

3p

Harlequin

Leisure Magazine of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Research Group and Associated Organisations



HARWELL's Tandem Generator

In this issue

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THE CSMA

WILD LIFE STUDIES BY VIC BURROUGHS

APRIL
1979

ASHDOWN HOUSE

PETS' CORNER

THROUGH THE MONTH WITH TED NORVELL

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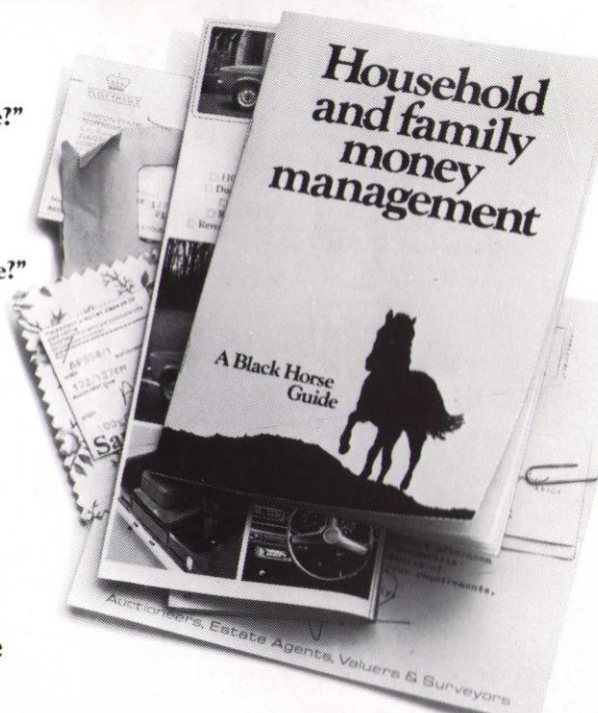
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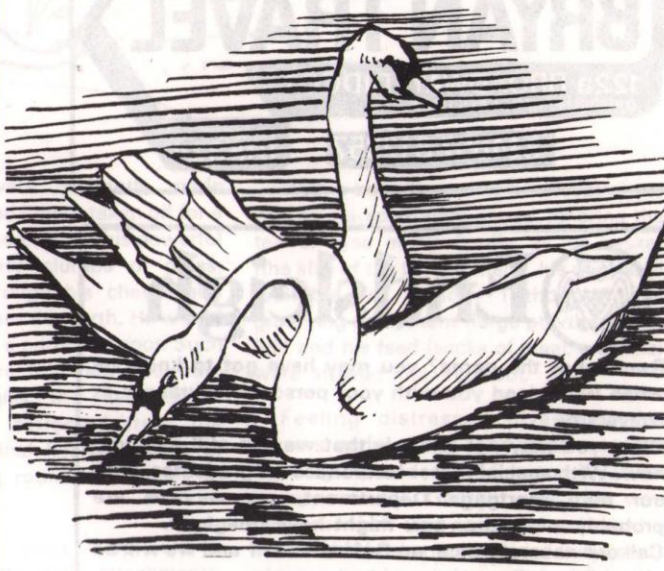
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GEORGE — how we were adopted by a basset hound



— PAULINE SNOW

My small and elegant wire-haired fox terrier, having bitten and barked her way through postmen, milkmen, workmen and policemen for most of her eight years, was finally put to sleep (from complications due to her blindness). Anticipating the dreadful vacuum, my husband and I decided to offer a home to a dog from our local Dog Rescue Society. With little initial warning, Skippy, an animated hearthrug on four legs, arrived from Bognor Regis with temporary owners who had inherited him from an emigrated sister. He instantly skipped back to Bognor as soon as the car door was opened (no wonder he had been thus named). Feeling we would not therefore be seeing much of Skippy, we firmly said "Not suitable for our environment!"

A few days later we were informed through a kind basset breeder that George, a seven-year old basset hound, was looking for a happy home as his devoted owners were off to the Far East, and then to the States, and that they were desperately searching for the right home for him.

I had lived for two years next to Sarah, a basset of endearing obstinacy and had fallen in love with the breed; as had my husband in his youth, because of a male basset on bitch duty who would often stroll round his garden with complete aplomb.

We met George's owners at our local Yacht Basin (where they were enjoying a final sail on a friend's yacht before winging their way towards untaxed thousands), and my husband and I waited on a burning hot Saturday morning, highly nervous.

Finally I spied a long tail waving through an estate car's window. A massive head, long body and eloquent rump poured out of the back door followed by a taut arm attached to the lady of the house.

"But he's enormous..." I muttered to my husband "Look at his paws!" They were like saucers.

Introductions were hesitantly made and my husband and I were taken off for a walk by George who pressed his powerful nose against choice clumps of grass, blowing loudly through his cheeks and flattening his jaw into the earth. He would become rivetted to a particular spot. Such special smells were then watered from three to four angles, the last drop of enjoyment being extracted from the situation with a final hearty scratch of loose stones flung round our ankles to show his approval.

George has a strong male aura, a swinging personality with attachments, and enjoyed a pretty girl, but showed even greater relish over any large butch male dog which caught his eye. There seemed to be quite a few of these around the yachts. I became sensitively aware in a way I'd never been before, of any male dog in the vicinity, for George would duck his head towards them, make a determined heave and give an excited bay. The most prudent policy seemed to be avoidance before he sighted them.

"In no way can we make this dog happy" I murmured to my husband, as we returned to his owners who were standing in a forlorn group with their teenage sons, pale with the threat of bereavement.

I felt sure a more bassetty family with rolling acres and guns flanked by retrievers would be better for him. I said as much to his owners, adding faintly to the wife (because George by now was sitting at our feet pouring emotion at me through deep brown eyes) that we were not the best home for him.

"But we feel you are..." insisted the owners. At this, George laid a large white paw on my husband's knee and placed his heavy head on mine (we were all sitting talking on a low white wall at the time). Fatal...

"Should we try him until Thursday?" suggested my husband hesitantly. "...just to see if he would settle..."

Need I say more?

With a bound onto the back seat of our car, he stared straight ahead, ignoring the tearful eyes of his family, as his basket (the size of the Queen Mary), his dog-bowl (suitable for a pony I thought), his grooming equipment (large polythene bag full) and his feed (sacks of meal, and tins) were stowed into the boot.

Feeling distressed myself at his owners' sadness, we sped off to cut short their agony and arrived home in about twenty minutes. George waved his way into our hall and selected where he wanted his basket to be placed (where our old one had been). He marched into the back garden, watered my husband's tomatoes from all angles (I have never been allowed near them), my husband not turning a hair at this sacrilege, but insisting George must be made to Feel At Home.

We gave him a welcoming light snack of a pint of milk and a lightly boiled farm egg with some wholemeal, then he fell asleep in his basket.

From then on, George never looked back. He organised us into his routine with no nonsense. When he required a walk (and at the times he set) he would bang his massive head against my



husband's newspaper until he was forced to leave his chair.

He was used to being exercised for about an hour and a half a day in total,

and we had been led to understand that walking on pavements for some of the time would keep his nails down. Well, it has ours, but George's nails are cast-iron. My husband has now mastered the trick of keeping them short, but it does entail a Slush Fund (biscuit before and after) and my husband's brow beading with perspiration as, veins bulging with effort, he neatly clips off the required amount of rhino horn.

Every morning George accompanies me to the office and does his typing. He stretches out on a rug beside my desk and sleeps, only waking for his half-pint of office milk before his mid-day walk. His main meal of fresh meat and biscuit he enjoys in the evening.

On George's day of entry into our lives and after his evening meal, we set forth to give him a good walk round the harbour. We had just entered an approach lane when a car drew up and an elegant gentleman in an impeccable silver-grey suit (whom we had never seen before) leapt out and pointed dramatically to the front of his car.

"Is this guy mad?" muttered my husband, "we haven't touched his car". The gentleman continued to point even more urgently, so we rounded the car bonnet to find the Basset Hound Car Badge upon it.

"A new basset!" exclaimed the excited gentleman as his wife, ravishing in evening dress and rhinestones, got out of the passenger-seat at George's feet, both she and her husband kissing his nose ecstatically. George accepted this as his due with a regal wave and paternal smile.

"My wife is the Queen of the Bassets" the husband confided to us "She carries out obedience training in this area..." At this, the Basset Queen passionately pressed George to her pretty bosom, drenching him with Je Reviens. George was enchanted!

Husband then ran up the path of a near-by cottage and returned with two bassets in his arms and a spaniel at his feet. There was pandemonium. George bayed; one of the lady bassets snarled sharply at him to keep his distance; he waved his tail in a full circle (his highest accolade), embraced the neck of the Queen of the Bassets with his two huge paws and then nuzzled the spaniel. Five basset instruction-books were most kindly pressed into our hands as the three of us in very dazed fashion, took our leave and simply continued our walk.

Three days later, I was with George in our village bank when a pretty middle-aged lady with blue eyes and auburn rinse, clutching cheque-book, pen, hand-bag



and paying-in slip to her ample bosom, saw George and with a cry, lay at his feet and kissed his freckled muzzle all over. "Now where have I seen this before?" I mused... it proved to be the Mother of the Queen of the Bassets. So genetics will out.

Our friends were subjected to the George push-over as soon as they relaxed in our lounge. (This is his Omar Sharif bit). Firstly, George would gaze at them, tuck down his chin, thus accentuating his superb basset dome and allowing his long silky ears to hang over his eyelashes. All the ladies would start to coo, then melt. Gazing at my husband, George would slowly lift one front paw (his idea of shaking hands); if that did not do the trick, he would lift the other paw. Seduction of husband! George would then lie down on one side, his paws fully stretched, one ear caressing his cheek, gazing soulfully out of one eye to watch the effect on his audience. "Ah, George...!" the ladies would sigh, "aren't you beautiful?"

Thus would then be too much even for him so he would lumber over to my husband and with no warning, place his paws on my husband's knee and tuck his vast head beneath my husband's arm

(coffee if to hand often being sent flying over trousers) - George at this point being Overcome by Embarrassment at his success. By then, every eye in the room would be on him.

Regular bulletins were mailed to his previous owners to reassure them that George was not pining, getting thin or wasting away, and that he was eating "regular and hearty", walking us off our feet and making strong personal relationships. A few days with us in South Wales saw him galloping over the fields of the Gower, his ears blown back as he savoured the tang of the Atlantic from a Welsh sea-top garden.



He loves long grass, a champagne-coloured peke called Honey, a fresh marrow-bone, his deep sleep after a long run, the exquisite pleasure of a powerful smell drawn from a dusty clump of grass, and the jangle of his lead-chain.

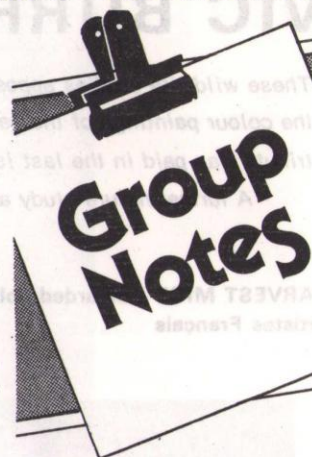
And we just love George!

Illustrated by
David Cater
Education & Training



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THE CIVIL SERVICE MOTORING ASSOCIATION



With over 200,000 members the Civil Service Motoring Association is the largest private motoring club in the country. Founded in 1923 by a group of enthusiastic motorists, its original purpose was to "provide and encourage the sport and pastime of motoring".

The original aim of the CSMA hasn't altered, but the organisation has. Today, for a mere £3 a year subscription, members have access to a whole range of benefits designed to make their motoring cheaper and more enjoyable.

Insurance, a thorn in the side of most motorists, is provided by the CSMA's brokers Norman Frizzell. They offer a Lloyd's-backed policy specially designed for the CSMA members. The burden of your motor insurance premium can be spread with Frizzell's new credit terms: 20% down and the rest over four months, and all for a 5% service charge. The rates are highly favourable, and official use and rally cover are provided at no extra cost. Add to this the CSMA's unique Arbitration Committee, Uninsured Loss Recovery Scheme and free legal defence and advice service and you have a formidable package that is hard to beat.

A feature of the Frizzell policy is a Stranded Motorist Service, which for just 25p extra enables members to obtain help in the event of a minor breakdown. Should the breakdown be more serious, membership of the National Breakdown Recovery Club at a special CSMA rate of £6.50 ensures that the car, passengers and luggage are transported safely to their destination. Effectively, the CSMA is offering a breakdown and recovery scheme for just £6.75 a year!

Many more motoring bargains are available through the CSMA's *Trading Services*. New and used cars can be purchased at discounts of up to 11% and 5% respectively and arrangements exist for members to obtain a whole range of products from accessories to oil and exhausts at very competitive prices. Ziebart rustproofing, sunshine roofs and windscreen replacement services are also offered at special rates.

On the *social side*, the CSMA has its own country club at Clitheroe in Lancashire. Equivalent to a 3-star hotel and ideally situated for visits to Blackpool and the Lake District, Eaves Hall is a popular attraction for members wishing to spend a relaxing weekend or longer.

Camping and caravanning are fast becoming major pastimes and are particularly well catered for in the CSMA. Two leisure parks, one in the Forest of Dean and one in Harrogate, provide excellent facilities for members. Both are ideal places for the family, whether for a week's holiday or just a day out in the country.

For those who like to travel, the CSMA runs a number of *holiday and social weekends* at home and abroad, which are extremely popular and very reasonably priced. A comprehensive Continental Touring Package will be introduced in 1979. Designed to take care of all your foreign motoring needs it will provide a ferry booking service, Camping Carnet, Breakdown and Recovery scheme, spare parts kit, personal and luggage insurance, Michelin maps and guides and full touring information and advice.

Local activities are provided by the 70 Groups around the country. Each Group is in effect a small motor club and runs a full social and sporting programme. A member wishing to take up rallying for the first time can learn all he needs to know from a Group, many of whom hold their own major rallies.

In addition to all these benefits, the £3 subscription also buys six issues of the CSMA's own motoring magazine. Recently re-launched under a new editor, Civil Service Motoring is a lively publication full of interesting articles, information and road tests. For members involved in local activities, there is also a club newspaper, CSMA News. As well as featuring general motoring information, it also covers the rallying scene and gives details of the Group's programmes.

There can be few organisations around that offer so much for just £3 a year. It's not surprising that CSMA members are called "The Bargain Drivers"!

For further details and an application form, write or telephone:- Civil Service Motoring Association Ltd., 797 London Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 6YG Tel. 01-684 8871.

Several local functions are already arranged for 1979:

OXFORD

April 20th. A.G.M. & Talk.

May 11th. Illustrated Talk about U.S.A.

June 8th. General Knowledge Quiz.

July 1st. Annual Motor Gymkhana.

July 29th. Walking Treasure Hunt.

OXFORD: RON RIGLEY, 10 Baker Road, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 5LW. Tel: Abingdon 24055.

Letters requesting information or membership forms will be forwarded by "Harlequin".

READING: JENNY ETESON, 54 Rowan Drive, Woodley. Phone Reading 693271.

April 5th. A.G.M. & Film Show.

April 12th. Skittles.

April 20th. 12-car Rally.

May 3rd. Quiz.

May 20th. Jim's Jaunt.

June 16th. Gymkhana.

July 5th. Orienteering.

July 27th. Bar-B-Q.

VIC BURROUGHS 1900-1979

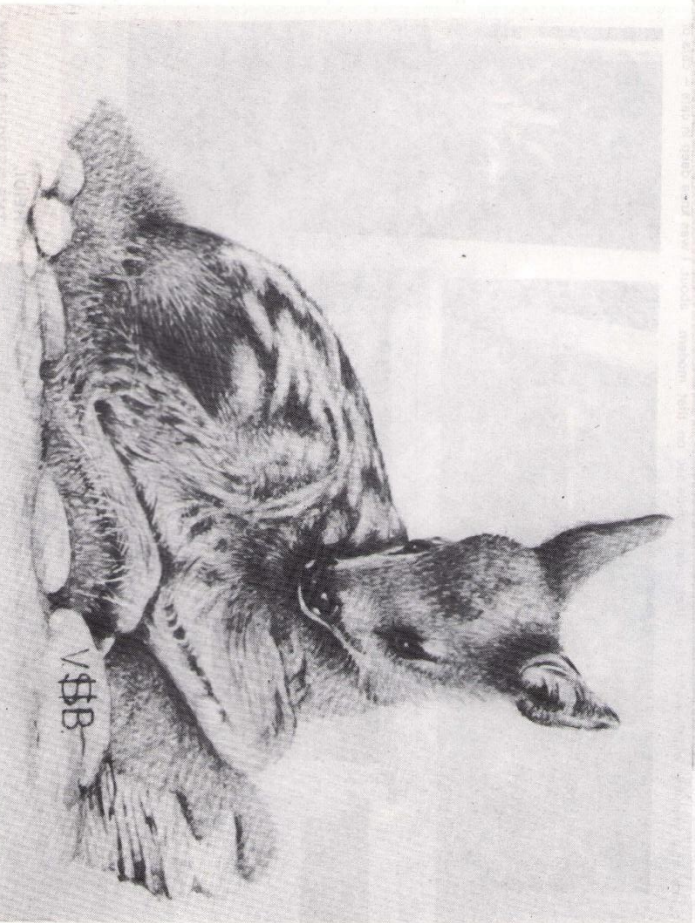
These wild life studies appear to bear a variety of signatures, but are all reproduced from the colour paintings of the same size executed by the one-time HARWELL artist to whom tribute was paid in the last issue.

A further nature study and signature are reproduced overleaf on page 11

HARVEST MICE - awarded gold medal at the 1974 Paris Exhibition of the Société des Artistes Français



STOAT



FAWN

PETS' CORNER

No.1

by Ted Norvell, Grounds Dept.



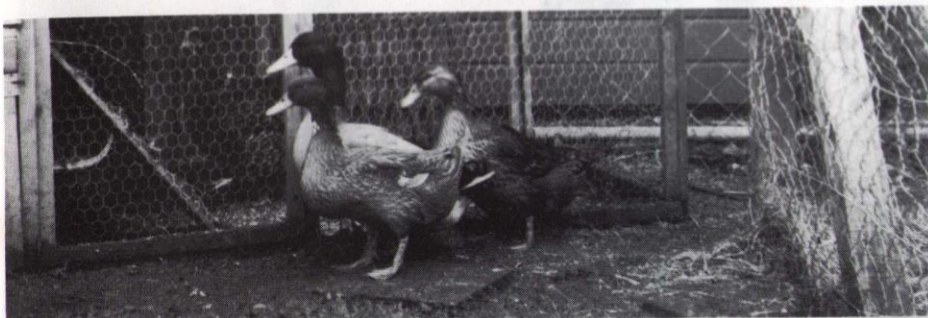
Dr. Valentine shares a joke with Valerie Goodwin when presenting her with her farewell gift.

Val Goodwin is well known to HARWELL staff for her activities with the Badminton Club and the Horticultural Society, and as an enthusiastic coach-outing organiser. She left her secretarial post at Rutherford Laboratory last year to become a supervisor at the N.R.P.B. Typing Centre. She also moved house and then asked me to look at a weeping willow which she

thought might have been threatening the foundations, and when I went to see it, I discovered that there were other demands on her time.

I wasn't expecting to find a collection of livestock at the neat corner bungalow in that smart cul-de-sac on that modern

estate. There was nothing very unusual about the dog that met me at the door — except perhaps its ancestry — but as Val led me through the lounge, I began to suspect something. I had to steady myself against a settee until my eyes became accustomed to the light, because the carpet seemed to be heaving and rolling about. I was knee deep in cats — cats of



HEIDI,
THE NERVOUS NANNY

every colour and conformity, a whole pack of them, their green eyes watching me for the slightest sign of weakness. I didn't dare falter as I waded through, for nature has no place for the infirm.

I reached the conservatory with some relief, and stopped to admire the rabbits. Believing that all domestic animals should either be useful or occupy some economic niche, I remarked that the rabbits were just about ready for the table, but Val gave only a cold stare at the suggestion.

The garden looked neat and normal, with an innocent young willow which had scarcely reached puberty a good twenty yards from the building. At one side though, there was a big cage full of fowl, including some pure white hen-sized creatures with floppy head-dress; Val said they were "silkie". Padding back and forwards outside the cage were some oven-worthy ducks, which would have just about filled a roasting tray.

Around the other corner there was a splendid aviary, and by this time, I was half expecting to find a partridge in a pear

tree. If there was one, I missed it, but I did see fifty-odd calling birds, seven odd-looking hens, four turtle doves, and some sort of mini-partridges hiding under a tree in a corner which Val said were two kinds of quail, no bigger than larks. Gorgeously-marked zebra finches, Java sparrows, cockatiels and weaver birds were chirruping happily and stretching their wings in the big cage, and all looked very sleek and healthy.

Behind a fence, in an enclosure, all to itself, was Heidi, the Toggenburg goat. Heidi is a nervous young nanny, and during a noisy gale the previous week, she had apparently bleated incessantly well into the night. Val is very community-conscious, and dreading to think that the neighbours might be woken up, she got up herself, took Heidi into the kitchen, and went back to bed. The wind — and the bleating — continued, so that Val couldn't sleep, and after several unsuccessful attempts to placate the beast, eventually took her into the bedroom. The bleating stopped, but still Val didn't sleep, because the goat stood beside the bed and stared

at her all night, and that was more disconcerting than the noise.

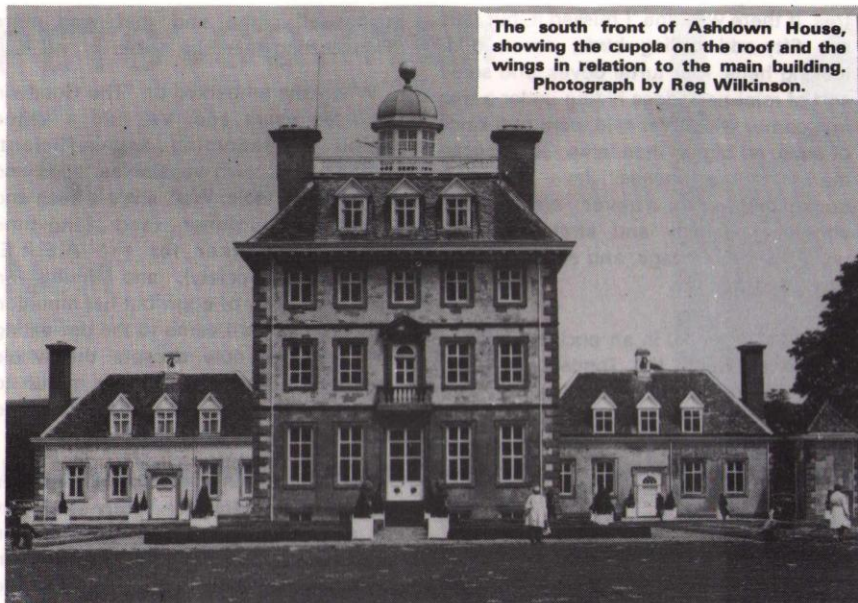
When she embarked on "The Goodwin Life" ten years ago, Val had a vague notion of becoming self-sufficient, producing her own vegetables, eggs and meat for the table. Well, she's a keen and successful gardener (and long-time committee worker for the A.E.R.E. Horticultural Society), and there's an unsteady supply of eggs, but her ambition foundered when it came to the pet-eating part, and she now accepts the whole expensive business — £25 per month to feed all the livestock — as a hobby with no returns, but with endless pleasure.

The aviary birds are breeding, Heidi has a place to go when it's windy, and they are all active, clean and content. The neighbours have a dump for their kitchen scraps and no trouble with mice. And the garden at 'Diere' (meaning "many animals"), will no doubt flourish with all that lovely manure.

"Harlequin" will be glad to hear of other readers and their pets.



THE THAMES AT STREATLEY



The south front of Ashdown House, showing the cupola on the roof and the wings in relation to the main building. Photograph by Reg Wilkinson.

By permission of "Buckinghamshire and Berkshire Countryside"

ASHDOWN House is located in Ashdown Park, high on the Berkshire Downs some 3½ miles north-west of Lambourn. The countryside round about has a lonely, mysterious, almost magical quality, which is enhanced by the presence of a number of historic and legendary sites including Wayland Smith's Cave, the Blowing Stone, Uffington Castle and the Berkshire White Horse.

William, the 1st Earl of Craven, was responsible for building Ashdown. The exact date of construction is not known, but the house was probably completed in 1663 by Captain William Winde, the architect who also designed houses for Lord Craven at Hampstead Marshall in Berkshire and at Coombe Abbey in Warwickshire.

Lord Craven is said to have devoted his life to Elizabeth, the daughter of James I and sister of Charles I, who reigned as Queen of Bohemia until her husband, Frederick V, was defeated by the Hapsburg Emperor. She and Frederick were on the throne for a short time during the winter of 1619-20 and for this reason Elizabeth is sometimes known as the Winter Queen.

The couple spent a number of years in exile in Holland, where Lord Craven first made their acquaintance as a young soldier in the service of Prince Maurice of Nassau. After Frederick died in 1632 Elizabeth took up residence in England, but during the Civil War she returned to Holland where her many children left her to fend for herself.

On several occasions, when Elizabeth was near to starvation, Lord Craven gave her financial assistance. He also donated money to Charles I and the Royalist cause. As a result of this the Roundheads confiscated his estates in England, but they were restored to him when Charles II ascended the throne.

Elizabeth took up residence in Lord Craven's London house in Drury Lane after the Restoration. The city was an unhealthy place in which to live at that time and William decided to build Ashdown on its remote wind-swept site, because he thought it

would be a suitable refuge for her from disease-ridden London.

Unfortunately Elizabeth contracted the plague before she could leave the city and she died in 1662 without ever seeing the house. Her protector survived her by thirty-five years, a staunch supporter of the Stuart cause to the end. He never married and when he died, in his ninetieth year, his estates passed to the grandson of his first cousin.

by Reg Wilkinson, MRC

Lord Craven's Berkshire retreat resembles a doll's house in many ways. Its plan is a square, set facing the four points of the compass, and its façades are more or less identical. Each one is five bays wide with three main floors, a low basement and an attic. The steep roof has three dormer windows on the north and south sides and above it is a platform upon which stands an octagonal cupola surmounted by a golden ball. The platform is flanked by huge chimneys.

There are outlying wings on the east and west sides of the house which help to break up its stark outline. On the roof of each there is a bell turret and dormer windows on the north and south sides, similar to those on the main building. In addition, there are high chimneys at each end of both wings.

The interior of Ashdown is divided into

William Lord Craven built Ashdown House as a refuge for Elizabeth Stuart from plague-ridden London. Unfortunately she contracted the disease before she could leave the city and died without ever seeing it.

halves by a central passage extending from the front to the back of the house. It is further divided into quarters on all floors. There are rooms in three of the subdivisions while the one in the south-east corner is occupied by a vast staircase which rises from the ground floor to the roof.

A splendid view of the surrounding countryside is the reward for those who ascend to the roof. In the old days the house was sur-

rounded by forests and, as it was visible for miles around, a lantern was placed in the cupola after dark. This enabled Lord Craven and his hunting friends to find their way home at the end of the day and it also gave travellers some indication of their whereabouts.

As the centuries passed, Ashdown was handed down from generation to generation of Cravens until World War Two, when it was taken over by the army. None of the original contents survived this occupation and the house was left in a semi-derelict condition until 1956 when it was donated to the National Trust by Cornelia, Countess of Craven.

During the next few years repairs and alterations were made with the help of grants from the Historic Buildings Council, and in 1968 twenty-three paintings from the Craven Collection were purchased by the Treasury and hung in the hall and on the staircase at Ashdown. Many of these originate from a collection of family portraits which Elizabeth bequeathed to William. Also included are portraits of William and his mother.

Although Ashdown is normally on lease to a tenant, the hall, the staircase, the roof and the gardens are on view to the public from May to September. Opening times are between 2 and 6 pm on Wednesdays and the first and third Saturdays in each month. The National Trust has made a magnificent job of restoring the house and it is well worth a visit, in spite of its remote location!

THROUGH THE MONTH

with TED NORVELL, Grounds Dept.



Sister Stanton E.M.Sc. Division

What about a "save the rat" campaign?

Nature lovers do not love blindly.

Some wild things are dear to us all, such as the wild flowers and the songbirds in the hedgerow, while less endearing but equally "natural" subjects are merely tolerated, or even disliked. The stinging nettle is a wild flower, but it is trampled and chopped down and sprayed with chemicals wherever it encroaches on our environment, and the poor old starling is shoed away from the bird table by the same hand which feeds the tits and finches. We enjoy the gaudy butterflies in the garden, but kill flies and wasps and mosquitoes simply for being what they are.

Reactions to our fellow-creatures vary with the individual, but there is one little bright-eyed, intelligent, furry brown mammal which holds a special place in every heart. The rat, alas, arouses feelings of abhorrence and hatred in everyone, and the mere sight of this animal can make flesh crawl.

Why should we feel this way? It is hardly the unwitting rat's fault that the fleas which live in his fur were responsible for the pneumonic and bubonic plagues which decimated civilisations in Europe and Asia, or that he can spread Weil's disease, food poisoning, and typhus among us. Should he be despised for a genetical make-up which causes him to live in squalor and to drag his mis-shapen

posterior along the ground? Where is justice?

The rat undoubtedly has a certain something for which he is clubbed down with pick-handles, trapped, gassed, and fed poisons and anti-coagulants. It's not much of a life really, especially for a creature with such a love of mankind that he has followed man for many centuries to his furthestmost outposts. He will eat anything, anywhere, at any time of day or night. He can climb a vertical wall, gnaw plate glass and concrete, and swim underwater like a fish: abilities which would be admired in other creatures make the rat even more menacing and sinister.

The question has been asked that if there was only one pair of rats left on earth, should they be killed? No one can give any answer, for there may be some ecological backlash if the rat became extinct.

Estimates indicate that the rat population approximates to our own in Britain, so the species is in no immediate danger. If we ever discover a control which the rat's prodigious breeding capability can not transcend, then we may one day need a "Save the Rat" campaign.

Dutch elm disease: still the irresistible force

Hopes that a hard winter might have

reduced the numbers of the elm bark beetle by now — and the consequent spread of Dutch elm disease — have proved in vain.

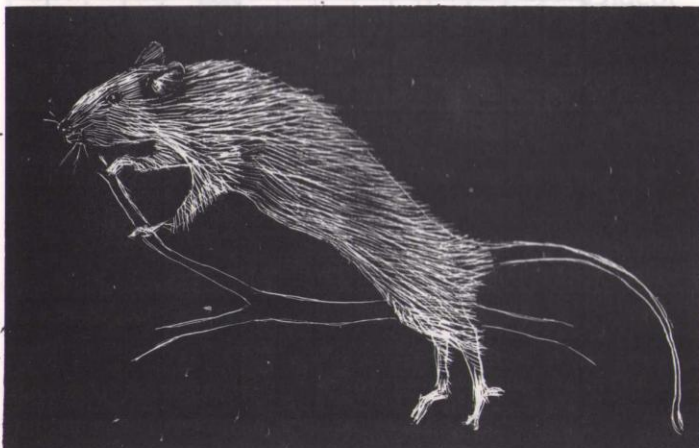
There was also a possibility that some of the elm species grown in Britain may not have been affected by the disease, but one after another over the last ten years they have all proved vulnerable.

The signs are that our most splendid local tree is about to be eliminated by a rudimentary life form which can be carried about on the toe-nails of an insect about the size of a ladybird. The combination of fungus and insects is so clinically specialised that from all the hundreds of different plants in the landscape, only elm is selected and killed.

Such "selectivity" is an objective of the scientists involved in the struggle against all kinds of harmful viruses, bacterial and fungus diseases, and unwanted plants and animals. The results of their labours — whether in a weedkiller which only affects broad-leaved plants in the lawn, or in a poison which only kills rats — are not nearly so frighteningly effective as some naturally-occurring "controls." Some of these, like myxomatosis in rabbits, are of some economic benefit to mankind, but others, like Dutch elm disease, we could very well do without.

There is still a chance that an individual elm tree somewhere will prove to have a natural resistance to the disease, and it could be the source of a new healthy stock. Rabbits are gradually breeding themselves clear of myxomatosis as nature selects the most resistant individuals from each generation, but with as many as four generations a year, they have an obvious advantage over the slow-maturing elm. There is also a possibility that the fungus which is affecting the elms will gradually become less effective, but that won't happen before the countryside has been devastated.

A cheerful side-effect of an otherwise unqualified disaster may be the great increase in the number of woodpeckers about, presumably here to eat the bugs which carry the fungus that kills the trees.





20 YEARS' SERVICE, left to right: W.H. Taylor, F. Strange, J.F.R. Stevans. B.P.K. Sharpe, P.G. Hoar, D.J. Baker, W. Leat, H. Knappe, G.D. Hucklebridge

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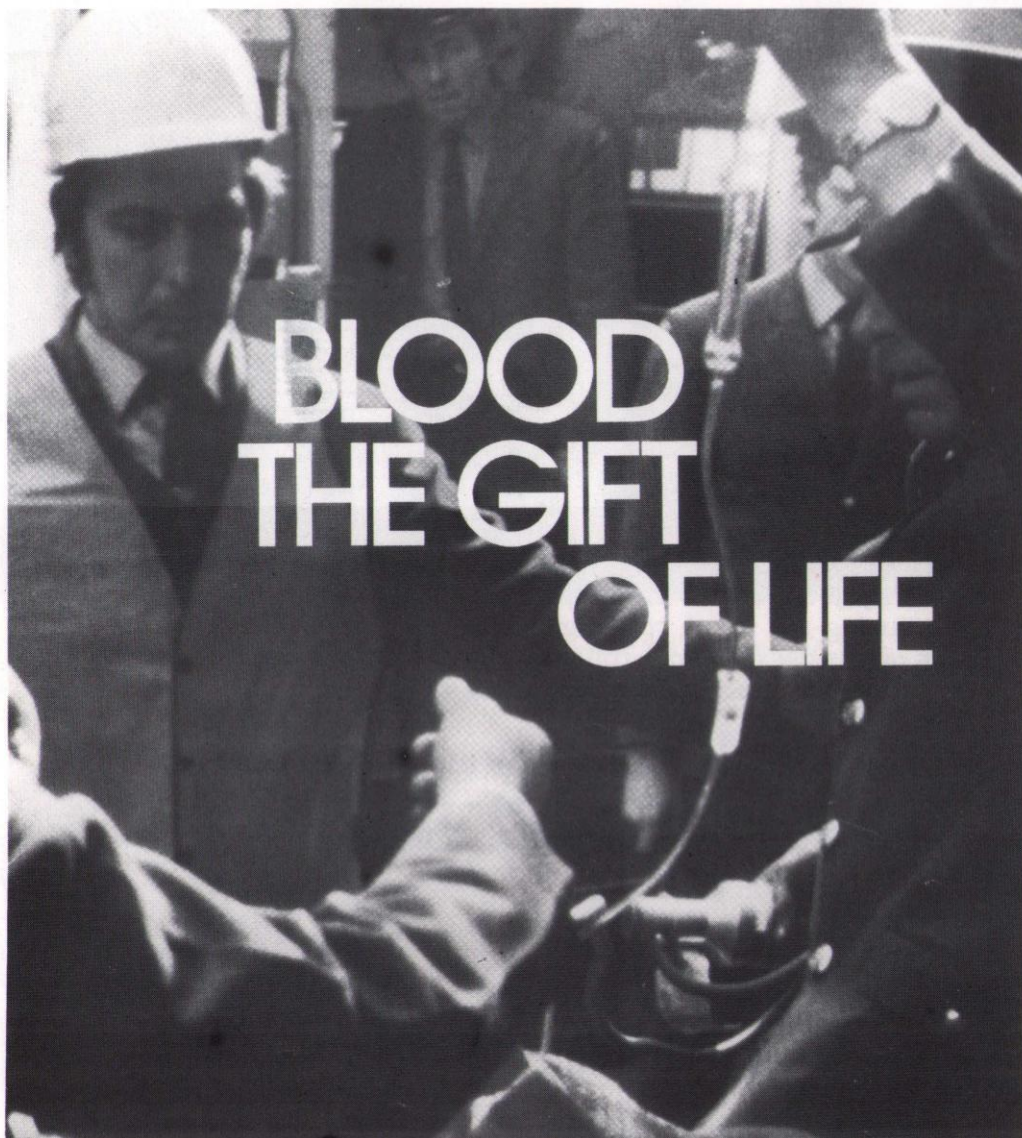
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