



WW1. A few bits I came across looking for something else:

Erasmus, *Complaint of Peace*

Peace is horrified that this type of war memorial is allowed in churches. "Today the trophies stained with the blood of those whom Christ shed his own blood to save are set up in churches between the statues of the apostles and martyrs, as if in future it will be an act of piety to create a martyr, not to become one".

Owen *A Soldier's Dream*

I dreamed kind Jesus fouled the big-gun gears;  
And caused a permanent stoppage in all bolts;  
And buckled with a smile Mausers and Colts;  
And rusted every bayonet with His tears.

And there were no more bombs, of ours or Theirs,  
So we got out, and gathering up our plunder  
Of pains, and nightmares for the night, in wonder! –  
Leapt the communication trench like flares.

But at the port, a man from U.S.A.  
Stopped us, and said: You go right back this minute.  
I'll follow. Christ, your miracle ain't in it,  
I'll get those rifles mended by today.

Anthony Grayling wrote on 10.11

Remembrance Day ... misses the point if it does not also instigate a hard, penetrating look at war and the meaning of war, aimed at making us resolute for peace, and as resolute in fighting when fighting is a genuinely necessary and unavoidable act of self-protection.

Marcus Aurelius via Sir Thomas North wrote

I ask now what fame, what honour, what glory, what victory, or what riches in what war can be won, wherein so many good, virtuous, and wise men are lost? There is such penury of the good in the world, and such need of them in the commonwealth, that if it were in our power, we with our tears ought to pluck them out of their graves and give them life, and not lead them into the wars, as to a shambles to be put to death.

Sassoon *Reconciliation. November 1918.*

When you are standing at your hero's grave,  
Or near some homeless village where he died,  
Remember, through your heart's rekindling pride,  
The German soldiers who were loyal and brave.

Men fought like brutes; and hideous things were done;  
And you have nourished hatred, harsh and blind.

But in that Golgotha perhaps you'll find  
The mothers of the men who killed your son.

Important.

KATHY TO USE  
The reconciliation  
for scene with  
Sassoon in the play

Wickham was High Sheriff of Oxford and his son was a Justice. This Mr Justice Wickham (d-1727) married an heiress from the City of London, Mary Wilkinson, and it must have been he who made the few, and only, additions to the house between 1624 and 1928. These are the two tiny wings (wig-closets) which project east and west from the north front of the house, and the small wing to the south-west. Although mullioned windows had become out of date by the reign of Queen Anne, they were nevertheless made, out of an unusual respect for the existing style. He would also have built the handsome stone piers at the entrance to the courtyard, added the ball finials at the four corners, and made the elegant hooded porch over the front door.

By 1780 only two daughters of the last Mr Wickham survived, Mary and Ann, and they married two brothers of the Tyrwhitt-Drake family, of Shardeloes, Amersham. Thus the Manor passed into the possession of a new family, who let it out to tenant farmers, and never lived in it themselves. Absenteeism saved the house from the often reckless improvements of the nineteenth century. It became a large farm house, lived in first by the Quatermain family and then by the Gale family. It was not until old Joseph Gale, aged nearly a hundred, fell off his horse and died that the next owners, the Morrells, could come and live in the Manor.

In 1913, the house had been put up for auction, and was bought by Philip Morrell, MP, for £8,400 with 360 acres of farmland and several houses and cottages. Photographs taken in that year show the house much as it is now, with the tall yew hedges and the ladder-trained pear-tree. The house now entered its celebrated period as the house of Philip Morrell and his wife Lady Ottoline, née Cavendish-Bentick. The Morrells, with their small daughter Julian, came to live in Garsington in 1915, when the Great War had already begun.

The village was pleased to have 'gentry' established at last in the Manor, and rang the church bells to welcome the Morrells. Both Philip and Lady Ottoline took a great interest in local life, and were generous in many ways, such as allowing all comers to swim in the pool, or letting the fields be used for football matches and cricket matches, while in the barns there would be harvest suppers and dances. More well-known is their hospitality to the famous names of the literary and artistic world of the day. The litany of names of all those who came and stayed here, and wrote, gossiped, quarreled and enthused would be too long. The most frequent guests at one time or another included D. H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda; Lytton Strachey who at one time settled in for several months (even by the standards of the time, life at Garsington was rather Spartan: thus Lytton Strachey was the only male guest permitted to use the inside lavatory, on account of his weak health); Aldous Huxley; Siegfried Sassoon, who recorded hearing the bells ringing on 11 November 1918 as he walked by the river below nearby Cuddesdon, signalling the end of the 'loathsome tragedy of the last four years'; Bertrand Russell, pursuing an unsatisfactory love-affair with Lady Ottoline; while there came and went streams of others, including the Prime Minister H. H. Asquith, T. S. Eliot, Duncan Grant, Clive Bell, Virginia Woolf, Stanley and Gilbert Spencer, Katherine Mansfield, Maynard Keynes, Robert Graves.

The Morrells, Lady Ottoline in particular, were remarkable hosts and lovers of art and artists. They were also pacifists, and in the words of a villager who remembers them, were 'plucky in speaking out against the war'. At the time, this meant social ostracism. They made Garsington a haven for their conscientious objector friends, allowing them the chance to avoid conscription on the fragile grounds that they were agricultural labourers. Aldous Huxley and David Garnett thus found themselves ineptly splitting logs and hoeing cabbages in 1916-17. Few of their talented guests reciprocated the Morrells' kindness. D. H. Lawrence portrayed Lady Ottoline as Hermione in *Women In Love*, to her horror; and Aldous Huxley lightly mocked 'Lollipop Hall' (the phrase is Dora Carrington's) in *Crome Yellow*. Both books ended their authors' friendship with the Morrells. By 1928 the Morrells left Garsington for Gower Street in London. There is a moving bas-relief memorial to Lady Ottoline, who died in 1937, by Eric Gill in the Church to the left of the door. There is too, a touching memorial to an earlier Chatelaine, Mary Wickham, also a woman of forceful character.

## II. THE GARDEN

The greatest memorial that the Morrells left behind is the garden. The charming-sounding decorative indoor schemes have vanished, the Venetian-red panelled drawing-room picked out in gold by D. H. L., the hall in grey and rose, 'like a winter sunset'; the sea-green drawing-room. But the garden remains, now in the maturity which they never saw, the limes and ilexes they planted now full-grown. In 1925 Lady Ottoline wrote in the Diary: 'If I leave here, I wonder what will happen to my lavender hedges and the Irish yews and the Italian cypresses, and the Ilex trees and avenues? I hope they will endure and be beautiful hundreds of years hence'.

The raised terrace and three-arched loggia to the east of the house was the work of Philip Morrell, and the architect Philip Tilden. Lady Ottoline, who knew and loved Italy, was the moving spirit for this and for the 'Italian Garden', i.e. the small lake surrounded by statues and tall yew hedges. The work on the terrace was very protracted, and in the end, never finished. It proved ruinously expensive, and was one of the reasons the Morrells gave up the house, with much heartbreak.

There are three gardens at Garsington. The first is the flower garden, east of the terrace, enclosed entirely by walls, and divided into twenty-four square beds. Each bed is marked at each corner by a slim Irish yew, kept in shape by a corset of wire. A grass path divides the two halves of the garden, ending with a bench from which there is a satisfying view of the house and its chimneys. In spite of its Tudor air, this formal garden — formerly a vegetable garden — was created by the Morrells, and filled with brightly coloured flowers, such as zinnias.

Stepping down from the flower garden by the further end, you come to a walk with a mulberry tree and a dovecot. The mulberry tree was introduced in the 1930s from a parent tree in Oxford, originating from the stock that James I had planted. The dovecot has a date over the inside of the door, 1714. The roof beams are ships' timbers, impregnated with salt.

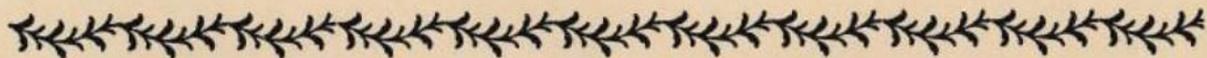
The lawn below the mulberry tree has been used for tennis and croquet for over a hundred years, and the Village Play is performed there yearly. Making your way down the terraced walk planted with ornamental junipers (this terracing was laid out by Dr Heaton of Christ Church who bought the Manor from the Morrells in 1928), you will pass under a doorway and out to the small lake or large pond and the Italian garden. This lake and the further pool are mentioned in ancient records as fish ponds. The Morrells squared up and lined the pool to make it the centre of the formal Italian garden, whose virtue lies in water, stone and sky, with massive formal trees. The statues were brought, some from Italy, others from more local sources. The boat house they used to call 'The Temple'. There is a second hedge of yew behind the statues, making a secret alley. Here are windows, 'claire-voies' cut in the hedge for a view of the orchard and fields, ending with the Wittenham Clumps (above Dorchester) and the Berkshire Downs beyond. Legend has it that Lady Ottoline would sometimes trail her long skirts down this alley, reading Dryden aloud to the peacocks, following.

Moving westwards you come to the third garden, the 'wild garden'. The pool is here ringed with willows below and lime-trees above. The water is fed from a spring higher up. An ornamental bridge leads to a miniature island at the far end of the pool. Above this pool is a dell-garden, almost hidden, with water running through it.

This wooded end of the garden is a spring garden, filled with snowdrops and daffodils. Near this end of the house is the so-called Monastic Brew House, a cottage, with a barn, thought to be older than the Manor, a vestige of vanished Church lands.

The large ilex-tree on the lawn is reputed to be of great antiquity. It was once much larger: under it, many summer conversations between Lady Ottoline's guests took place. Of the three pear-trees trained up against the house only one now remains, the beautifully ladder-trained sickle-pear on the corner, which is said to be 200 years old. The yew hedges enclosing the front courtyard are at least as old, probably much older. They are thought to be the highest pair in England. Lady Ottoline used to drive a trap and pair of horses through the front gate at speed. She continued to use horse-drawn carriages for some time after motors became general.

After the departure of the Morrells, Dr and Mrs Heaton bought the Manor. They removed the red paint in the drawing-room. They effected useful building repairs and built the existing kitchen, the discreetly-built extension to the west. During the war the house was let to the Lowinsky family. Some of Thomas Lowinsky's paintings can be seen in the Tate Gallery. After the war, Mrs Heaton's brother, John Wheeler-Bennett (later Sir John) and his wife Ruth, of Virginia, bought the house, remaining there until 1982. Sir John, a modern historian, was a founder member of St Antony's College, Oxford. Among his books are a biography of George VI, and *Munich, Prologue to Tragedy*. The Conservative Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, later Lord Stockton, was a regular visitor to the Manor while the Wheeler-Bennetts lived in it. In 1982 the manor was sold, and Mr and Mrs Leonard Ingrams and their four children came to live in it.



# GARSINGTON MANOR

## I. THE HOUSE

Garsington Manor is a small Tudor manor house built of grey stone, the only survivor of the two or three manors which once existed in Garsington. Its early history is obscure. In medieval times the Abbey of Abingdon owned the land, and it was from the Abbey that the Norman family of Hauville held the estate from about 1240 to 1420. The house was once known as Havels Manor. By 1424 Thomas Chaucer, the son of the poet and a rising man, had bought the place, along with much other local property. His heir was his daughter Alice, who married William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. Her beautiful alabaster tomb may be seen in Ewelme Church nearby. In 1487 the de la Pole estates were seized by the Crown, and Henry VIII awarded Garsington to Oliver St John, from Wiltshire. His family owned it for 100 years. Between 1597 and 1624 there is a gap, when the Manor seems to have been in the hands of several speculators, who at last sold it to William Wickham (a collateral descendant, he claimed, of the great William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester) in 1624. The Wickhams remained for five generations until 1782.

The present house replaces an earlier one. No one knows when it was built, or who by, but it was probably round about 1570, when Sir Thomas Pope, President of Trinity, was building the (demolished) Rectory in a closely similar style. However, the house was again remodelled, internally, by the new owners, in the 1620s. They made it into a double cube by eliminating an internal court yard, and on the resultant inside flat roof they built the curious little structure whose cupola roof gives a distinctive silhouette to the Manor. One picturesque explanation for these little roof houses, which occur in other houses of the period, is that they served as a retreat on summer evenings, a place where one would go to enjoy fruit and sweetmeats after dinner and look at the view.

The main downstairs rooms are panelled in oak, with decorated friezes, and the handsome oak staircase with its great columnar newel posts is of the same Jacobean style.

On 1 May 1646, General Fairfax is said to have slept at the Manor, with his troops billeted in the village, prior to the Siege of Oxford. In 1682 a Mr

made on a small scale, but a lot of nobility and tenderness in it. He took me to see the Poet Laureate, shaggy and self-conscious and rather hectoring. He spoke intolerantly about 'those Socialists', and I did not like him. Back to Garsington through the dark streets of Oxford, leaving J.M. at hide-and-seek in the twilight of his garden with his girl Judith and little boy, and a Bridges girl. Francis Meynell<sup>1</sup> and his wife Hilda Saxe the pianist came to Garsington at dinner-time; also Aldous Huxley, who is a master at Eton. H.S. played two short Beethoven pieces, two Brahms waltzes and a Moussorgsky, and F.M. talked a lot of *Herald* Labour politics, and announced the Kaiser's abdication. Dear Toronto sat very quiet all the evening and listened.

The more I think of Hardy the greater his simplicity seems. It is a deeply moving memory already. What a contrast to arrogant old Bridges with his reactionary war-talk. The one a supreme tragic artist, the other a splendid craftsman with a commonplace mind.

#### *November 11*

I was walking in the water-meadows by the river below Cuddesdon this morning—a quiet grey day. A jolly peal of bells was ringing from the village church, and the villagers were hanging little flags out of the windows of their thatched houses. The war is ended. It is impossible to realise. Oxford had much flag-waving also, and signs of demonstration.

I got to London about 6.30 and found masses of people in streets and congested Tubes, all waving flags and making fools of themselves—an outburst of mob patriotism. It was a wretched wet night, and very mild. It is a loathsome ending to the loathsome tragedy of the last four years.

---

S.S. remained on indefinite sick-leave until on 11 March 1919 the *London Gazette* announced: 'Lt (acting Captain) S. L. SASSOON mc relinquishes his acting rank, is placed on the retired list on account of ill-health caused by wounds 12 March 1919 and is granted the rank of Captain.'

<sup>1</sup> Son of Wilfrid and Alice Meynell. Book designer, publisher and poet (1891–1975). Founder of the Nonesuch Press. Knighted 1946.