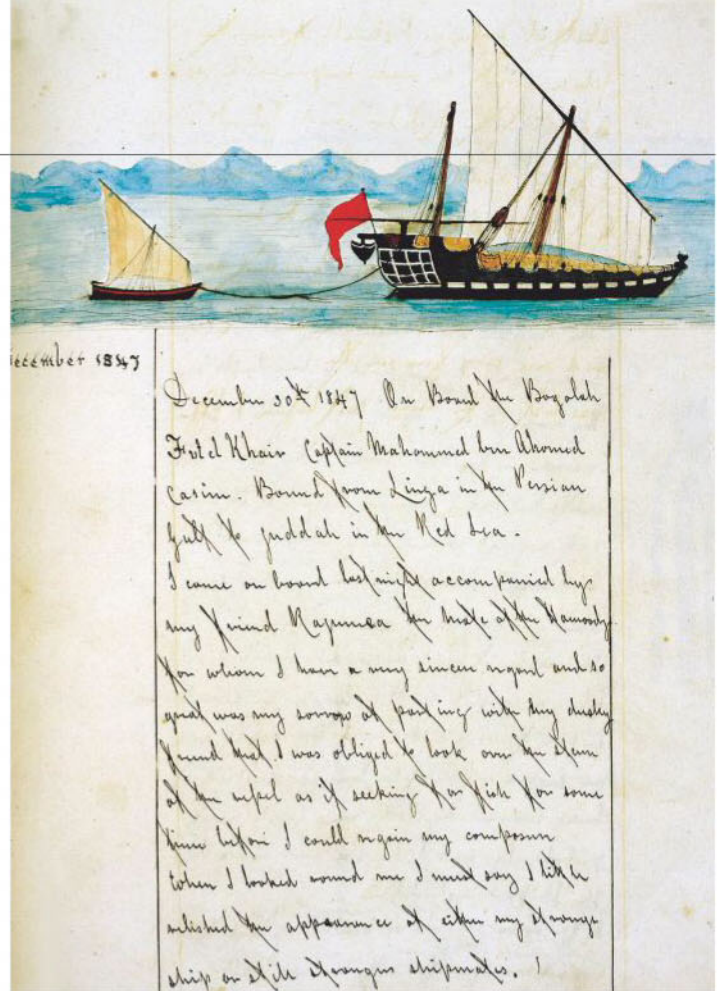
However, the rollicking good tales they tell, interspersed with darker periods of alcoholism and jail, are frequently hilarious, sometimes violent and always illuminating. Should you wish to know how to snare, trap, net, tickle, shoot, stalk or course just about anything edible that swims, flies or walks, let this be your primer.

Some of what the Toveys poach, they profess to give away to the poor, some they eat themselves and some they sell. Other than a bit of builder's labouring, both father and son have made a living out of poaching. But, as Brian says: 'It was never all about killing. Life has to be given a chance to breed and recover... We look after our environment. So, I suppose we're conservationists in our way.'

Bob tried to turn gamekeeper for a while, but he lasted one season. There was 'too much work and not enough freedom... I went back to poaching, so I could roam where I wanted and when I liked and have the freedom of a poacher's domain.' In that rugged individualism lies the romance of the poacher, whose skills command the grudging respect of many a countryman:

As me and my companions was
setting of a snare,
'Twas then we spied the game
keeper—for him we did not care.
For we can wrestle and fight, my boys,
and jump o'er anywhere,
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shining
night, in the season of the year.

Joe Gibbs



Thomas Machell's sketch of an Arab baghlah on which he sailed

Biography/travel Deeper Than Indigo

Jenny Balfour Paul
(Medina Publishing, £22.95 *£21.95)

THIS IS a story of obsession, a book turned inside out to expose every stage of its creation: journeys—physical and emotional—discoveries in libraries and dusty boxes, and the physical act of writing. It's a deeply personal book, it couldn't be otherwise because as soon as Jenny Balfour Paul begins to read Thomas Machell's 'surprisingly frank' journals written between 1840 and his death in 1864, she notices strange correspondences between his life and her own, so that *Deeper Than Indigo* becomes as much autobiography as biography.

Machell and his biographer were born rebellious, with a curiosity that takes them to remoter parts of the world. At 16, he's sailing to India on a merchant ship; she goes there at 18 in a Land Rover full of hippies. He continues through fever and foul weather to China and 'The First Opium War'; she goes in pursuit of indigo, her special subject for many years.

Already, subject and biographer are crossing paths, albeit at

a distance of 150 years. She was trying to 'move on from indigo' when she 'met' Machell, but then he turns indigo planter in Bengal, making the subject 'too tightly woven into our joint lives ever to be disentangled'. Nevertheless, her 'passion for indigo' will gradually evolve into a 'passion for Thomas' that leads her on adventures in his footsteps all over the world.

Machell is refreshingly open-minded; he's critical of colonialism, rejects religious extremism and, in Polynesia, he falls for a cannibal chief's daughter. Two questions lie at the heart of his story: where are the missing volumes of his journals and where is his grave? With nothing but her 'pseudo-academic reputation' to lose, the author seeks answers by dowsing for the location of the grave and accepting the invitation of a Jungian therapist who specialises in past-life regression.

The book evolves into a conversation between her and her subject, with Machell beginning to write parts of it himself, so that she confesses: 'Now I no longer know who is writing this book.' Unorthodox? Certainly, but no less entertaining for that. *Helena Attlee*

Chris Chapman, 1998; British Library



Out poaching on the Totworth estate, Gloucestershire, in the 1990s

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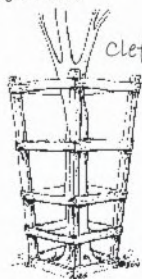
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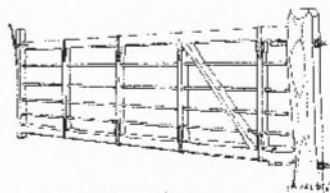
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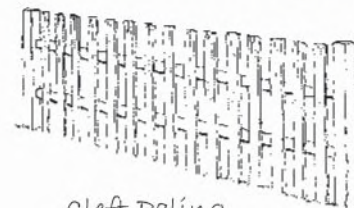
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Dorset Rod Gate



Cleft Paling



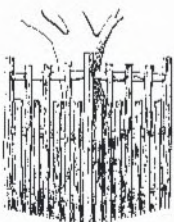
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Squeezer Stile

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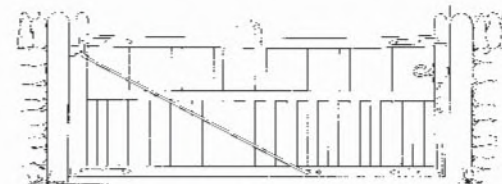
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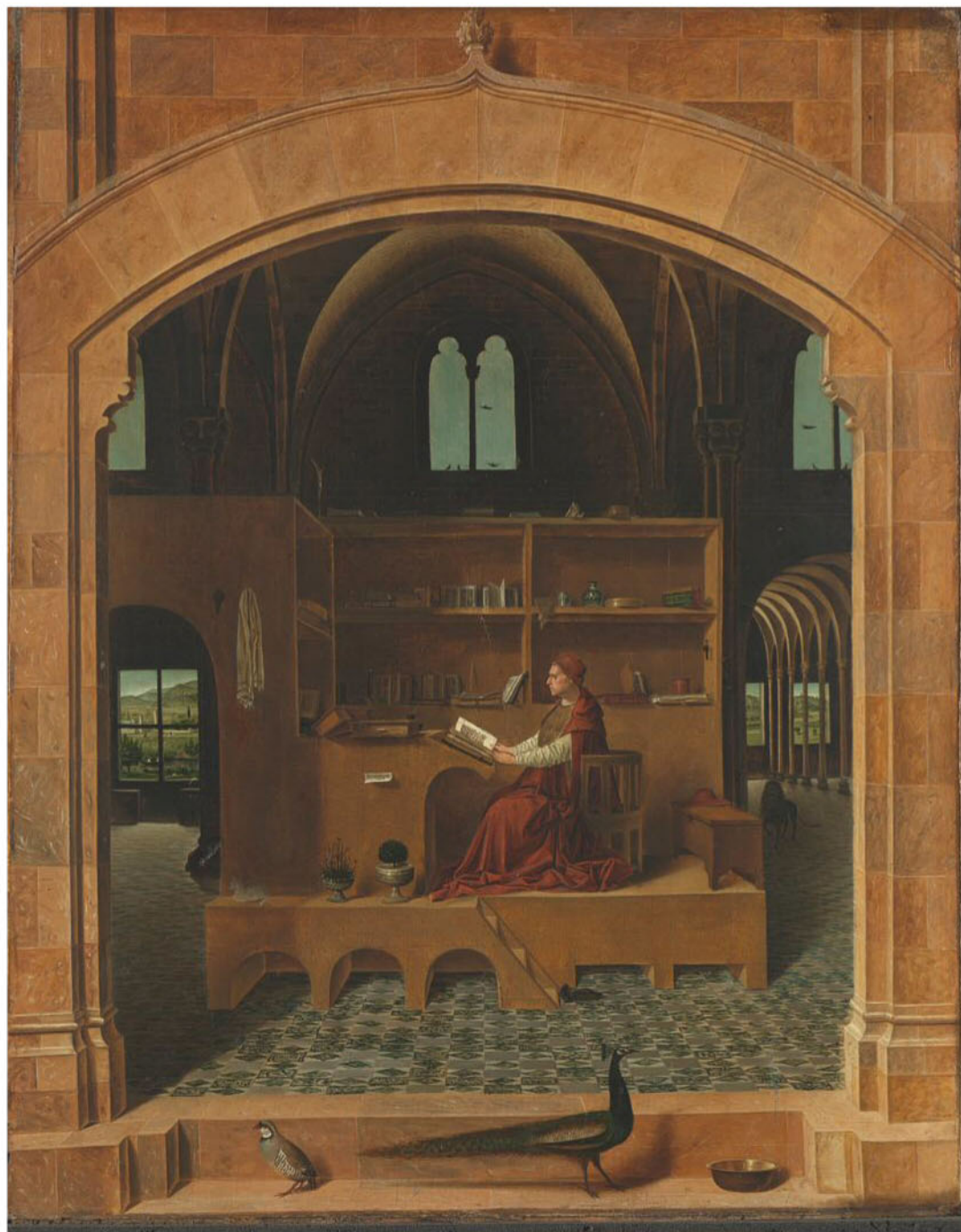
Harmony or dischord?

In a radical change from its usual exhibitions, the National Gallery invites us to consider six of its paintings, each presented with a specially composed soundtrack. Huon Mallalieu listens to the results

THREE years ago (*COUNTRY LIFE*, March 7, 2012), I wrote about the ways in which some painters deliberately insert sounds as well as visual images into our minds. I suggested that sound is very frequently met with in post-Renaissance and post-Reformation painting, particularly in Flanders and the Netherlands, but also in the work of later artists as diverse as Courbet, Turner and Maggi Hambling. For the greatest enjoyment, we should learn to use the mind's ear as well as its eye.

Now, in its latest show, the National Gallery has taken up the idea, at least in part. Seven sound artists and musicians—two working in partnership—have each been commissioned to create a 'soundscape' for a painting of their choice. Visitors make their way through a warren of darkened, sound-isolated spaces in which to look and listen.

We start with Akseli Gallen-Kallela's irenic 1905 painting



of Lake Keitele in central Finland, its silver-blue surface scratched by the wind. This is a natural choice for Chris Watson, a musician and composer as well as one of the world's top wildlife recorders (*COUNTRY LIFE*, February 13, 2013). He has won plaudits working on David Attenborough's television series. As well as forest birds and cawing ravens, his soundscape incorporates the melodic, echoing calls with which the local Sami people communicate with their ancestors.

Next is Holbein's *Ambassadors*, inspiration for *Air on a Broken*



Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller (left) have created a 3D model animated with sounds and lighting to accompany Antonello da Messina's *St Jerome in his Study* (above)

String by Susan Philipsz, who creates 'installations that explore the psychological and sculptural potential of sound'. Here, the broken string on the painted lute—difficult to see in the subdued lighting—is one of many symbols of discord in the picture and is evoked by removing one string of the violin whose layered tones are broadcast through three speakers. The aim is an undefined atmosphere of tension.

For Antonello da Messina's *St Jerome in his Study* of about 1475, Canadian collaborators Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller have made a 3D model of the complex painting's indoor and outdoor spaces, adding sounds to animate it. The lighting, as well as the sounds, changes as a day progresses; there are the noises of the countryside as well as within the house. Jerome is not yet at his desk, but we hear his approaching steps. An unseen singer moves through the model and eventually emerges to surround us with music.

For the greatest enjoyment, we should learn to use the mind's ear as well as its eye

Nico Muhly is a chamber, choral, orchestral and opera composer and his *Long Phrases* for the *Wilton Diptych* is a 'slow look at all four panels': Richard II's white-hart badge, the Madonna, Child and Angels, the Kings and Richard's time-worn coat-of-arms. This is accompanying music on viola da gamba for a lovely (for me) silent painting.

The film composer Gabriel Yared won an Oscar for his score for *The English Patient* and has also composed ballets. For Cézanne's *Les Grandes Baigneuses*, he invites viewers to 'open their ears in order to be drawn into the painting creating their own story and interpretation'. The speaker plinths represent different instruments, so what you hear varies as you move about the space.



Wildlife recorder Chris Watson (below) worked with Akseli Gallen-Kallela's *Lake Keitele* (above)



Finally, it is back to water and light, with Théo van Rysselberghe's *Coastal Scene*, a Pointillist work of the 1890s. Jamie Smith, aka Jamie xx, is a music producer and remix artist, so in *Ultramarine*, he has created a sound installation in which the music seems to diffuse and break up as you move closer to the painting—as does the paint itself.

There is a major difference between the approach of this show and the experience that I suggested in my article. There is slight opportunity to listen to what the painter might be trying to make you hear, as it is overlaid by a third party's interpretation, particularly when they are on infinite loops. Several have pauses after runs of a few minutes, but, should you wish to enjoy the full

recording of Chris Watson's birds, you must devote 50 minutes to *Lake Keitele*.

I had considerable difficulty in opening my ears to *Les Grandes Baigneuses* as suggested by Yared, as where he tries to convey 'the abstract nature of Cézanne's work', I hear the specific murmur of female gossip. I most enjoyed *Conversation with Antonello*, as so many of Cardiff and Bures Miller's sounds seem to me exactly what the painter would have wished us to hear. One that I may have missed, but hope was included, is the soft pad of the lion's paws as it approaches the saint across the marble floor.

Soundscape is at the National Gallery, Sainsbury Wing, Trafalgar Square, London WC2, until September 6 (www.nationalgallery.org.uk; 020-7747 2885)

Next week: Yves St Laurent at the Bowes Museum



All the bells and whistles

Barbara Newman wonders why choreographers feel they need to rely on gimmicks and technology



Dutch National Ballet brought a colourful if confusing *Cinderella* by Christopher Wheeldon to the Coliseum, starring Anna Tsygankova

WHEN George Balanchine and Frederick Ashton were unknown and eager for opportunity, they took whatever choreographic assignments they could get. Unemployed after Diaghilev's death in 1929, Balanchine made dances for C. B. Cochran's revues, Broadway shows and Hollywood movies. During the same period, Ashton choreographed a Dryden comedy, an Anthony Asquith film and various operas, musicals and revues as well.

Once they could join, or build, a permanent ballet company, they worked almost exclusively within it, as they had hoped to do from the start and, by the time Kenneth MacMillan made his first piece in 1953, ballet was so firmly rooted in America and Europe that he never had to create anything else.

Contemporary choreographers often did the same thing. Martha Graham concentrated on her own company for 30 years before



New English Ballet Theatre (NEBT)'s Matthieu Quincy and Christina Cecchini in Kristin McNally's *Mad Women*

approaching ballet in 1959, when she and Balanchine made *Episodes* for New York City Ballet, using one another's dancers for independent works linked by one title.

Dancemakers now seem increasingly restless, even those who have a permanent troupe at their disposal. Perhaps the barrage of movement, speech,

music and design that reaches us through our phones and screens tempts them to absorb those dizzying combinations. Or perhaps the need to satisfy an audience with an ever-shorter attention span prompts secure troupes to supply a stream of novelties. Whatever the reason, today's dancemakers have slipped the confines of a single ensem-

ble and now work everywhere.

In the past five years, Wayne McGregor has fulfilled commissions in Paris, Stuttgart, San Francisco, Zurich and New York while making dances for his own Random Dance troupe and the Royal Ballet; since 2006, he has been the latter's resident choreographer.

His latest creation, *Tree of Codes*, opened at the Manchester International Festival with even better-known artists in tow. Olafur Eliasson provided the 'visual concept', the pop composer Jamie xx wrote the score, Jonathan Safran Foer's eponymous book inspired the structure and performers from the Paris Opera Ballet and Random Dance shared the floor to realise Mr McGregor's ambitious vision.

What was it? Only those who read the programme could tell. Content to stick with the frenetic pace and extreme physicality that characterise all his

Angela Sterling; Dave Morgan; Ravi Deepres

ballets, Mr McGregor allowed the designs to steal the stage.

Reflecting scrimms gave us individual echoes of the dancers and innumerable replicas that shot away from us into infinity; shrouded in blackout costumes wired with electricity along their limbs, the dancers became a cloud of fireflies; huge mirrored discs cut from an apparently solid cloth revolved on their vertical axis, bouncing light in all directions.

Forcing your attention away from this staggering display of Mr Eliasson's imagination and ingenuity, you found superbly trained, thoroughly dedicated performers, struggling against overwhelming odds to be seen and appreciated. If this piece were billed as an installation embracing choreography, the dominance of design over dance would have made sense, but Mr McGregor's idea of creative collaboration enhances his reputation while undercutting the art he supposedly supports.

Nevertheless, the audience cheered and the stellar names involved clearly sold tickets; one Manchester local said he'd come to hear the music, but would give contemporary choreography another try. As long as design reigns supreme, however, you have to wonder how much choreography he'll be able to see.

Christopher Wheeldon's work is now as popular and ubiquitous among ballet companies as Mr McGregor's. In 2014, he directed and choreographed his first musical, a theatrical adaptation of the film *An American in Paris*, which travelled to Broadway and won him a Tony. Two Royal Ballet productions, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *The Winter's Tale*, revealed his interest in narrative, but, like *Tree of Codes* and *Alice* itself, his *Cinderella*, which Dutch National Ballet recently brought to the Coliseum, suffers from a risky imbalance between design and dance.

The inventive designer Julian Crouch dreamed up fairy-tale sets, costumes and masks and the puppeteer Basil Twist

devised a splendid articulated tree and carriage. Yet the child sitting beside me, who never took her eyes off the action, kept asking 'What's happening? Who's that?'—legitimate questions that her mother couldn't answer.

A detailed libretto in the programme explained Mr Wheeldon's dramatic reinterpretation of the familiar story, video projections added atmosphere to the events and the dancers threw themselves wholeheartedly into their characters, leaning heavily on mimetic acting rather than expressive dancing. But if neither the children nor the adults in the audience could follow the plot, what purpose did the elaborate decorations serve?

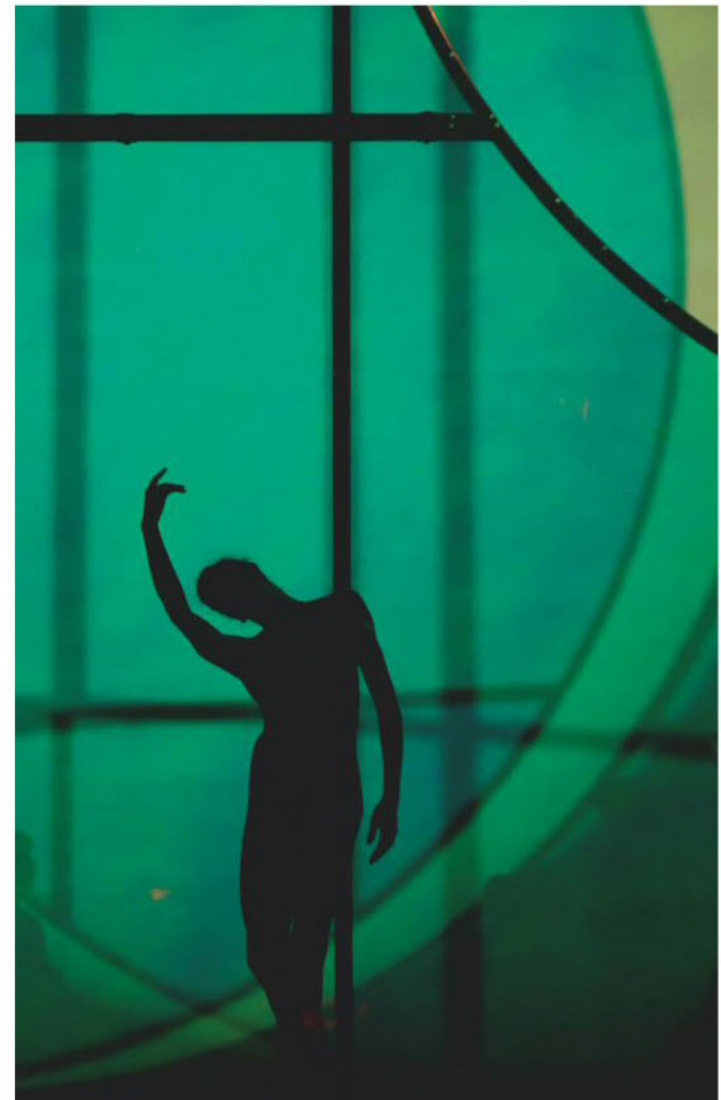
I saw more engaging dances at a performance by the New English Ballet Theatre, a concert group that exposes young performers to different stylistic challenges and encourages young choreographers to stretch their ability. As it happened, three Royal Ballet dancers—Erico Montes, Kristen McNally and Valentino Zucchetti—plus Andrew McNicol, who studied at the company's school, created four of the evening's five pieces.

Sustained only by live music, sensitive costuming and their creativity, these artists proved beyond doubt that choreography doesn't need costly production values to succeed. In ways no other artform duplicates, it can effectively explore space, time and human experience all by itself.

New English Theatre Ballet will be at the Lyric Hammer-smith from July 24 to 25 and at St James Theatre from August 20 to 22 (www.nebt.co.uk); Ballett Zürich dances Mr McGregor's 'Kairos' at the Edinburgh International Festival, August 27–29 (www.eif.co.uk); Queensland Ballet will bring 'La Sylphide' to the London Coliseum from August 4–8; the Royal Ballet revives Mr McGregor's 'Raven Girl' in October as well as new works by him and Mr Wheeldon (www.roh.org.uk)



Above: NEBT in Valentino Zucchetti's *Orbital Motion*. Below: Marie-Agnes Gillot in Wayne McGregor's *Tree of Codes*





Eggs and Bacon

Modern works continue to garner high saleroom prices and exhibitors did well at the highly successful Masterpiece



Fig 1: *Four Eggs on a Plate*, a Lucian Freud thank-you. £989,000

THE exhibition ‘Francis Bacon and the Masters’, which closes this week at the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, can only have served to lessen the artist’s reputation. Even the warmer reviews could find only that vacuous word ‘compelling’ with which to praise it. Granted, there were many works by Rembrandt and other undoubted masters to enjoy, but almost all demonstrated that, although

Bacon may have drawn inspiration from them, he did not quite belong in such company.

It may well be that, having been lauded so highly both before and since his death—in 1971, he was crowned the world’s leading artist in a poll conducted by the French art journal *Connaissance des Arts*—with ever rising prices, he is due for a period of reappraisal. It was also in 1971 that he painted the



Fig 2: *Warhol's One Dollar Bill (Silver Certificate)*. £20,869,000



Fig 3: *Francis Bacon's Two Men Working in a Field*. £10,722,500

78in by 58in *Two Men working in a Field* (Fig 3), which was one of the top lots in Christie’s modern and contemporary sale on the last evening of June.

It is unusual in his *oeuvre* in that it is, loosely speaking, a landscape. The catalogue entry suggested many influences, especially for the eye-like composition, including the Surrealists, notably Dalí and Buñuel’s film *Un Chien Andalou* and the writings of Georges Bataille, a Raphael cartoon, *Castor and Pollux* by the sculptor Nollekens and, more unexpectedly, according to the authority Martin Harrison, ‘the peaked caps worn by the men were derived from a plate in *Ben Hogan: The Modern Fundamentals of Golf*, 1957’.

He continues: ‘Bacon had employed the graphic device of “directional” arrows before Hogan’s manual was published, but he claimed he first encountered them in a golfing book: Hogan’s illustrations are at least likely to have suggested the arrows in

Two Men Working in a Field. There was no mention, however, of Millet’s *Gleaners*, which should surely be worth considering.

It sold for £10,722,500, just over the upper estimate, and a second Bacon lot, *Study for the Head of Isabel Rawsthorne* and *Study for the Head of George Dyer*, each 14in by 12in, but mounted and framed together, also went just over estimate at £12,178,500.

At Sotheby’s, 24 hours later, the essence of Warhol sold for twice as much. In 1975, Andy Warhol proclaimed ‘I like money on the wall’ and his principal attraction for ‘collectors’ is that however little their visitors know about art, they will know pretty precisely what has been paid for a Warhol on the host’s wall. It is an immediately recognisable asset, rather than art.

As early as 1962, Warhol had been pursuing this idea, painting, in Sotheby’s words, ‘the very first in what would become a lineage of canvases depicting

the ultimate symbol of status and wealth: money. This painting is *One Dollar Bill (Silver Certificate)* (**Fig 2**). Unimpeachably important, it signifies the very foundation upon which Warhol forged his career, the one painting to which Warhol's fascination with consumption, wealth, celebrity, and glamour is rooted'. I would quarrel with only one word; 'important' should perhaps be 'trite'.

However, the 52½in by 71½in painting's new owner—and it is a painting in casein and pencil rather than some form of mechanical image—can at least be sure that everyone will know that he had £20,869,000 to spend.

Had luck or a miracle have made it financially possible, from every point of view, I would prefer that rather than such brashness, on my wall my visitors should enjoy another offering in this sale: Lucian Freud's 4in by 6in *Four Eggs on a Plate* (**Fig 1**).

The simplest of Freud's, and probably anybody else's, still-lives, this little masterpiece is a glowing tribute to a great friendship. The late Duchess of Devonshire loved her chickens as much as she loved Chatsworth, where Freud had been her first guest. He returned many times, painting murals and family portraits. Later, whenever she went to London, she would take him some eggs and, if he happened not to be at home, she would leave them on the doorstep. This 2002 painting was an



Fig 4: Castle Howard mirror. Sold by Ronald Phillips



Fig 5: Rare pair of silver seal matrices. Sold by Koopman

equally charming 'Thank you'. This year's Masterpiece fair, which closed in the Chelsea Royal Hospital gardens on July 1, seems to have been the most successful so far. Luxury was still very much the tone of the enterprise, but the bling-ish excesses of the first years have been muted, making it a much more congen-

ial experience for collectors and curators. Sales have been claimed across the range and down the ages, including Old Masters, 18th- and 19th-century furniture, silver and clocks.

I am afraid that I have not got prices, but among those sales was Rupert Wace's 3rd–2nd century BC Hellenistic Hygieia, goddess of physical and mental health (illustrated here, June 17). Koopman sold the only known pair of Victorian Queen's Bench silver seal matrices for England and Wales (**Fig 5**), which won it the accolade of the fair's most outstanding silver item, for both artistic and historical reasons. It also sold an unusually large *nef* table galleon (to a buyer from Monaco).

Fig 6: George III cabinet. Sold by Godson & Coles



Fig 7: Painting of about 1500. Sold by Fam Fogg

Sam Fogg sold numerous antiquities and medieval pieces, including a Netherlandish painting, of about 1500, of courtiers and serenading musicians (**Fig 7**); Godson & Coles a George III satinwood cabinet (**Fig 6**) once owned by the 1st Marquess of Anglesea; and Ronald Phillips a set of four George II giltwood mirrors, about 1740, from Castle Howard (**Fig 4**).

Next week Curious contraptions and glorious glass

Pick of the week

More Warhol at the Antiques for Everyone fair at the Birmingham NEC from tomorrow to Sunday. As well as its antiquarian stock, Lucius Books offers a handbag signed in marker pen and gold ink in 1984 (with dollar signs naturally) by him and Jean-Michel Basquiat. It was carried by Joy Bouldin when she accompanied them to Keith Haring's 'Party of Life' at the Paradise Garage on May 16, 1984. Two years earlier, Bouldin had thrown up a job in a law firm to become the all-powerful elevator girl and door person at the fashionable Danceteria. If 'Joystick' did not like you, you were socially dead. She sat to Basquiat several times. Two of those paintings have sold for £1.5 million and £2.6 million and her bag is priced at £10,000.



Crossword

A prize of £15 in book tokens will be awarded for the first correct solution opened. Solutions must reach Crossword No 4390, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU by **Tuesday, July 28**. UK entrants only.

ACROSS

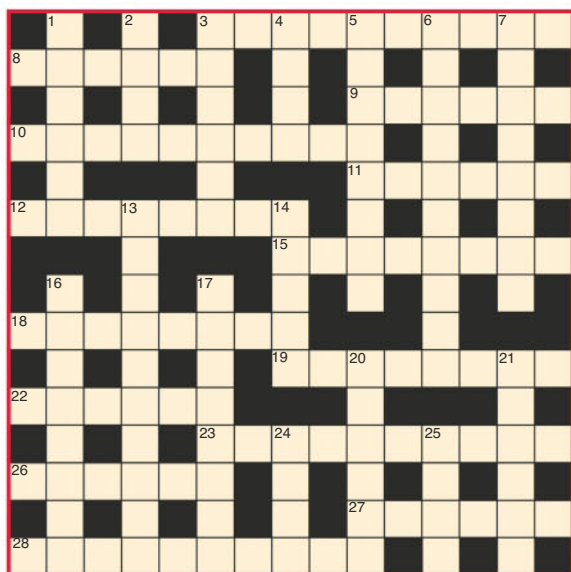
3. Colony negotiated terms (10)
8. Small sanctuary cut short (6)
9. Light reading source (6)
10. English speaker orders Pole—hang on (10)
11. I am caught in squeeze for electrical system (6)
12. Traitor arranges drink around serving receptacle (8)
15. Outdoes back of rostra (8)
18. Reserve sporting venue for literary gathering (4, 4)
19. Relative first with argon for fire starter (8)
22. Fleet provide arsenal for lady (6)
23. Organised dismissal during pillage (10)
26. Want the French to tease (6)
27. Covers hens (6)
28. Prophet returns to earth with items for wood (5, 5)

DOWN

1. Complain about pivot point (6)
2. Get in shape at cricket ground (4)
3. Brisk and fashionable (6)
4. Leaving for African country (4)
5. Similarly enjoy Morecambe's partner (8)
6. Clergyman has trivial weapon (5, 5)
7. Not any more desire of queen on rising (2, 6)
13. Outdoor area for bands—especially the Stones? (4, 6)
14. Dance to add degree (5)
16. Way to announce arrival at bordello dance (8)
17. Place insignia around meadow in most obvious way (8)
20. Stops unintentionally in part of theatre (6)
21. Extra to remove moisture under natural conditions (6)
24. French city looks pleasant (4)
25. Means of access to low islands (4)

4390

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SOLUTION TO 4389 (Winner will be announced in two weeks' time)

ACROSS: 1, Habit-forming; 8, Union; 9, Medicinal; 11, Thermostat; 12, Asps; 14, Resist; 15 Scenario; 17, Apple pie; 19, Edible; 22, Etch; 23, Altar cloth; 25, Neuralgia; 26 Theta; 27, Get the wind up.
DOWN: 1, Heifers; 2, Bandmaster; 3, Tamest; 4, Ordinance; 5, Mace; 6, Non-user; 7, Subterranean; 10, Lose one's head; 13, Uneducated; 16, Dialogue; 18, Picture; 20, Booze-up; 21, Safari; 24, Last.

Winner of 4387 is Anne Smart, Bodmin, Cornwall.

Bridge Andrew Robson

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island, the venue for the 2014 US Fall Nationals, was cold. Bitterly cold. Especially when riding along the East Bay Cycle Path into a freezing gale, jetlagged, at 8am. However, you do think better in the cold—take these two Providence deals.

Dealer West
East-West vulnerable

♠ 9 7 6 3
♥ A Q 10 2
♦ A K 5
♣ 10 5

♠ A Q J 5 4
♥ — N ♠ 10 8 2
♦ Q 9 7 W+E ♥ K 5 4
♣ A 9 8 7 6 S ♣ 10 6 4 3

♠ K
♥ J 9 8 7 6 3
♦ J 8 2
♣ K J 2

South	West	North	East
	1♠	Pass(1)	Pass
2♥(2)	3♣	4♥	End(3)

(1) Too many Spades to double.
(2) In the Protective ('Cheat') Seat, this is perfectly acceptable.
(3) East might well have bid Four Spades here, facing a big black two-suiter. This would go just one down on best play.

With an awkward choice of lead, West opted for the Ace of Spades and was pleased to see declarer's King fall. He continued with a second Spade, declarer ruffing. At trick three, declarer led a Heart, hoping for West to hold the King. When West rudely discarded, he played dummy's Queen and gave East the King, East returning a 'safe' Heart (was this best?).

Winning the second Heart in dummy, declarer led the ten of Clubs, correctly covered by East's Queen (to prevent declarer from scoring two Club tricks). Declarer's King lost to West's Ace and West returned the nine of Clubs. Winning the Knave, declarer ruffed his third Club and now ruffed a third Spade, an important play because it removed East's last Spade.

Declarer drew East's last Heart, then led his final Heart. What could West discard? His last four cards were the Queen of Spades and Queen-nine-seven of Diamonds. Dummy's were the nine of Spades and Ace-King-five of Diamonds. Because declarer had ruffed a third Spade, West had sole charge of Spades, so had to release a Diamond, in the hope his

partner held the Knave. Declarer now threw dummy's Spade—it had served its purpose—and led a (low) Diamond to the Ace-King. West's Queen was felled and declarer could lead back to his promoted Knave at trick 13.

Ten tricks and game made, making East wish he'd led a third Spade when he won the King of Hearts. West could then have led a fourth (high) Spade when he won the Ace of Clubs, so removing the Spade threat.

Our second deal from the Ocean State was just a part score. However, at matchpoint scoring (Pairs), all deals count the same.

Dealer South
Neither vulnerable

♠ Q J 7
♥ A J 7 4 3
♦ Q 4
♣ Q 4 3

♠ 6
♥ 10 6 N ♠ K 8 5
♦ K J 9 7 6 3 2 W+E ♦ 8
♣ A 9 7 S ♣ K J 8 5

♠ A 10 9 4 3 2
♥ K
♦ A 10 5
♣ 10 6 2

South	West	North	East
1♠	3♦(1)	3♠(2)	End

(1) Weak Jump Overcall.
(2) Sensible. Three Hearts does not limit the strength and emphasises the wrong feature. If in doubt, support.

West began with the ten of Hearts and declarer naturally ran it to his singleton King. Lacking an entry to take the Spade finesse, he cashed the Ace and led a Spade to dummy. East won the King and switched to his singleton Diamond.

Declarer had to rise with the Ace of Diamonds to avoid a second-round ruff, then led a second Diamond. West rose with the King, but East knew the hand. He ruffed his partner's winner and switched to a low Club. West won the Ace, returned a second Club and East's King-Knave set the contract.

There was just one way to make Three Spades. Declarer had to rise with dummy's Ace of Hearts at trick one, swallowing his King. He runs the Queen-Knave of Spades to pick up the suit without loss, then, after drawing trumps, leads towards the Queen of Diamonds. Six Spades, a Heart and two Diamonds make nine tricks and contract made.

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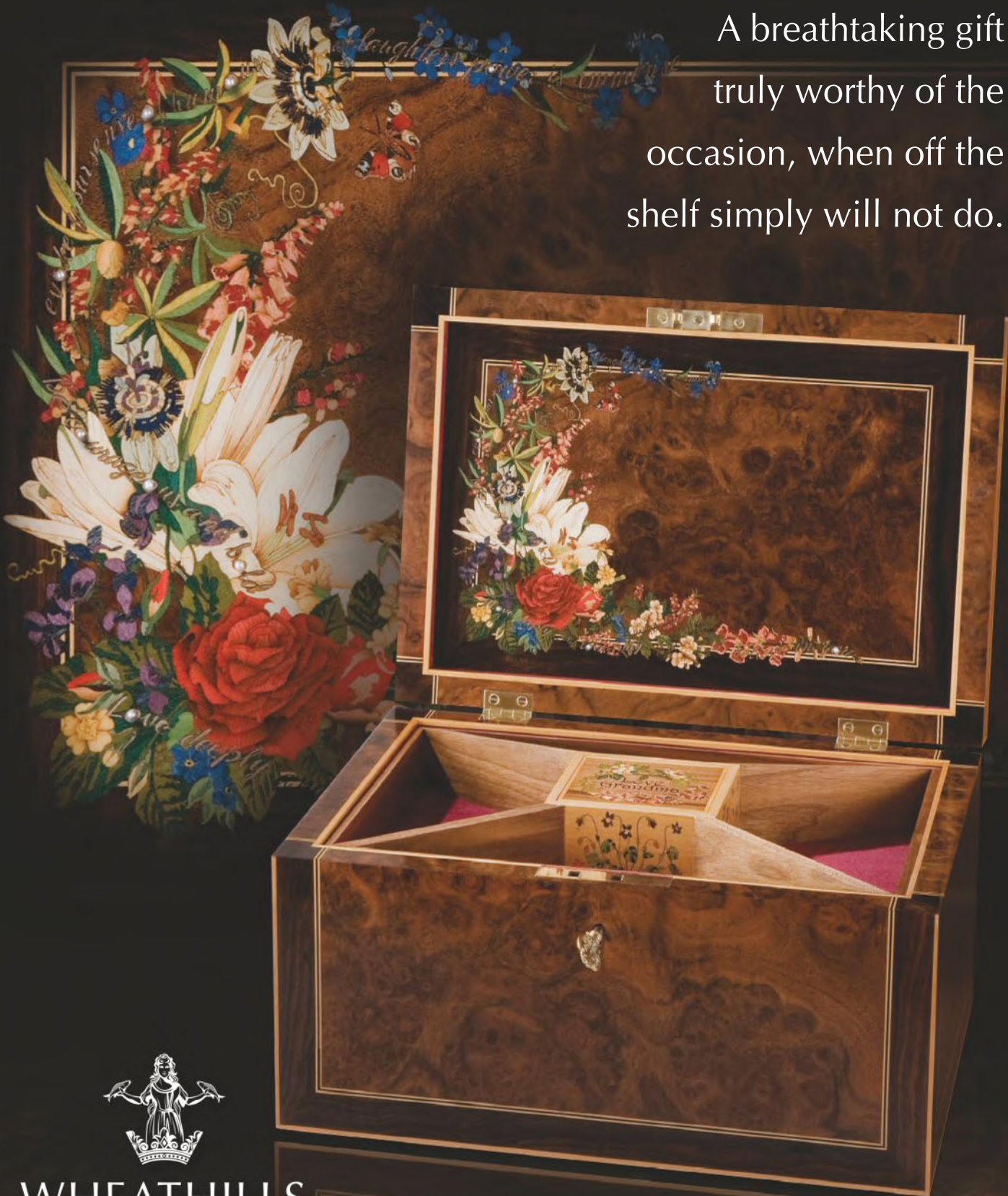
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The long and the short of it

If you're held up at gunpoint after 11 days in South America, don't tell your mother until you get home. When a policeman in some lawless state accuses you of something you haven't done and seesaws his hands as if they are the scales of justice, saying 'we have a problem' (hand up) 'or we have a solution' (hand down), place several notes in the 'solution' hand. If you plan to fish, take a sinking tip.

Now rediscovering the delights of home turf, Will has described various aspects of travelling in South America that I'm glad I didn't know about at the time: bird-eating spiders, wolf spiders in the sleeping bag, roads of death—so named because of the number of people who died building the road he assured me—and so on. All part of growing up and handling situations.

However, in one respect, I feel we sent him off with a certain amount of useful experience. If you're over 6ft, expect to have your photograph taken. If you're 6ft 6in, you will be pointed at quite openly. I suppose I should have realised this would become

a theme of family life when I took Olive out in the pram for the first time and a woman approached me, looked at Zam's departing back as he headed into a shop, tut-tutted and said: 'You two shouldn't breed.'

As the children have grown—and grown—we've become used to ticket inspectors bouncing imaginary basketballs at us (Paris, Marrakech) or restaurant owners wondering if they have enough food (Italy) and, in England, we count the mentions—Anna got six at lunch yesterday and four at supper, which is on the low side. She doesn't mind this conversational opener, but I can't help resenting it a tad. It's not as if I go around saying 'Wow, aren't you short?' or 'Gosh, you haven't grown at all'.

In South America, Will was photographed on a daily basis. Schoolchildren gawped, phones were whipped out and he posed, pretty willingly, I suspect. At the science museum in Medellín ('once murder capital of the world, Mum'), there was a queue for the instrument that measured how high you could jump. He touched

the top bar without going on tiptoes to the amazement of the rest of the museum, who made him do it again and again.

The average Colombian man is 5ft 7in. When Will left his placement in Rio, he sent us a photo

6 If you're held up at gunpoint, don't tell your mother until you get home ;

in which he's standing arm in arm with his beloved bosses as he towers above their heads. They are both standing on a wall. Actually, Brazilian women are tall at 5ft 2in compared to, say, Bolivians, who are 4ft 8in.

When Zam and I visited the Summer Palace in Beijing (average Chinese height 5ft 5in), we were more of a hit than the palace. Apparently, my height, nose and bosom were a physical trio worth recording. I fled to a bench in a quiet spot in order to escape

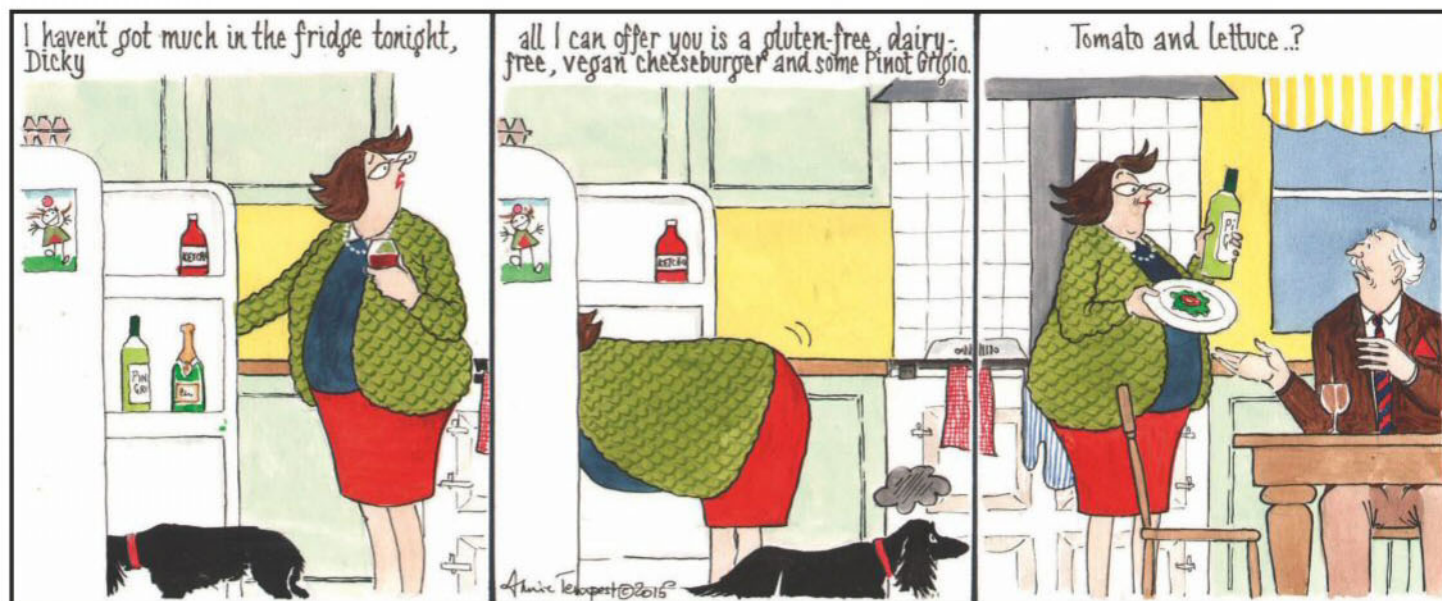
the staring eyes and clicking cameras, but, within minutes, a group had joined me while they took it in turns to arrange themselves like a team photograph. I imagined them showing it back home: 'Look what we saw in Beijing!' I wasn't a mascot, I was a freak.

I realise that being tall is not a drawback—if you discount clothes, shoes, legroom, beds, old houses, being sighed at when you sit down in the theatre, it is, of course, a very lucky and blessed physical attribute, which reflects the prosperous nature of the western world. Just sometimes, I would prefer it if it wasn't mentioned.

'Do you ever get called Shorty?' the man at the fish-and-chip shop asked Anna as he wrapped our lunch last week, 'because I used to be the fattest guy in the school and they called me Slim.' But there is a place where we feel truly at ease and can buy any number of shoes. There are no bird-eating spiders and you know where you stand with the police. Amsterdam seems a mighty fine place for a gap year.

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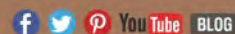
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