

Samuel Junior was by 1752 generally known as Dr or Chancellor Peploe; he had been married 25 years and his wife Elizabeth had born him 6 daughters and 3 sons during their residence in Preston all of whom had died in infancy except the youngest. He was a son and baptised John at Preston on February 8th 1740.

Following Bishop Peploe's death Chancellor Peploe probably surrendered the lease on the house built for his father between the years 1745 and 1751 out of St John's Churchyard at Chester.



Mary Peploe's house (called the Archdeacon's house) in the foreground with central bay, and her father's house slightly behind and to the left.

About this time there was built westwards onto the building a canted bay behind which was a new dining room with rococo plasterwork, and it seems unlikely that Chancellor Peploe would have required such an enormous house for himself and his small family. The house, which became known as 'The Old Bishop's Palace', was substantially increased still further in the 19th century and survives to this day. It became the official residence of the bishops of Chester in 1865, and continued to be used for this purpose until the 1920s. It then was converted for use as a YMCA hostel, and retained this purpose until the early 1980s, when it was further converted into commercial offices. It is likely Chancellor Peploe resided from this time onwards at the house built by his father in 1737 as part of the Abbey Court complex adjoining the Cathedral, and which was bequeathed to him in Bishop Peploe's will. The Abbey Court and its mid Georgian houses remain today very much as they were in Chancellor Peploe's day.

About this time Bishop Peploe's daughter Mary rebuilt The Archdeacon's House left to her by her father and it was described by a contemporary as 'a pretty showy house.' It had a main south front of five bays and three storeys in style resembling houses shortly to be built on the north side of Abbey Square and was positioned on the banks of the River Dee with St Johns Church set slightly back on one side and Bishop Peploe's old house on the other. The site was leased from the Bishop of Chester as was Chancellor Peploe's house next door, and Mary left it to her brother after own death in 1772. In fact Mary's nephew Abel Ward took the lease on, not Chancellor Peploe, and his son Peploe Ward continued to live there until 1800.

Both Bishop Peploe's and his daughter's house were situated on an elevated ridge of ground above what was called the Groves, and the south fronts commanded 'delightful views of the Dee, and an extensive range of fine country' in the distance. They had extensive pleasure gardens with coach houses attached and can be seen in various 19th century views of the area, but it would

seem The Archdeacon's House was demolished in 1865 at the same time as Bishop Peploe's old house next door was substantially enlarged to accommodate the new Bishop of Chester after his removal from the old palace.

At Manchester the unhappy controversies of the day slowly subsided, and public peace was restored. After the death of his father, Chancellor Peploe, who had more than met his match with the Fellows and had found that his position in the Chapter House 'was as humiliating to himself as



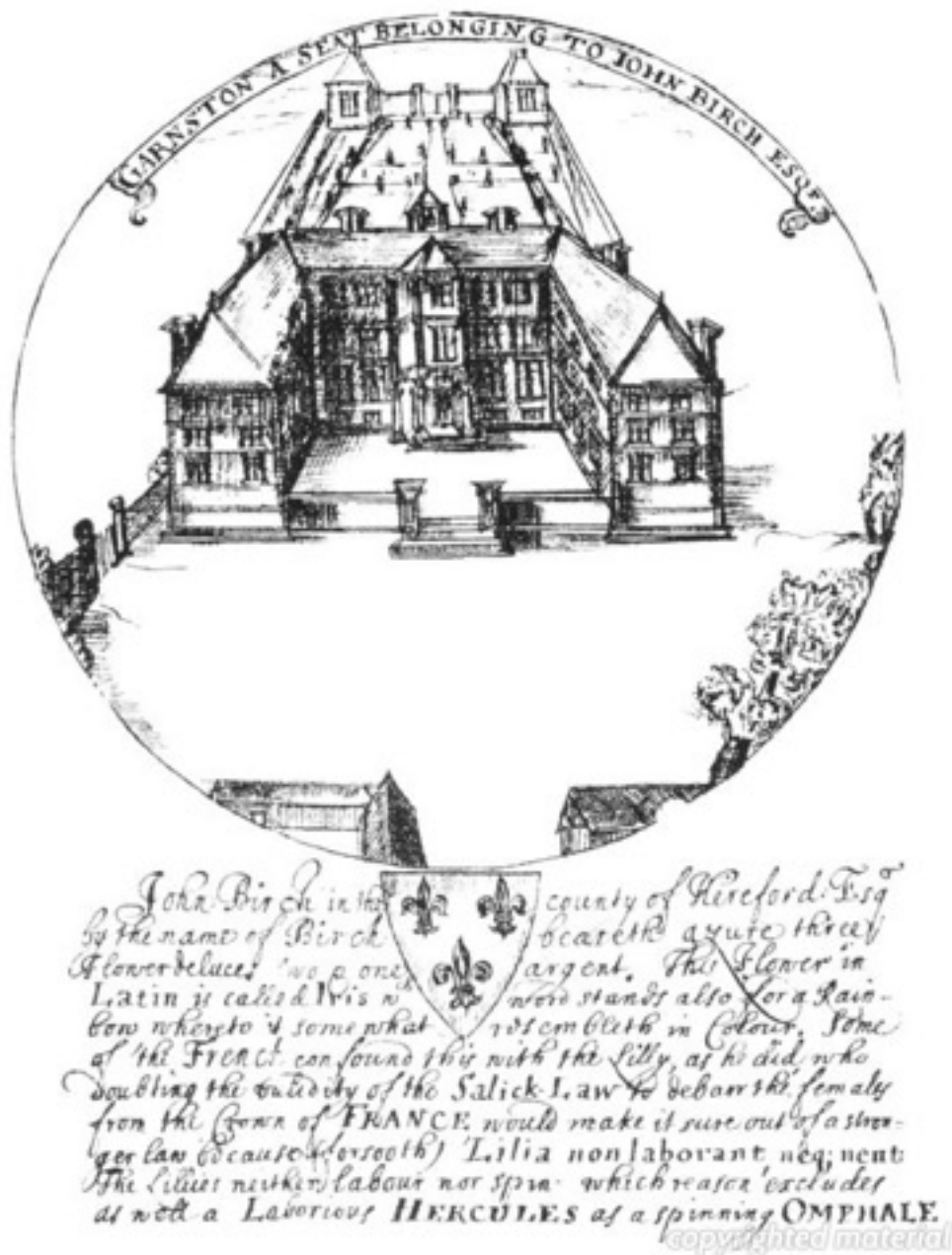
Mary Jodrell, eldest daughter of Bishop Peploe

it was dangerous to the Church, seems to have 'modified his views and to have conciliated his fellow dignitaries.'

He began to reside more frequently in Manchester and is said to have 'kept suitable port and hospitality' when he was in town. There was an old custom which required the fellows, chaplains and choristers to process singing before the Warden to the church with the gentlemen following after. When Hibbert Ware wrote his history of the Manchester Collegiate Church in 1827 he wrote:

'Some inhabitants of the town yet living remember the custom of fellows, choristers, church wardens and co setting off in procession from Dr Peploe's house in Deansgate on their route to the collegiate church'.

Hibbert Ware continued by saying of Chancellor Peploe 'the more his delicate shades of character and consistent conduct became known the more he appears to have been appreciated and the old grievances to have been forgotten.' He was a man of cultivated mind being particularly



Garnstone as it appeared when inherited from the Birch family by John Peploe

well informed on the religious views of his times, and many of the volumes in the Garnstone library carried his Chippendale style book plate with the inscription 'S Peploe L.L.D.' At the same time he commissioned one for his young son John - almost exactly the same format as his own except the oak sprigs growing out of the shield have sprouted a few more shoots.

His character has been drawn by a contemporary with a most complementary hand: 'Dr Peploe was a learned, honest, worthy, pious and good man; much respected by the clergy here and at Chester, as he resided occasionally at both places, and was remarkable for his attendance on public worship. His great affability to the members of each choir, or to those whom he took notice for their attendance at prayers, has greatly endeared his memory among the lower class of the people. Those of superior rank found in his company and conversation none of that sourness and formality observable in some devotees; for though exact in his attention to religious duties he was remarkable for the ease, politeness, facetiousness and urbanity of his manners. As a gentleman he was liberal without ostentation, possessing the happy talent which conferred favours or softened

the disappointment of a refusal with a grace peculiar to himself, while he preserved the gravity and decency of the clerical character. The same ease and dignity accompanied the delivery of his compositions from the pulpit where, if he touched upon controversy, he went through it with less acrimony and more precision than is generally observed. 'If a panegyrist and friend wrote in this strain it was,' pronounced some of his parishioners, "far from be too flattering".

Only two months after the death of Bishop Peploe, Samuel Birch of Garnstone in Herefordshire died without issue leaving his estates to his great nephew John Peploe, only surviving son of Chancellor Peploe. Garnstone had been bought in 1661 by Colonel John Birch and of his 3 sons remaining when he made his will in 1690, the youngest was dead, the second was childless, and the eldest was an invalid with 3 daughters. Of his own three daughters Mary and Elizabeth were married, and only the youngest Sarah, remained to inherit the family fortune.

Under the circumstances it had been essential that Sarah should marry one of her cousins, and only one measured up to her father's requirements. This was John Birch, Sergeant-at-law of the Middle Temple, the second son of the Colonel's brother Thomas, Vicar of Preston in Lancashire. John was the elder brother of the Anne Birch who had married Bishop Peploe as his second wife in 1712, and he was in 1690 enjoying a successful career as a barrister and an M.P. for Parliament.

Despite Sarah's objections the marriage was agreed upon, the final incentive being that Sarah would not receive the Garnstone inheritance unless the match took place. However no heir had been forthcoming with the result that Garnstone had passed in October 1735 to John's younger brother, Samuel. This Samuel Birch had married in 1671, Lettice, a daughter of the ancient family of Hunt of Boreatton in Shropshire, but unfortunately they too failed to produce an heir, and so left Garnstone in 1752 to John Peploe, the 12 year old grandson of his deceased youngest brother, Thomas, Rector of Hampton Bishop in Herefordshire.

Garnstone was probably erected by James or Richard Tbmkins, the then owners, in the 16th century, on the demolition of an earlier house. Tradition has it that the older mansion had stood much higher up the hill in a somewhat awkward position. When the new house was begun it was started at the bottom, but each night the fairies pulled down what the workmen had built by day, carrying the stones some distance away; so the higher and more inconvenient spot was chosen instead, and afterwards the work went on without interruption.

In 1681 Colonel Birch had carried out considerable alterations to Garnstone - and subsequently referred to it proudly as a 'gentile habitation'. It consisted of a main block with two supporting wings at right angles to it. In the centre of the main block was a large hexagonal porch, rising the full 3 storeys of the house with its roof projecting in rather an unsightly and awkward manner above the eaves of the central portion. A porch of similar design and attached to the house in the same way, faced the garden front. Thus there was no access for coach or horse to the front door and the Squire of Garnstone's guests must have been forced to walk the last thirty yards to the house. On the far side was an enclosed garden, its end wall flanked by two summerhouses. In the centre an iron gate opened onto the deer park. When John Peploe inherited in 1752 there were two dove houses in the gardens and the outhouses included barns, stables, brewhouses and sheep cotes. The old park, then little more than a paddock, was surrounded by a stone wall and further up the hill from the house was Birch Wood. John, looking out from the windows of his mansion, would have seen hopyards, meadows filled with sheep, orchards, flax fields and in the distance the tall spire of Weobley Church dominating the valley.

There is an amusing story about Col Birch and his second wife Winifred which took place in Weobley Church. The owners of Garnstone had by tradition used the Garnstone Pew since before Colonel Birch's day and it still stands to the east of the south aisle in Weobley Church. It was originally a small chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas, hence the screen which divides it from the rest of the church. One Sunday morning, after service, he came out of the Garnstone pew and asked the vicar to marry him to Winifred, though his first wife was still alive. He declared his first marriage had been 'a match of friends, that he loved Winifred, that she had brought him a cow and a horse and, at various times, £40 in all'. The 'morose' minister naturally refused, whereupon Birch himself pronounced the words of union, while the congregation 'looked and laughed'.

Samuel Birch devised the estate to John on condition that he took the surname and arms of Birch in addition to his own. As he was a minor this required an Act of Parliament to be passed, a very costly business and an event which last occurred in about 1900. This did not satisfy some

collateral branches of the Birch family who felt they should have inherited Garnstone, and they took the dispute to court but were unsuccessful in their claim.

Bishop Peploe had used the arms of the ancient family of Peplo of Peplo Castle in Cheshire from the year 1744 onwards, but he had never had them confirmed by the College of Arms.

If John were to take the name and arms of Birch in addition to his own, his father would first have to officialise the Peploe coat, and with this in mind he approached the Earl Marshall at the College of Arms in the spring of 1753. Chancellor Peploe was anxious to have some additional bearings incorporated to the arms in acknowledgement of his father's 'singular loyalty to his late Majesty King George I at the Battle of Preston in the memorable year 1715 and his advancement in the Church on that account'.

The Earl Marshall suggested a canton should be added to the shield as a mark of honour to the Bishop; it bears a pastoral staff surmounting a sword and represents his promotion after the Battle of Preston and the triumph of the church over the threat of violence, and the event is further alluded to by the bishop's mitre positioned on the chevron. It was also necessary to make some addition to the crest to vary it from those of other families, and the Earl Marshall suggested the weeping eye mourning device used by Chancellor Peploe when sealing his letters should be incorporated into the design. The eye situated on the neck of the reindeer is the eye that 'Peeps low' as spoken of by King George I after the Battle of Preston. As far as is known, Chancellor Peploe only used this device after his father's death and then significantly with black sealing wax; it therefore seems probable that the eye that 'Peeps-low' is weeping over the death of the Bishop.

However various other legends have been handed down as the origin of the weeping eye. Dr Murray Webb-Peploe believed it signified a genetic defect which had from time to time occurred in both the Webb-Peploe and Hutchinson families (see family tree). This defect, called a Branchial Sinus, meant that the embryonic gills did not close up before birth, and in the days before modern surgery the unfortunate inheritor of this trait was compelled to have a handkerchief permanently tucked into his collar to absorb the puss which 'wept' from a tiny pore in the neck. My great-grandfather, Hal Peploe, joked that the heraldic device represented his own eyes which would weep in the wind when he was playing on the golf links.

A carved stone coat of arms dating to the period of Chancellor Peploe can be seen on the city walls of Chester close to the water tower and according to the guide books it came from the Old Exchange Building or Town Hall of Chester which was burnt down in 1862, hence its very blackened condition. What makes them particularly interesting is the motto which is inscribed underneath - 'Invenit et Facit' or 'Find and Make', and it is the only occasion where a motto has been found to accompany the Peploe coat of arms. Old engravings of The Exchange Building do show a pair of armorials high up to each side of the front door, but neither of them are to do with the Peploes, and it may be that this coat of arms actually came from The Archdeacon's House which was demolished around the same date as The Exchange burnt down. A very in depth description of the interior and exterior of the Exchange exists and there is no mention of a Peploe armorial.

There is also a painted coat of arms to Chancellor Peploe in the front room above the arch of the 14th Century Abbey Gateway in Northgate Street. This was clearly a robing room in the late 18th century with a range of cupboards on which the Peploe coat of arms can be seen together with that of Edmund Chester - the then Bishop. The artist was thought to be a member of the Randle Holmes family, and the name Samuel Peploe L.L.B. is inscribed beneath the Peploe coat of arms.

A third carved wooden coat of arms belonging to Chancellor Peploe (initialled S.P. and dated 1775) can be seen high up on the walls of the Consistory Court in Chester where he would have conducted his legal business connected with the church. In 1988 I borrowed it from Chester Cathedral and made a copy of it.

The arms were confirmed at the College of Arms on February 23rd 1753 soon after John's Act of Parliament was passed and Garnstone legally entered into the possession of the Peploe family. John was officially to be called John Peploe Birch (henceforth called John P.B.) although to many of his contemporaries he was known as plain Mr Birch.

It is unlikely that either Chancellor Peploe or his young son John P.B. spent much time at Garnstone in the seventeen fifties as the former's work was very much centred on Chester and Manchester. However in 1754 the guardian of the young Lord Weymouth (later Marquis of Bath) wrote to Samuel for his Lordship 'thanking their new neighbour for his friendly disposition towards

Weymouth's interests at Weobley', (the Marquis of Bath was one of the principle land owners in Weobley).



Tombstone to the wife and younger son of the Rev John Peploe of Bednall and Acton Trussell drawn by his grandson Thomas Peploe Wood

On June 11th 1754 Chancellor Peploe placed the following curious advertisement in Harrop's Mercury, Manchester's local paper:

'Whereas some months ago, a letter with half a crown inclosed was found in the back court of the Warden's house in Manchester, containing the words following: 'Sir, please to take this half crown; it was one I got of your father by a false petition, and I have been sorry for it for a long time, which makes me takes this method to ease myself'. This therefore is to give notice that if the person who laid or ordered the letter to be laid there will make himself personally known to the said Dr Peploe, who hereby promises to secrete his name, he shall for his conscientious restitution of a former wrong, receive a present and generous reward.'

Whether the repentant thief came forward is not known, but the story shows that the heart and purse of Chancellor Peploe were not beyond reach. On another occasion Chancellor Peploe offered 2 bottles of wine to any strange minister that would preach at his parish, and his generous but slightly eccentric behaviour earned him quite 'a local fame and he appears to have enjoyed it'.

The following year Chancellor Peploe's eldest sister Mary married Mr Francis Jodrell of Twelvehoe near Chester. This old Cheshire name has been made famous by Jodrell Bank, the country's largest observatory. She was aged 58 but had briefly been engaged in 1739 to a James Chetham of Smedley (High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1730 who subsequently died unmarried), and her husband, who had been married twice before, was 70. People in Chester joked over the marriage by saying she 'wouldn't be keeping her lent!' The marriage can't have been a very satisfactory one for Francis died only two years later and Mary moved back to her old home - The Archdeacon's House near St Johns at Chester, where she consoled herself by adopting a distant cousin called Ann Peploe. She was the daughter of the Rev John Peploe (1723 - 1806) of Bednall and Acton Trussell in Staffordshire and therefore a great grand daughter of the Reverend John Peploe of Penkridge. The family appear to have lived quite close to the poverty line according to this article from 'A Topographical history of Staffordshire' written by William Pitt in 1817:



Bednall Church drawn by Thomas Peploe Wood with the grave stone to Mary Peploe clearly visible to the right of the main door

'The Rev Mr Peploe, a man remarkable for the humility and simplicity of his manners, officiated as curate at both these places for many years. Having a large family to support, he has been known to do extra duty at Bushbury on Sundays, and to walk thither and back, a distance of full twenty miles. When the late Sir Edward Littleton went to London, Mr Peploe frequently came to Teddesley during his absence by desire of the Baronet, who thought the presence of a clergyman might keep the servants in order. However humiliating this office may appear, it was attended with the most

beneficial effects, for the servants were so regular and well behaved that Sir Edward seldom dismissed any of them.'

Bishop Peploe's family were very conscious of the debt they owed to Podmore Peploe's brother John and the education he provided for his nephew without which he may not have advanced to



Stone coat of arms made for Chancellor Peploe probably to commemorate his being given the Freedom of Chester and now situated on the City Wall of Chester. It is the only occasion where a motto has been found - 'Invenit et Facit' or 'Find and Make'

such a high position in the church. In her will dated 1772 Mary Jodrell left £800 in trust with her brother for Ann Peploe with the interest to be paid to her during her life time and then to be divided amongst any children she might have; however she caused great disappointment by marrying a wild young 'ensign' called Richard Beckett without asking Chancellor Peploe's permission in 1775:

'On Tuesday last was married at Acton Trussell near Stafford, Mr Richard Becket, Junior of Baddeley Hall in this county to Miss Anne Peploe daughter of Rev Mr Peploe of Bednall in the county of Stafford, a most accomplished young lady with a genteel fortune.'

Chancellor Peploe himself paid for the education of Ann's youngest brother John, but he was found to be backward and the outcome of this venture also fell below expectations. He remained unmarried and lived with his parents at Bednall until his death aged 43 in 1797. Their eldest brother William had better luck for he was left £200 at the age of 5 in 1756 by his uncle Richard Fynney of Ashford near Bakewell in Derbyshire. It is thought he subsequently put it towards entering the Civil Service as an Exciseman in Leeds. Both his son and grandson became Excisemen and their descendants included Samuel Peploe the renowned Scottish Colourist and Major James Reid Peploe, an early researcher into the family history.

For the sake of familial duty Chancellor Peploe also felt compelled to allow Ann Beckett's cousin, another William Peploe born at Penkrige in 1717, his wife Jane and their ten children to take on

the lease of Lower Barton Farm, part of the Shredicote estate. However when William died in 1756 aged 40 his family were found to be in such debt that Chancellor Peploe was obliged to send in the bailiffs until a satisfactory arrangement for paying the rent could be found. William's son, also called William, married a Sarah Wootton in 1771 but died soon after and Chancellor Peploe allowed his widow to continue to reside at Shredicote Hall until her own death in 1803 as recorded by the Gentleman's Magazine:

'Mrs Peplow of Shredicote Hall died'

Furthermore Chancellor Peploe made efforts to assist William Jr's brother Johns entry into the army in 1765. Chancellor Peploe knew Lady Grey of Massey Hall in Cheshire and she used her contacts with the Duke of Portland to try and secure John an Ensigncy in one of the Irish Regiments, but it is not known whether the project came to fruition.



Elizabeth Bradshaw, youngest daughter of Bishop Peploe from a painting by Winstanley

The month after his sister Mary's wedding Chancellor Peploe was honoured by being granted the freedom of Chester.

In 1757 rioting broke out in Manchester amongst the labouring classes due to the scarcity of food. James Bailey, Chancellor Peploe's brother-in-law, was High Sheriff that year, and both he and John Bradshaw, who had married Bishop Peploe's youngest daughter were directly involved. Despite the greatest effort on both their parts, 4 of the rioters were killed at one scuffle and the event became known in Manchester's history as the 'Shudehill Fight'. Mr Bradshaw was a Commissioner

of the Peace at Manchester for over 40 years and it is said he used to send for his own carriage when one of 'His Majesties Pensioners' was unable to attend on him in the Justice Room through sickness or infirmity. It is not known if Samuel was at Manchester during the Shudehill Riots, he certainly had a house there during that period.

John P.B. reached the age of 19 in 1759 and Chancellor Peploe, with his own background in Civil Law, suggested to his son that he might enter one of the Inns of Court. It was fairly common from the 15th century onwards for an heir to large estates to have a basic legal training, the better to protect his possessions. A large body of the law concerns real property and the man who owns land on an extensive scale must have a working knowledge of his rights and obligations with



John Bradshaw of Darcy Lever - husband of Bishop Peploe's daughter Elizabeth.

respect to items such as tenures, forests, game laws, and rights of way. John was duly admitted into the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple on 10th February 1759, the fee being £4-5-2, but he was never called to the Bar. In 1763 he was admitted to Peterhouse College and received a B.A. at Queens College, Cambridge.

Chancellor Peploe himself graduated as a Grand Compounder with a Doctor of Law degree in the summer of 1763 at his old college at Oxford. 63 is an advanced age to take a Doctors Degree, but in those days it's acquisition required the very minimum in formal examination. He was however, expected to provide Wadham College with a jolly good meal in appreciation of the honour, and during the occasion he wore the customary scarlet hood and square cap. The meal was a great success; Mr Franklin, the College cook, provided salmon and lobster sauce, a sirloin of beef, a large choice of vegetables, 3 rabbits and onions, 4 chickens and sauce, 4 ducks and sauce, 2

dishes of pate and butter, 200 crayfish, and to finish with: jellies and syllabubs, a raspberry and Currant ice, and strawberries and creme. Chancellor Peploe kept the bill as a memento of the auspicious day, its total cost was £141-18-8.

After getting his degree John P.B. moved into his father's house at Deansgate Street in Manchester. He still regarded Manchester and Chester as his home towns for it was there that he had been brought up, and probably Herefordshire and its people still felt a little strange to him. He remains a rather shadowy figure, and there is virtually no mention of his name in contemporary diaries despite the fact he had houses in London, Manchester and Herefordshire. He appears to

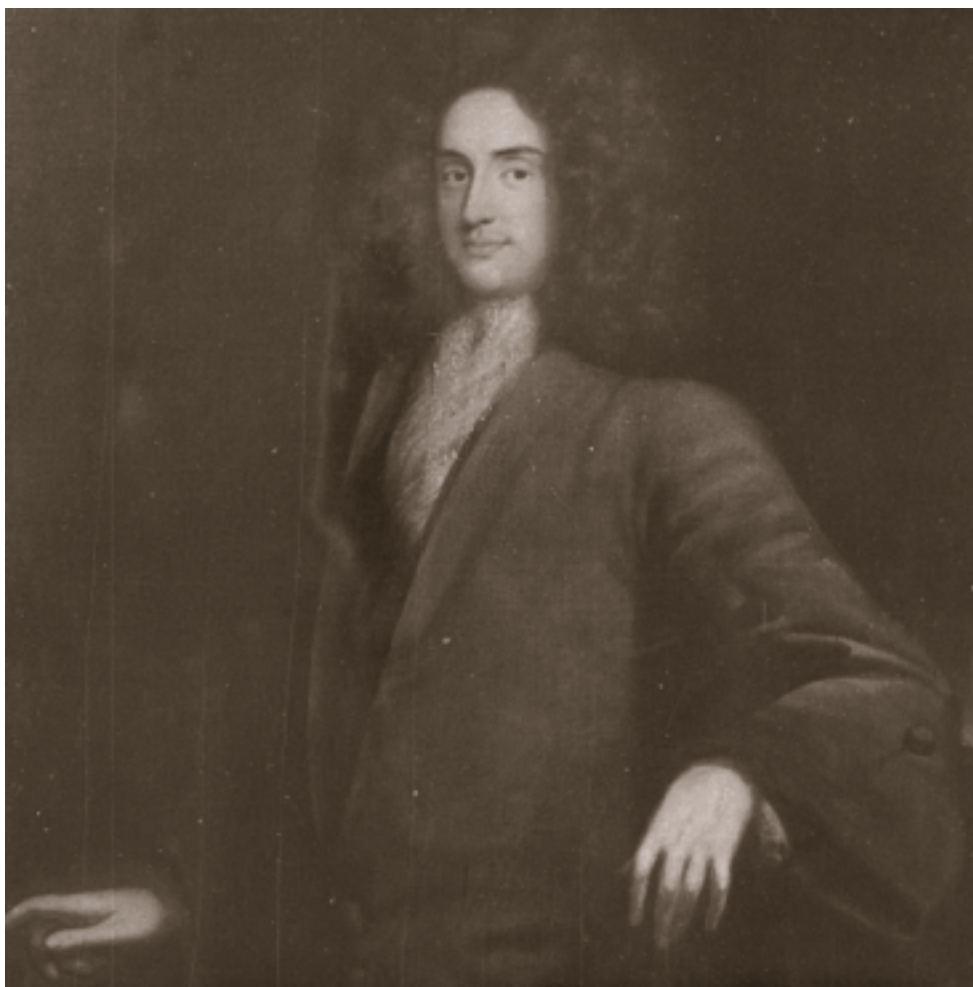


James Bradshaw Junior - cousin to John Peploe Birch and whom he resembled.

have been a quiet man, content to manage his own affairs, and rarely ventured into the public eye. He looked after his various hereditaments with an efficiency uncommon amongst the gentry of the day, writing every estate letter himself in duplicate in his small neat handwriting. He was certainly an shrewd businessman and the family estates expanded steadily during his tenure. It was therefore very much in character when he chose to marry in 1764 Anne, the daughter and eventual

heiress of William Clowes, one of the wealthier merchants of Manchester, who lived at Hunts Bank House, only 2 minutes walk from the Collegiate Church where Samuel was Warden.

William Clowes was the fourth son of Samuel Clowes, a wealthy landowner in Manchester, and his sister Anne was already connected with the Peploes through her marriage to Samuel Birch of Ardwick. William himself and his elder brother Thomas had become possessed of large estates in Manchester and its neighbourhood by marriage with Elizabeth and Margaret Nield, daughters and coheiresses of Miles Nield, merchant and chapman of Manchester. Miles Nield, whose large house at Hunts Bank is clearly visible in Whitworth's S.W. Prospect of Manchester, published in 1734, was a churchwarden at the Collegiate Church during Bishop Peploe's time as Warden and so was well acquainted with the Peploe family. When Miles Nield died in 1738, he divided all his estates



Probably William Clowes of Manchester from a portrait at Garnstone

including his house at Hunts Bank equally between his two son-in-laws which would ultimately lead to confusion and disharmony between the Clowes brothers and their descendants who never really knew who owned what.

William Clowes was certainly a very wealthy man for when John P.B. married his daughter in October 1764 at the Collegiate Church in Manchester she was given as her dowry a fortune of up to £60000; the bride was described on the occasion as both 'a beautiful lady' and 'a very agreeable young lady', she certainly was from a financial viewpoint.

During that autumn William Clowes settled over 500 acres of land in Manchester, Chetham, Gorton, Droylesden and Darcy Lever on his son-in-law in trust, these included 20 houses, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 20 stables and a pub called, rather curiously, the Dog Tavern.

The same month as the marriage the anniversary meeting of the 'ancient and respectable Corporation of Ardwick was held at Manchester, it was something in the nature of a Social Club of which there were several in Lancashire. William Clowes was chosen to be Mayor of Manchester for the year ensuing, and John P.B. and Joshua Marriot were elected Aldermen - 1764 was proving an annus mirabilis for the young man.

With his wife behind him he began to spend more time at Garnstone and their first child was born there in 1765, she was christened Anne after her mother. Three years later he became High Sheriff for Herefordshire thereby firmly establishing himself as one of the local gentry. However the roads of Herefordshire were said to be completely impassable in the winter during this period and possibly John P.B. and his family found the old fashioned Garnstone an inhospitable place at such time. He therefore took on the lease of 22 Curzon Street, Mayfair and it was here that the family spent the majority of their winters for over 40 years.



Anne Peploe Birch, daughter of William Clowes of Manchester - one of George Romney's most accomplished portraits painted in 1777

Both John P.B. and his father found the management of the Yorkshire tithes at times very troublesome. In 1764 Chancellor Peploe had filed a law case against a Mr Egerton in order to eject

the latter from the Peploe property at Cottingham, and it took a lengthy correspondence before the case was successful. Three years later John P-B, who was by now managing the family estates, complained bitterly to his agent in Hull that the Yorkshire property was considerably underlet compared with the Lancashire hereditaments.

Chancellor Peploe, relieved of his responsibility towards the families estates, began to spend more time doing charity work. In 1765 he wrote to his friend Mr Ducarel at the Doctor's Commons requesting information on the Boughton Spittle which had existed as a lock for lepers in the 14th century near the East Gate of the city of Chester. Samuel was anxious to ensure that any ancient endowments in the Diocese of Chester were still being put to good use, but the Harrop's Mercury newspaper discovered old records relating to the Boughton Spittle which showed that the income had long since been absorbed. In any case Chancellor Peploe did not meet with the encouragement he expected and so dropped his idea of completing this work.



Chancellor Peploe painted by Thomas Gainsborough at Bath in 1770

In the spring of the following year Chancellor Peploe preached a charity sermon in aid of the funds of the Manchester Infirmary, and at the same time he paid the wages for an assistant school master at Cottingham in Yorkshire. At a later date he also gave to the parish a set of silver communion plate which cost £30.

In the autumn of 1770 Chancellor Peploe's wife Elizabeth became ill and it was recommended by their son John P.B. that she should take the cure at Bath. Any visiting gentry to Bath would go the Assembly Rooms and there sign the visitors book, and this would be printed in the Bath Journal the following day. It is clear from these records that John P.B. was a frequent visitor to Bath as were other members of the Herefordshire gentry including the Cornewalls of Moccas, close neighbours at Garnstone, but Chancellor Peploe came only once and he and his wife's arrival was recorded for 30th October of that year.

They spent three weeks in Bath and Chancellor Peploe decided - perhaps to kill time, to have his portrait painted by the famous Thomas Gainsborough at his studio in The Circus. The picture shows him 'robed in his black gown and cassock, he is also wearing bands. He has on a large full bottomed powdered wig. The features are good, the face large and full with much pleasing intelligence and solidity of character in the expression. The original descended to Samuel Peploe of Garnstone and was engraved for Dr H.Ware's History of the Collegiate Church in 1831. It was one of the few objects that survived the break up of the Garnstone estate in 1900 and continued down through the family until 1957 when it was lost in transit between Postwick in Norfolk and Shoreham in Kent where it was supposed to have been put into storage. Somehow or rather it ended up in New Zealand in a very distressed state and without its original Maratta frame, but in 2005 it was bought back into the family from a couple who had purchased it with the idea of using the replacement frame for a mirror and sticking the tatty old canvas onto a bonfire!

The following month the Bath Journal recorded the following:

20th December 1770

Deaths: Lady of Rev Dr Peploe, Chancellor of Chester, at her lodgings in Bath on Sunday night.

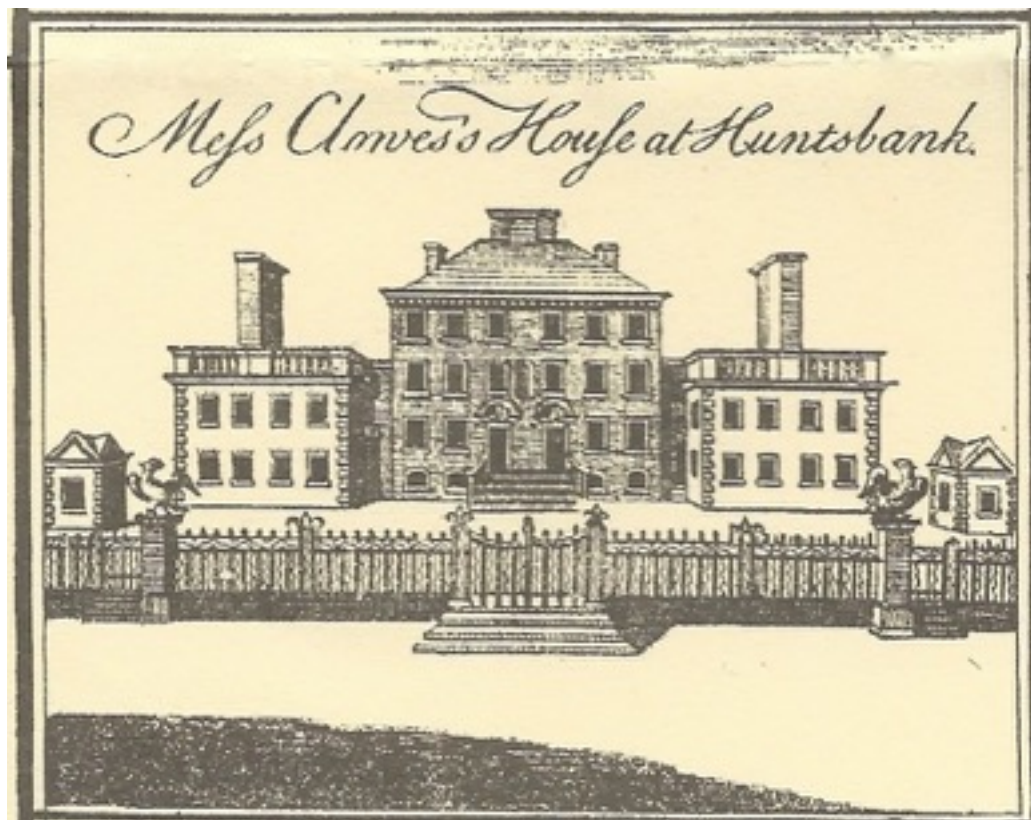
As far as is known Chancellor Peploe never went back to Bath.

In 1771, the then Bishop of Chester, Edmund Keene was succeeded by William Markham (1771—7), and he was non resident during most of his brief episcopate, his time being taken up with his duties as dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and tutor to the Prince of Wales. Although he made annual visits to the See, and conducted ordinations at Chester and elsewhere, he made no visitation, and left the administration at Chester in the hands of his Chancellor, now aged 70. This resulted in Chancellor Peploe becoming increasingly overburdened with work and a quiet retirement was temporally out of the question. Matters became even worse when his eldest sister, Mary Jodrell, died the following year leaving Samuel as sole executor. Her codicil written in April 1765 is touchingly personal and describes many of her most precious belongings:

I Mary Jodrell, widow of Frances Jodrell Esq, whenever it pleases God to call my precious should to himself, desire my remains may be entered at my dear fathers feet; that the head of my coffin my joyn the foot of the Bishops.

I desire all my debit and funeral expenses to be paid as soon as decency will allow. I would have a lead coffin in the usual way. I give to the society for the Propagation of the Gospel ten pounds, and the sum of ten pounds to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and five pounds to the Protestant Schools of Ireland. My house, garden, stable, coach house and co, I give to my Brother Peploe and to my nephew John Peploe after his father but should my nephew John Peploe leave no children then my house as above to go to my sister Bayley and sister Bradshaw and their heirs but any heir of heiress of my Brother Peploes to come in first and as the dropping of my life will open the lease I give 30 pounds towards filling it up the the person or persons rightly concerned. My plate I give betwixt my sister Bayley and my sister Bradshaw except my best case of knives and forks and my silver bason - those I give to my Brother Peploe and my nephew and my best hand silver candlesticks I give to my brother Peploe and co. The rest of my plate I would have my sisters Bayley and Bradshaw to divide without selling any of it. My hoop diamond ring and the best of my other diamond rings that has the Bishops Hair in it I give to my Dr Peploe and my nephew; my diamond earrings I give to my sister Bayley. My brilliant diamond ring and pearl necklace I give to

my sister Bradshaw and the Bishop's picture in ye drawing room I give to sister Bradshaw. My dear fathers picture at my watch I give to my nephew Peploe. My watch and locket to the eldest of sister Bayley's daughters that has no watch and my equipage along with my watch. My nephew Peploe to have his choice of any books I have and my nephew James Bayley to have the rest except one of my bibles which I would have my John Bayley to have his choice. My linnen I leave betwixt my sisters Bayley and Bradshaw to divide my bed. I give my nephew Peploe my Buroe. I give my sister Bayley my cabinet. I give my sister Bradshaw for I would not have them sold my chairs in ye drawing room and dining room and window curtains. I leave to my nephew Peploe my work tent, stick screen. I leave to sister Bradshaw the silk box my late dear mother left me. I leave to sister Bayley with my yellow Japanned trunk my dressing table as ye boxes were my own dear mothers work. I value em and give em to sister Bayley with ye table cloth and glass. Same to the boxes. The window curtains in my room and closet and dressing room with a pier glass. I give to sister Bradshaw. The pier glass in the dining room I give to sister Bradshaw as they are a pair. What money I leave in cash or securities to be equally divided betwixt my sister Bayley and my sister



Hunts Bank House as it looked when he inherited it from the Clowes family

Bradshaw - one half to one family and the other half to the other family; and the branches of either family if have most need have a double share.

Mary Jodrell
April 25th 1765

Despite his engagements at Chester he still found time to take an active interest in his various parishes. He was a trustee of the Tattenhall parish school which provided free education for the poor boys and in 1772 he generously subscribed £2000 towards the building of the Chester Canal from Chester to Nantwich. It was said that 'this more than anything else brought a new prosperity to Tattenhall and provided transport both for dairy produce and for cattle. It resulted in the establishment of the various commercial enterprises at Tattenhall Road and later to the building of the Aldersley Arms Hotel. A note in the end of the Tattenhall Register alludes to a less happy

occasion when in 1773 Chancellor Peploe and the principle inhabitants of Tattenhall imposed ten shilling fines on any alehouse keepers who persistently sold beer on Sundays.

In 1772 J.P.B's father-in-law died after a short illness at his house in Hunts Bank; his memorial tablet of Sienna and Statuary marble in the Collegiate Church, now Cathedral, of Manchester is one of the few surviving from the German bombing of the 2nd W.W.

Shortly after the decease of William Clowes, John P.B. and his family moved from their house in Deansgate into half of Hunts Bank House; the other half of which was inhabited by Mrs Peploe-Birch's cousin Richard Clowes and his wife Dorothy who had also recently inherited from his father Thomas.

Hunts Bank house was a tall mansion standing alongside the River Irk, and John P.B.'s half was L shaped with extensive formal gardens sloping upwards from the back of the house. The rear edge of the pleasure gardens was bounded by a raised gravel walk and palisade at each end of which was a pretty summerhouse, and the whole terrace could be approached by a sweeping stone staircase. In the front of the house was an enclosed court, and discretely placed at one of its corners were sheds containing '4 necefsaries' or toilets. There were also numerous stables, a coach house, granary and even a clock house. Some distance away from the main mansion was a smaller house built by William Clowes sometime before the death of his father-in-law Miles Nield; it was said to have 'strongly built and elegantly finished with every possible convenience for a gentleman's family'.

In those days the whole area was quite rural and both the Irk and nearby Irwell were clear and pure, and the slopes behind Hunts Bank House were said to have been crested with hawthorn. The point where the 2 rivers met was crossed by Hunts Bank bridge and this was so insignificant that 2 vehicles could not pass. The bridge served to connect the city of Manchester with the few houses at Hunts Bank via a country lane called Strangeways Walk, now the busy Great Ducie Street. This was bordered by hedgerows and trees, with fields of the left, in one of which were dye works, and on the right hand side coming from the Manchester direction was Hunts Bank House.

Many years later a visitor to Weobley from Manchester was interested to see names mentioned he recognised from his home town:

Hereford Journal Wednesday 17th January 1849

Letter to the Editor

"These Peploes, mindful of early associations, intermarried with the family of Clowes, of Hunts Bank, Manchester. The last representative of this ancient family were co-heiresses, maiden ladies, and they died probably about twenty years ago. The paternal mansion was a noble structure of the era of Charles the Second, It remained in all its pristine grandeur until a comparatively recent period, when it was converted into offices in connection with the Manchester and Leeds Railway, and finally it was razed to give place to the present Manchester railway station which occupies its site. When I had the pleasure a year ago of inspecting the relics in Weobley Church, I felt great interest in these monuments to the families of Birch Peploe and Clowes. I was truly astonished to find names with which I had been so long familiar as peculiar to Manchester, so honourably recognised in a distant province."

There is a representation of 'Messrs Clowes house' at Hunts Bank on the engraved map of 1755 entitled "A plan of The Town of Manchester and Salford in the County Palantine of Lancaster' by Casson and Berry. It clearly shows the staircase leading up to the double front door - one for each of the Clowes brothers. It is a very handsome and symmetrical 17th century house with elaborate railings enclosing the shared front court, and a copy of this map hung for many years in the hall way at Garnstone.

However Hunts Bank was not an easy house to manage for when the estate had been split up after Miles Nield's death in 1737 the rights of way had been only vaguely endorsed. Around 1796 Richard Clowes threatened to build a new road from the coal shed and garden to his half of the property, thus completely blocking access to J.P.B.'s half of the house! Numerous irate letters were written and when Richard Clowes's widow Dorothy wrote her will in 1818 she expressed a hope that the two halves of the mansion might one day be re-united. In fact the dispute was sorted the following year to the Peploe's favour at which point it was sold to Dorothy Clowes's heir. Two Miss Clowes were the last inhabitants of Hunts Bank Hall and it was advertised and sold by auction in

lots during the summer of 1843. Finally it was taken down for the erection of Manchester's Victoria Station, and very soon the little River Irk was bricked over altogether.

In 1791 the first stone of the Manchester Workhouse was laid on the slopes behind Hunts Bank House, and no longer could the area be called exclusive. Indeed the whole of Manchester was rapidly becoming industrialised for in 1808 it was reported that the River Irwell was as black as ink. In 1796 three very valuable strata of coal were found under John's Hackin Hall farm at Darcy Lever near Manchester, land which he had inherited from William Clowes, and the building of the Bolton Canal alongside the estate enabled him to get a high price for it a few years later. Not long after Richard Clowes decided to lease out his half of the Hunts Bank property and build himself another elsewhere, John P.B. followed suit and by 1793 the whole of Hunts Bank House was let. When Richard Clowes's widow Dorothy wrote her will in 1818 she expressed a hope that the two halves of the mansion might one day be re-united, but at that time the Peploe share was sub let to a Messrs Rushforth and co.

On 12th August 1777 John P.B.'s wife Anne began sitting for her portrait by George Romney and it took over two months and 9 sittings before the 3/4 length picture was complete. George Romney was born in Furness in Lancashire and as a student he known both Hamlet Winstanley and Arthur Devis of Preston, both artists who had been commissioned by the Peploe family to paint portraits. Furthermore the artist was a great favourite with the circle of Herefordshire friends with whom the Peploe-Birch's mixed, and that same year Lady Cornwall of Moccas and her daughter Kitty had their portraits painted. Indeed most of the Cornwall family sat at some time for Romney as well as Caroline wife of Sir Uvedale Price of Foxley, and it seems very probable that John P.B. himself was painted some time around 1774. His portrait, together with the Gainsborough of Chancellor Peploe, was kept by the family after Garnstone was sold up, but suffered the same fate of being lost in 1957. it was apparently a most engaging picture with the sitter looking slightly to the left and wearing a dark green (or possibly blue due the yellowing effect of varnish) jacket, gold waistcoat and white cravat. John P.B. had inherited Bishop Peploe's fine aquiline nose and probably resembled his cousin James Bradshaw of Darcy Lever in looks. He had an intelligent humorous face and it is to be hoped that the painting will one day be found.

Anne's portrait was an outstanding success and is considered to be one of George Romney's best portraits - from Alex Kidson's book on the artist:

'The rich red of Mrs Birch's robe, the slightly claustrophobic woodland setting and the prominent attributes of music give this portrait a distinctive character within the sequence of seated female half lengths that Romney painted in the lated 1770'ties.....there lurks under its outward calm a heated, red-bloodied quality. There is a sense that this woman will soon be playing her part in some Poussinesque Bacchanalian revel. The coiled energy of Romney's design, with a series of loops springing away from the taut curves of the central lyre, contributes to this feeling.'

it is not clear when it was sold by the family but the Verdins who purchased Garnstone from the Peploes in 1899 had heard that a valuable portrait from Garnstone had 'gone to America'. Its first public appearance was at the Royal Academy in 1908 when it belonged to H. Grant Thorold Esq but his descendants have no idea how he came to have the picture, remembering him as a complete philistine when it came to art. It is now in the Phoenix Museum of Art in Arizona.

Chancellor Peploe was by now a very old man and it was with great relief that Dr Markham, the absentee Bishop of Chester, retired in 1777; no longer did the Chancellor have to deal with the administration of the diocese. He was able to spend more time with his son and in 1779 bought the farm of Wistaston for £4500 as a contribution to the Garnstone estate.

Two years later the news came from Chester that Chancellor Peploe had died peacefully during the evening of October 30th 1781; the Chester newspaper reported his death by saying 'We cannot pass over so truly amiable a character without observing that his heart was the pure seat of universal philanthropy, manifested by a long life spent in the uninterrupted practise of virtue, benevolence and humanity.' The people of Chester were genuinely grieved by Chancellor Peploe's death and he left behind him the character, probably described by his son, of having been 'a devout christian, an able preacher and a sound divine.' .

Chancellor Peploe was buried in the grave of his father and step mother just behind the High Altar in Chester Cathedral, it was here that the remains of his wife had been placed nine years earlier.

John P.B. commissioned the fashionable late 18th century sculptor Joseph Nollekens to make a memorial for him in the Cathedral; it is a pyramidal marble monument with a boy weeping over an urn.

The final link with Chester was broken and John focused his attention on improving his Herefordshire property, although his only son, Samuel, was born at Hunts Bank in 1774. Between 1788 and 1791 Samuel was at Eton and it was at this time he had his miniature painted by the celebrated artist George Engleheart. It showed him wearing a blue coat, green waistcoat and white cravat, and it was set in a gold locket, enamelled dark blue and set with pearls. The miniature descended to Jack Curtis Webb, the great great nephew of the sitter and he sold it at Christies on 14th July 1919 for 165 guineas together with Samuel's watch. The miniature entered the collection of Thomas Hugh Cobb and it was shown at the V and A exhibition on George Engleheart of 1929 where it attracted much praise. After T.H.Cobb's death in 1944 it was bought by the collector Henry Nyburg who in turn died in 1978 since which time it has not appeared in public. After Eton Samuel progressed to Christchurch Oxford and he matriculated in 1792.

In 1787 the widow of Lord Tyrconnel died, she was John P.B.'s neighbour at Garnstone and her largish mansion called the Homme was put up for sale. The house was situated at Dilwyn, a small village on the northern perimeter of the Garnstone Estate, and John P.B was the purchaser probably feeling it might be suitable as a future home for his son. Sadly it was demolished in 1874 and no known representative of it exists, although it is said that it had undergone a great many changes in its time. At the time of its destruction it consisted of an early Victorian centre portion



Daniel Webb of Audley Square by George Engleheart

with two supporting wings, these were probably 16th century and had gables and numerous oak beams. The Homme was said to be badly haunted; in fact the story goes that it was taken down on that account. There was a blood stained floor, where it was thought a murder was committed. Often

the servants could hear a coach and horses come up to the front door, and even the driver's whips would crack, but on going out nothing would be visible.

Co-incidentally there was also a curious ghost story connected with Fields End, another farm on the Garnstone estate. It was said a farmer committed suicide there and his spirit retaliated in the form of a calf. At an exorcism it was conjured into a snuff box and this was thrown into the pond at Garnstone.

In the summer of 1790 the Gentleman's Magazine carried the following announcement concerning John P.B.'s eldest daughter:

June 2nd

Daniel Webb, esq, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, to Miss Peploe, daughter of John Peploe Birch Esq. of Garnstone, Herefordshire.

They were married at the society church of St Georges, and soon after the event they moved to 3 Audley Square where their first son Daniel was born in 1794. Number 3 Audley Square is one of the few Georgian Houses to remain more or less intact at this little cul-de-sac at the end of South



3 Audley Square where the Webbs lived after their marriage and where their eldest son Daniel Peploe Webb was born

Audley Street, and the Webb family were to live there on and off until 1809. Their neighbours included the Earl of Chesterfield, the Archbishop of York and Lady Webster, the wife of Sir Godfrey Webster and a particular friend of Mrs Daniel Webb with whom she shared recipes. Lady Webster later caused tremendous scandal in Georgian London by running off with Henry Fox, the third Lord Holland by whom she had seven children over a period of 14 years.

Daniel and his brother John had been brought up in London where their father, a former wool factor of Blackwell Hall and also called Daniel, had been made Treasurer of Christ's Hospital School for boys. Their mother, too was a Webb, descended from a junior branch of the same family as Daniel Webb senior, and their roots lay in Gloucester where many generations of Webbs had been Aldermen and Mayors closely connected with the business community of that city.

The first member of the family to make his mark was Nicholas born 1586 at Frocester some 15kms south of Gloucester. He had been apprenticed to a wealthy apothecary called John Bower in 1601, and subsequently progressed through the ranks of the City Corporation until becoming

Mayor in 1643. By family tradition he was responsible for shutting the City gates to the Royalists when they came to besiege Gloucester during the Civil War.

Before Nicholas the Webb family had been yeoman farmers at Frocester since his great grandfather had settled in the village around the year 1490. His name is not known but he left a widow Helen and two surviving sons, Thomas and John, who were recorded in the Military Survey of Gloucester 1522. Helen may have been a Browne before her marriage as her two sons were entitled to take over that families copyhold leasehold land from the Lord of the Manor under the name Webb alias Browne in 1530. This consisted of two parcels of land each with its own cottage attached; one of 35.5 acres in Peter Street and this passed down the family until 1724, and the other of 23 acres close to the gatehouse of Frocester Court where irregularities in the ground still show the site of the cottage.

The name Webb is very ancient in Gloucestershire being synonymous with the weaving industry, and one particular group came to predominate.

During the 1320'ties the business minded King Edward III realised it would be more profitable if English exporters could sell woollen cloth as well as ordinary plain woollen yarn to Europe. However English weaving skills did not in any way compare with their Flemish counterparts at this time, and so around 1330/1 seventy cloth working families from the Netherlands were encouraged to settle in England by the King. Various centres were established in East Anglia, the area around Cranbrook in Kent including Goudhurst, Biddenden and Frittenden, and also the Stroud valley and Dursley area of Gloucestershire.

According to John Speed in his 'Historie of Great Britaine' of 1611, King Edward III was anxious to discover how well his experiment had worked, and so a few years later in 1336 he sent some of his men back to the cloth making areas of the country where Flemish weavers had settled to see what



The Webb family grave at Frocester where generations of the family had been interred.

progress had been made. Apparently the weavers of the Gloucestershire beat all the competition, and the best of them all was given the name of Webb by the King. This story is also repeated by Thomas Fuller in his 'History of the Church History of Great Britain' of 1655, and according to a

pedigree entered at the College of Arms by one of his descendants in 1620 the name of the master weaver was Richard and he was honoured with the coat of arms described as: Or, a cross, quarterly, counterchanged, gules and sable, in the first quarter an eagle displayed of the last.

It is on record that the Webbs of Frocester were using this coat of arms by the early 17th century but so far it has not been possible to prove they are actually descendants of the master Flemish weaver of 1320. An ancient family of clothworkers called Webb had held the fulling mill at Churchend in Eastington next door to Frocester from 1444 on condition they rebuild it, and it is possible the two families were connected, but only DNA evidence would be able to establish a definite link.

DNA testing has shown however that the Webb family of Frocester are related to Roger Webb of Lurgan born 1622 to Edward Webb and this Roger became one of the founding fathers of Quakerism in Ireland. Skilled weavers were encouraged to settle in the province during the 17th Century to help with the native linen industry and Roger Webb's forbears almost certainly came from Gloucestershire via Lancashire during the 16th century.

Some of the descendants of Nicholas Webb, Mayor of Gloucester 1643, made considerable sums of money trading merchant ships. In 1699 Colonel Nicholas Webb was appointed Governor of Providence Island in the Bahamas and it is said he made a fortune by illicit dealings with pirates, but lost it back to them on his return when his ship was attacked. His brother Gyles, an army captain who emigrated to Henrico County in Virginia, married the widow of H. Randolph Jr in 1713, and is supposed to have very efficiently assisted Huguenot emigrants settle in that country.



Anne Webb, mother of Daniel Webb of Audley Square and sister to Captain John Webb of Cote House, Durdham Down, Bristol, and Norton Court, Gloucester

Later Captain John Webb, the uncle of Daniel of Audley Square, ran East Indiaman to Canton and India and back, and amassed an enormous fortune with which he built Norton Court, a five by a house set within a considerable estate near Gloucester in 1762. He also bought the Cote House estate on the outskirts of Bristol in 1775 and was probably responsible for giving it a 'delightful Gothic exterior' which was painted by Turner in 1791. Captain John Webb became M.P. for Gloucester and his monument can be seen in the Cathedral there, as can that of his son Edward who spent £27000 of his own money successfully contesting the Gloucester election of 1816. Edward left an only daughter and heiress, Miss Elizabeth Frances Webb, and she was closely connected to the Peploe family for many years.

The eldest branch of the Webb family of Gloucester ended in an heiress called Anna who married Charles Hyatt of Painswick House in Gloucestershire. With some of the Webb inheritance they built the famous rococco gardens of Painswick still open to the public.

Daniel's father was a bibliophile and when he died his collection of books was split between him and his brother John and each had his own bookplate designed. He was considerably older than his wife Anne and Daniel was only 5 when his father's death occurred.

Later Daniel Junior went to Oriel College, Oxford, although he could not really be called an academic, but rather a man of taste and fashion. He and his wife seem to have had a happy marriage and moved from one spar town to another after their lease on 3 Audley Square had expired.



Cote House, Bristol, built by Captain John Webb, uncle to Daniel Webb of Audley Square, painted by J.M. Turner

Pictures of Daniel and his family show that he resembled his mother in features; the Webbs were tall, big boned people and do not appear to have been particularly good looking. However Daniel

was devoted to his wife and family, and he even had his dress shirt buttons mounted with his daughter's hair. Soon after their marriage Anne started a recipe book with contributions from all their friends and family including one for making ginger beer from John P.B., and another entitled 'to cure the bite of a mad dog.'

In 1790 it was reported that John P.B. had expressed an interest in purchasing the Bolesworth Castle estate within his father's old parish of Tattenhall, a house with which he must therefore have been very familiar. It had been built in 1750 probably copying the style of Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill in Twickenham which was then at the cutting edge of fashion. At the time the estate was relatively small and sadly the original house was completely rebuilt in 1826, but it is interesting that John P.B. admired it as Leila Peploe in the 1870'ties credited him with the initial approach to John Nash with the idea of rebuilding Garnstone in the Gothic style. At around this time John P.B.'s cousin Sir Oswald Moseley, father of Rev John Peploe Mosley, lived there for a while. From the Heber letters:

'Mrs Crewe told me that Sir Forster Cunliffe was likely to purchase Bolesworth but if he does not Mr Peploe Birch is to have the next refusal. I wish he was to be your neighbour but am surprised he should think of leaving Herefordshire.'



Samuel Peploe as a boy, only son of John Peploe Birch painted by George Engleheart

In April of 1795 the Register of Times reported an unusual event which took place at Garnstone:

'Some days ago a very singular chase took place at Garnstone, Hereforshire; an outlying buck, belonging to the park of John Peploe Birch Esq which it was intended to replace in the paddock, on account of his becoming troublesome in the neighbourhood, was aroused in Garnstone wood, and closely followed and kept in view for four hours and a half, by only three spaniels, over a distance of thirty miles. He took at first for Badenage, and returned by the park pales; then set off for Stand common, came back by Kinnersley, and, taking through Weobley returned home, where he was stopped and secured. During the run, he went through several extensive piece of water, and died, from extreme fatigue, soon after he was taken.'



Kitty Cornwall and her brother George (later 2nd Baronet) painted by George Romney 1777

1795 saw Samuel finish taking his degree at Christ Church, Oxford and in July of that year he came of age. It was customary amongst the landed classes for the heir's father to entertain all his neighbours, both rich and poor on such an important family occasion, and John P.B. was no exception. The Hereford Journal reported the event as follows:

'On Wednesday last, Samuel Peploe Esq, only son of John Peploe- Birch Esq of Garnstone, in this county, attained the 21st year of his age on which occasion the neighbouring gentlemen were invited to an elegant dinner, and the numerous poor were most plentifully regaled. The inhabitants of the borough of Weobley vied with each other in testifying their affectionate regard for the family by illuminations and other demonstrations of joy. On Thursday a dinner was provided at Garnstone for the tenants, and in the evening a ball was given to their wives and daughters, and for 2 days the surrounding neighbourhood joined in this scene of uninterrupted harmony and delight.'

The occasion served to introduce Samuel into the society life of Herefordshire, but in any case he must have known the exceptionally accomplished eldest daughter of his father's friend Sir George Amyand Cornwall since childhood as their family estate bounded the north western edge of Garnstone. She was called Katherine or Kitty to her close friends and family, and the couple were married in less than a year on 15th March 1796 at the exquisite little Norman Church in the park of Moccas Court. Kitty was two years older than Samuel but it was a true love match and after her death he would describe the drawing of his wife as 'the object of the greatest value to me that I possess'.

From a Country Life Article on Moccas:

'The Cornewalls of Berrington were a distinguished and ancient Herefordshire family, descended from Henry III's brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and had come into possession of Moccas when Edward Cornwall married the widow of Henry Vaughan in the middle of the 17th century. They had owned the estate since the 16th century and one branch had lived at Garnstone before it was bought by Colonel Birch in 1661. The grandson of the Vaughan widow was Velters Cornwall, Sir George's father-in-law. He was born in 1697 and represented Herefordshire in the Tory interest for 46 years in seven successive Parliaments until he died in 1768 when, in the words of his memorial in Hereford Cathedral, "his constituents were preparing to elect him to an eighth parliament." He married three times but only his third wife bore him any children. Their son Frederick Henry died in infancy, leaving the only daughter, Catherine, who was born in 1752 as heir. Her father had stipulated in his will that if she married, her husband should adopt the name and arms of Cornwall, and so in deference to this, at their marriage in 1771 the young Sir George Amyand became Sir George (Amyand) Cornwall, and the family name continued to be associated with Moccas until 1962.

For Moccas, the marriage between the two families was a fortunate one, for young Sir George must have fallen in love with those Herefordshire acres as well as the heiress and made up his mind at an early date to live there. His decision is significant since he had inherited from his father a fine house at Carshalton in Surrey and a fortune of some £158000 including property in Berkshire and the West Indies, and Moccas was to benefit from all these resources.

In 1777 Sir George had employed the local architect Anthony Keck to rebuild Moccas as the original house had seemed small and old fashioned to the new owner. The result was rather like a town house of considerable sophistication set down in a very beautiful and very remote country park. The decoration inside was somewhat restrained with the exception of the drawing room which had Pompeian decoration with papered and panelled walls, there were some very fine chimney pieces as well.

The Cornewalls from all accounts were a very musical family and Lady Cornwall encouraged all her children's musical tastes. Cimador was their master for song and a tenor on the Opera Stage would come to Moccas in the summer, in those days no one wished to attempt the roads in the winter! Katherine and her sisters became renowned in Herefordshire for their singing and her younger sister Fanny had a particularly charming voice, delighting people with her great natural taste for singing simple ballad music. Harriet, the second child, also sang very nicely but not like the others, inventing a kind of score of Mozart's and Haydn's pieces so that the organ, plaid by the youngest sister Caroline, could fill up the Hautboys and other wind instrument parts. Their mother had an Opera Box and belonged to the Ancient Concerts so the elder ones heard a great deal of music. '

Many years later Kitty's youngest sister Lady Caroline Duff Gordon sent a letter to her niece Henrietta Master recalling those days

London – November 26th 1873

My dear Henrietta

Georgy says you desire to know the history of your musical ancestors, the Cornewalls. I am not a good person to apply to as the real good ones and their education was long before my time, but I will blunder out something for you.

My eldest sister (Katherine but known as Kitty) was 17 years older than me, and it would be difficult for me to register her Master's names, but I believe there was a certain Mr Bates who was, I think, the promoter of the Commemoration of Handel, the year I should guess about 1789, when I was born, and he was the Leader and Manager of the whole thing. He married, I think, Miss Chambers, whom he taught to sing Handel's music. They came to Moccas and I remember her voice well singing in the Hall at Moccas 'The opening' of the "Hero and His Bride". I don't know who were my sister's Music Masters. I can only remember there was always music. When my sister, Kitty, married and left Moccas, I was only 6 years old. When she went abroad on her marriage, she stayed at Dresden and became acquainted with Paer, and he was so much delighted with her perfect singing at sight of his Operas, just then coming out, that he gave them to her in MSS. She had been well grounded in Clefs and Score and Thorough Bass by Mr Bates. At Moccas my two elder sisters, Anna Maria and Fanny, were instructed in the same way by the Hereford Organist, Mr Coyle, and thoroughly grounded them and the family in Score and Clefs, e.t.c. In those days music was not made easy as it is now, but thoroughly learnt. Your Aunt Fanny, Lady Hereford, had a charming voice, and great natural taste for single simple Ballad Music, and delighted people. She played admirably too, so did A. Maria, but not with so much feeling. My Mother was very fond of Music and encouraged all their musical tastes – "Cimador" was their Master for song. Also a Tenor on the Opera Stage used to come to Moccas in the summer (in those days, no one wished to attempt the roads in the winter!). Then your Father came home from abroad and the "Grand Tour", in about 1797, I should guess, with his Violincello, and later my younger brother Charles played on the Violin. Harriett (Your Aunt Lewis) sang very nicely, but not like her sisters – inventing a kind of score of Mozart's and Haydn's pieces, so that the organ (which I blew for them) could fill up the Hautboys and other wind instruments parts. In those days the pianoforte was sacred from vulgar fingers, and I practiced on the harpsichord for many years. My Mother had an Opera Box, and belonged to the Ancient Concerts, so that the elder ones heard a great deal of music.

In those days, it was customary for people to sing at the Dessert Table, and Fanny sang delightful Ballads, "The Thorn", "Crazy Jane", "The Orphan's Prayer", till tears rolled down people's cheeks listening to her. Some gentlemen who came to Moccas also sang after dinner – Captain Morris, Col. Sandeman, e.t.c. e.t.c., and my sisters, and they sang Catches and Glee's at table without accompaniment. The gentlemen remained 1 or 2 hours or more after the ladies left them and all came out with reddish faces, smelling of port wine. In the meantime we ladies had been working worsted work, or copying music – one reading aloud the "Cecilia" "Evelina" or even the "Tom Jones" and "Clarissa Harlowe" of the day! Breakfasted in good time, some of the party in riding habits (my Mother always with her riding hat on, her hair powdered and Boucle, and twice or three times a week went out with the Harriers). Often neighbouring Clergymen came to dinner, which was at 3 o'clock in summer and 5 o'clock in winter. They rode a grass horse and both man and beast were not sweet! Also many others of the same kind, Freeholders, always well received, as my Father was Member for the County, and we were brought up by my Mother, not only to be pleased, but to look pleased to all!!

The visitors to Moccas were numerous, "Prices of Foxley," the Clives, Lord and Lady Epey of Hampton Court, Mr and Mrs Birch of Garnstone (parents of Samuel Peploe), old Mr Stanhope and Lady Catherine of Whitfield (The Clives then lived at Wormbridge) the Sandemans, the Cotterells, the Foleys of Stoke Edith, the old Duke of Norfolk of Holme Lacy (in his old Coach and 4 black horses) who always drank like a fish, and it was said that he used to make a compromise with his Coachman saying, "John, you must be sober to-night and I shall be drunk."

Sometimes he slept at Moccas, but never brought a clean shirt with him, and came down to breakfast next morning with a port-wine spotted shirt, and generally himself unwashed. The servants considered him a "clean" man as he never wanted any water in his room!

The Freemans of Letton were our great friends. He lived to be a very old man, and never failed after dinner to say: "Gentlemen, I propose the health of Church and King". I forget the many other visitors from a distance. The Malmesbury's (Lady Malmesbury was my Father's sister), the Master's from The Abbey, Lord and Lady Northwick from Gloucestershire (or Winchester) an old cousin of my Mother's, Mr Annesley from Reading (my godfather who left me my picture of my Mother by Sir Joshua Reynolds, now at 34 Hertford Street. When I was quite a child, six years old about, my Mother, who hated governesses, had over from France a French Abbe – Monsieur Babey – an old man, but it turned out perfectly well. He never (wisely) interfered with our Protestant Creed, taught us French, Geography, Arithmetic, even the higher branches of it, was quite well conducted and used to ride an old pony every Sunday to Hereford to attend High Mass. He lived with us, I think, 7 years and went with my brother Charles to Leipzig, where he went to learn German before he went into the City House of business in Austin Friars. The family London House was No. 14 Stanhope St. where my Father and Mother gave dinners to many friends and lived well.

Then there came the calamity of the property in the West Indies failing, and then a greater misfortune, the City House Manager being a relation of my Father's failing, just as my brother



Moccas Court, home of the Cornwall family

Charles was to become Manager, and all went to the dogs, and poor old Moccas oaks suffered. This was about 1804, I think, but I don't remember.

Then the London House in Stanhope Street was sold and we learnt to 'walk short'. Your Aunt Lewis was married in 1806 and George C. Lewis was born at Tiberton Court in 1806, which his parents hired, as Harpton was under repair. Your Aunt Hereford was married about that time, and live for 2 years in the Vicarage at Bredwardine, where some of her sons were born. I forgot to mention sundry young men – Mr H. Wellington of Hay Castle, who later married Lord Hereford's sister Charlotte Devereux – Mr J Berrington of Wisley – or some such name – a Mr Higgins of Middlewood – a kind of middleclass man. My Father was, I think, Col. of Yeomanry Cavalry and some of these people used to drop in.

Then there were the Canons of Hereford – Dr Morgan, a remarkably acute man (but not at all fit for the Church) and his son who we all liked and Canon Rupell, who afterwards had the living of Dilwyn – a very respectable man, but had so little to do, he said he played at chess, his right hand against his left! The family were all horsewomen, which is essential, I need not tell you, for their happiness in Herefordshire, even now, but in those days the roads were abominable, also no one can enjoy the infinite charms of Moccas unless they can ride! George says, you want to know about Mr Payne-Knight of Downton Castle, who we all liked and wisely he never did our religious

principles any damage, but did our tastes great good, and was immensely learned in all works of Art and Beauties of Nature. He left his collections of medals, Bronzes e.t.c. to the British Museum. Walking out with him was a great pleasure.

He pointed out all the Beauties of Nature and effects of light and shade e.t.c. He was a very remarkable man. His Father was proprietor of a small Ironwork on the Teme, which runs thro' that valley. (In those days Downton Castle belonged to the Thomas family). Mr Knight, when he left school at Ludlow, begged, borrowed (and perhaps stole!) books in all languages – live and dead, and ended by being the greatest Grecian Scholar in England, and the highest Authority upon all Classical Literature. He traveled in Greece and Italy, learnt what to admire and what was spurious, and became the consulted "Man of Taste" in England. We used to dine often with him in his peculiar house in Soho Square, where he had collections of Bronzes, e.t.c. that he had brought home. He was very fond of music, and quite in love with Calalani; we met her at dinner at his house, and she sang magnificently there. He was a very pretty poet, no doubt you know his verses on "The Four Fair Nymphs," being your 4 Aunts!

He was a curiously ugly man. I have a bust of him in the dining room. His brother and successor was Andrew Knight who wrote upon Herefordshire apples and fruits generally. His son was accidentally shot by Mr Barneby of Brockhampton.

Your Father's deafness was said to be produced by the change of style in dressing men's hair – and that he caught cold in his ears – I just remember his return to Moccas from his "Grand Tour", I think about the year 1795. I can see him now, 'bien poudre' with curls at the ears, a light grey coat with white lining. Men were then beginning to crop their hair, especially those at all tinged with democracy, brought in after the French Revolution. Some even left off powder, but not generally for even when I married in 1816, powder and pigtails were worn with evening dress – this consisted always in Knees, silk stockings, and when really dressed, buckles to their shoes, and going out to dinner always a gold headed cane. I remember the year I married going to a grand dinner – we had two powdered footmen with canes and cocked hats, and so had the coachman – and thick white gloves – and your Uncle Gordon with a cocked hat, of course. No gentleman even thought of wearing a round hat in the evening. Hackney coaches were very dirty and only straw at the bottom of the carriage, so that those who came to dinner in one probably brought some straw in with them! When gentlemen wore boots in the morning, they were either very tight, fitting the shape of the leg high boots – or what was pretty – Hessian halfboots with a tassel and tight pantelons under them. It is quite since Belgravia was inhabited that Ladies even walked out without a footman, and for a long time was highly disapproved of.

The use of Umbrellas and parasols came in from France in 1793, and French ones were mostly made of red cotton, but English people did not much take to them. I am not certain when umbrellas became common in any house. In sunny weather, ladies carried large green paper fans. Table lamps and large easy chairs in drawing rooms were totally unknown. The books in a gentleman's library were mostly quarts or folio, so that one read to a table, with the heavy book before one. I remember 2 large chairs coming to Moccas, having been sent from Cirencester, and ordered for my Father and Mother by old Mr and Mrs Master, I think about 1799. They were more as ornaments than for use. My Father and Mother never lay back on them.

When Sir Velters Cornwall of Moccas died in 1868, the Court Journal wrote: "At the country seat of the Cornwalls the most eminent musical professors in the early part of the century were accustomed to meet: Cervetto, Cimador, Dragonetti and their contemporaries. It was the boast of the Dowager Lady Cornwall that she had "five daughters - the best linguists and musicians in England – viz: Viscountess Hereford, Mrs Peploe, Lady Frankland Lewis, Lady Duff-Gordon and one unmarried daughter". A note written by Lady Duff-Gordon in her old age suggests that Lady Hereford was taught by, amongst others, the famous Italian castrato Venanzio Rauzzini, who settled in Bath and became responsible for the principal concerts there and where he was visited by Haydn.

Kitty Peploe was quite exceptionally musical and her singing and piano playing ability was much admired by Charles Burney (1726-1814), organist, composer and the foremost music historian of his time in England. According to Rachel Cowgill, Professor of Music History at Liverpool and the author of Kitty Peploe's biography in the Oxford Companion to Music, Charles Burney was a very shrewd judge of musicality:

"and Mozart, in a totally different style, and for a totally different purpose, has rendered little favourite French, Italian, German and English airs, the most beautiful amusing and useful compositions for the piano forte that have ever been produced since the invention of the that instrument. More than twenty of these have been printed in England that were brought from Vienna by Mrs Peploe, who played them, as she did all other music, with a firmness, accuracy and spirit which neither dilettante nor professor has ever exceeded. These themes seem to have been a series of lessons, composed expressly to form the hand and taste of some disciple of the author, who promised to be a great performer. In every one of these themes, there are some peculiar difficulties of execution, refinement, and expression to vanquish, at which it is vain for mediocrity to aspire.'

In 1796 Samuel and Kitty made a visit through Germany to Vienna, at that time one of the great musical centres of Europe, and her younger brother George was at this time also doing a grand tour with his violincello. She had already travelled extensively around Europe as recorded by her aunt Lady Malmesbury who referred to the troubles at that time in France:

Grove Place June 21 1791

'I am so excessively cross that I don't know what to do. Imagine that it is but too true that the Emperor (of Germany) is going to assist the French immediately, and that the Prince de Conde is to have the command of the army, and in this case passing through France will be impossible, and I must as usual, go through Germany.But conceive that in addition to going to Germany, I shall be obliged to go to Ostend instead of Calais. In short, I am in despair. If Kitty (Cornwall) had not been going with me, I think I should have run all risks and so Mr Ellis had my epitaph; here it is:

"Good Christians! with wailing and singing of psalms, bury
The lovely remains of poor dear Lady Malmesbury.
Because she refused in Old England to stop, alas!
She was killed, do you see, by a parlez vous populace."

In Vienna Kitty was feted by the musical elite and in November 1796 Joseph Haydn began to make a series of MS copies of his vocal music for her. He added for her the date 1796 to his autograph manuscript of the duet 'Guarda Qui che lo vedrai', and according to Kitty's own testimony she received that piece in December and the duet 'Saper vorrei se m'ami' in November. Kitty later acquired further London and post London works from Haydn and many of these are now in the Burgenlandisches Landesmuseum at Eisenstadt.

When Haydn came to London in 1798 he was entertained by the Peploe Birches at their London House and Mrs Peploe of 22 Curzon Street was one of the subscribers to 'The Creation' for its Premiere at The Convent Garden in 1800.

Presumably these precious autograph works were kept at Garnstone during Kitty's life time but it is unfortunate that the inventory made at Samuel Peploe's death in 1845 provides insufficient details to be completely sure.

In late 1796 Gouvenor Morris - one time American Diplomat in Paris, visited a musical soiree held by Kitty when not everything went according to plan:

December 26th

Leave Sir M. Eden and go to Mrs. Peploe's to a musical meeting which might well be called a screaming party, for a Madame de Hasfeldt, who resembles more a Wapping landlady than anything human, pours forth such yells as would little disparage a chief of the Mohawks. A Comtesse de Zoes plays to show her graces, I presume, certainly not her science, while poor Madame Peploe, boiling with vexation at the murder of her music, labours, but in vain, to harmonise these discordances. I am thrown into a violent convulsion of laughter which, without being noisy, is apparent in spite of my utmost efforts. Mrs. Scott catches the infection, and conceals as well as she may the effects of it by coughing, while the Prince de Reusse, whose good heart is alike solicitous for the singing and laughing parties, that one may not give or the other take

offence, renders by his air, manner, and efforts the whole scene completely theatrical. After the company are gone and Mrs. Peploe has had a few moments to vent the expressions of her just indignation, she is so kind as to soothe my tingling ears (which feel as if something were scratching them) by a delicious air most sweetly sung."



Kitty's brother Sir George Cornwall, 2nd Bart from a painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence which used to hang in the dining room at Garnstone until left to the heir of Moccas Court by Samuel Peploe in his will of 1845.

At this time Samuel and Kitty lived at The Homme and he was encouraged by his father in law to become a Captain in the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry. Sir George Cornwall had served the Herefordshire Militia for some years and became its Colonel in Chief in 1805 - from the Hereford Journal of 19th June 1799:

'The two Troops of Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry are to be embodied in this city for a few days for the purpose of improving themselves in their discipline by practicing their manoeuvres in a body. For this purpose, the Troop commanded by Captain Peploe, are expected here, from Leominster, on Monday morning, when they will join Sir George Cornwall's Troop, and immediately proceed to their exercising ground, at the Bartonsham, near this city. '

And from the Hereford Journal of 1798:

'and with pleasure we now mention the conduct of Captain Peploe's troop; On Thursday they were assembled in the neighbourhood of Leominster, for the purpose of being consulted on the subject of Mr Dundas's letter, which being read, they immediately signified their willingness to march at any time, and to any place in this island, his Majesty may think necessary to order them, for the defence of their country; and upon the Captain declaring his readiness to lead them, they gave

repeated hurrahs, and assured him they would cheerfully meet any danger, in support of our beloved King and glorious constitution.'

During the early years of the 19th century John P.B. was becoming increasingly overburdened with his responsibility towards his estates and the first signs of a long illness were becoming apparent. His sons marriage settlement was also proving a great expense, and about this time he decided to sell parts of his Lancashire property; the family no longer had any ties there and the rapid industrialisation of Manchester was putting a large premium on the land. Hacken had already been sold and in 1800 he sold Bishop Peploe's Hapsford, Thornton and Little Budworth estates for £5600. John P.B. still owned the lease on Mrs Jodrell's old house at Deebanks, although it was by now a wreck of its former self and he surrendered his claim to it in 1800.

A still greater source of stress was caused by Samuel and Kitty's trip to Paris in 1803 during which they met Bertie Greatehead of Guys Cliffe (1759-1826), the English Dramatist and friend of Sarah Siddons the actress, who would become one of their closest friends. He kept a diary and recorded the unfortunate story of their getting marooned in Europe due to the outbreak of hostilities between Napoleon and England:

1803

April 18th 1803

Monday

There is a fresh importation of English. The Peploes, the Matthews of Hereford and Porter it seems for a few days.

April 20th Wednesday

We dined with the Clives (of Whitfield, Herefordshire) and met Mr and Mrs Peploe there: Herefordshire people: I like them very well. They have all to learn yet respecting the state of society here; they expect to find among the French good humour, and what you call good company in other countries.

April 30th Saturday

This has been a day of considerable emotion. We had interesting talk at breakfast. I walked with Clive and Peploe to the Granits to Lignereux who has been packing up Lord Whitworth's furniture. The buzz of war is everywhere, the Ambassador is selling horses, and the Duke of Bedford says he goes on Wednesday. Lord Whitworth informs those who were to have been presented, that he shall not attend the Audience.

The following day Samuel achieved an audience with Napoleon:

May 1st Sunday

After taking Nancy to Lord Whitworth's church, I called for Ferguson, and we went together to the Thuilleries, where we saw the Parade excellently from the passage of the Sale des Ambassadeurs. When Bonaparte went up stairs we followed into the chamber where he gives audience to his officers. A very grand and military show. This day the Cavalry as well as the Artillery were drawn up within the rails, so that the Consul never pass'd out among the people. This puts an end to the petitions. I only saw one presented by a woman who had been favoured with admission for the purpose. The English Ambassador was not there. Ferguson and Peploe followed Clive, Bertie and myself into the audience chamber. Bonaparte was in uniform. He spoke long to Markhof, said there would be war, that it would be known on Tuesday: That we had not kept faith and would not surrender Malta. He asked Lord Yarmouth and Clive where they came from; if they were just come. They had both been presented before and Lord Yarmouth has been here the whole winter. He then said "Votre Ambassadeur n'est pas ici: apparemment il est mal." Ferguson and Peploe kept behind and the trick passed off very well.

June 23rd Thursday

We went to the Peploes who had music; the Caramans and other ci-divants were there.... Bonaparte set off this evening for Flanders.

At this point Napoleon's relationship with the English visitors in Paris was becoming somewhat tense due to the failure of the Treat of Amiens and the outbreak of war between the two countries - many were being evacuated from the capital but not allowed home across the channel:

July 14th

Went to Madame Schall's then to Concannons where many were assembled to know their fate. Knox and the Fitzgeralds and several unknown to me have orders to leave Paris. The English are to be sent off in this manner by 12s or 15s at a time. Fontainebleau, Melun, Meaux, are the places: N--- and I called upon Monr: Sage who received us. We dined with Peploe and met Green there. As no carriages but those with the Government liveries were permitted after 7 this evening the Peploes and we walked to see the illuminations of the Tuileries. This day of commemoration is dying away apace. The centre of the Tuileries, the centre walk of the garden, the Place de la Concorde, the façade of the Garde Meuble had a grand effect. The concourse of people was great but by no means what I expected. The bridges, the wings of the Tuileries were not illuminated as on former occasions: there were no fireworks, no music. The night was windy and gloomy.

August 19th Friday

We supped with the Peploes. There were Lattin, Mrs Concannon and Green who had dined with Andreossi and been with him to St Cloud but no access; there is not good health, nor good temper. The papers and the town rumour an exchange....This has been a day of news and hope.

September 9th Friday

Green and Peploe called. Our petition (asking leave to go into Germany) must go to the Consul. I fear we shall not succeed.....

September 18th Sunday

The Peploes called in the morning, convinced we are to go away.

September 22nd Thursday

Green came in the evening. He has seen at Junor's a letter from Berthier permitting us to go out of France and any where but to England. So here at last is a great change! I suppose the Peploes, Ferguson and Wilbraham have the same leave. I can scarcely believe it possible to quit this town. We shall know more tomorrow. Swaine, Abercrombie and others from Valenciennes to the amount of 14 have broken their parole and been taken at Ostend on Board of an American ship.

September 30th Friday

Bertie and I went to Greens at 10 o'clock where we breakfasted with Peploe and Ferguson; then all but Ferguson (whose letter to Berthier sent by Perregeau has not been noticed) went to Junot's: he did not present himself: but our business was done. We have leave to go any where into Germany on parole for 6 months and the permission is given us so vaguely that it is plain they do not expect to see us again. Berthier as minister of war sends this first order to Junot; who has us in charge as Commandant of Paris. He has taken our written parole and given us an order to ask a passport of the Grand Judge. Junot has kept us in suspense above a week and we should probably never have heard from him at all but for Greens efforts. Sir James de Bathe, it seems has had a similar order thrown aside for many weeks and had given up all hopes. From this malignant man we went to the Grand Judge, and were told the Order must be accompanied by a petition. We drew up this at Sages, bought our papier timbre wrote it out fair in a coffee house and gave it to the head Clerk, who told us to return the next day at 3 o'clock. Peploe did the same as we did.

October 7th Friday

I went to the bronze shop rude du Bac, and then to Peploes. They were gone half an hour before from Paris.

Unfortunately Samuel and Kitty were only permitted by Napoleon to leave France for Vienna on parole. Edward Jenner, the inventor of the small pox injection, was considered to have such a

great personal influence around Europe that many strangers applied to him to accomplish that which the Government could not. He very kindly offered to intervene on behalf of the Peploes with whom he had formed a friendship a little while earlier:

To the Marquis of Hertford

November 1803

My Lord

Since I did myself the honour of addressing your Lordship on the subject of Lord Yarmouth's liberation, I received a solicitation to intercede in behalf of the Peploes, a family detained at Paris on their way to Spa.

Having made an acquaintance with General Andreossi during his embassy here, I wrote to him, but received no answer. However, I have since heard that this family has obtained permission to go into Germany; so that it is probable, although General Andreossi has not written, that he may have interested himself for them; and not in vain.

On reflection, my Lord, I think my chance of success would now be greater by addressing a body than any individual. My letter I consign to the care of your Lordship. Whether it may necessary to seal it I cannot determine: that it may meet with success is my most ardent wish.

E Jenner.

Enclosed letter:

To the National Institute of France

Gentlemen

Pardon my obtruding myself on you at this juncture. The Sciences are never at war. Peace must always preside in those bosoms whose object is the augmentation of human happiness.

Permit me, then, as a public body with whom I am connected, to solicit the exertion of your interest in the liberation of Lord Yarmouth, a young nobleman at this time detained with his family in France.

Lord Yarmouth, the son, the only son of my valued friend and patron the Marquess of Hertford: He stands high in my estimation for being among the foremost who encouraged my scheme of Vaccination when in its infancy, and contending with the prejudices of the world.

There is another family of the name of Peploe in whose behalf some months ago I solicited the interference of General Andreossi, a gentleman with whom I have had the honour of becoming acquainted during his residence in London; but alas! I have received no answer to my letter, nor heard any thing of my friends.

Should I be so fortunate as through your kind interference to see my friends restored to those who are suffering on their account the most painful solicitude, I shall ever be ready most gratefully to acknowledge the obligation you will have conferred upon me.

I have the honour to be Gentleman e.t.c.

E. Jenner

From the diary of Sir George Jackson at Potsdam:

12th December 1803

We have here, on their way to England, two families who were arrested at Paris on the breaking out of the war, but obtained leave, lately, to come to Germany – Mr and Mrs Peploe, the latter a neice of Ld Malmesbury, and Mr and Mrs Greatheed. Mr G is an author, and was a famous democrat, but has undergone a cure by the treatment he met with in France. I believe he has written something for Mrs Siddons, who lived in his family as an attendant on his wife.

Unfortunately the affair was still unresolved four months later and the Peploes remained as exiles in Vienna. They couldn't return to England for fear of causing harm to those English still trapped in France. From the correspondence of Charlotte Grenville, Lady Williams Wynn:

March 28th 1804

The Peploes and Greatheads are in great tribulation, as all their hopes to be permitted to go to England seem to have been put an end to by the discovery of Pichegrus and Georges conspiracy. The French Minister here who has behaved very well to them and who made the application for them, received a dispatch yesterday, from Berthier the Minister of War, saying that he did not dare to speak to the First Consul on the subject of the English Prisoners and that he was to veiller a leur retour quand leur conge sera epuis. I can fancy no situation so perplexing than that in which they now find themselves. I should not conceive that the parole which was unjustly forced from them would be binding, but in the present state of things, such a violation might expose their countrymen in France to greater misery than they now endure. What is their prospect on the other hand, a long tedious and unjust captivity, under a madman who considers them as hostages in his hands of which he will take advantage, in any future rebellion in Ireland, by declaring that he would put one of them to death for every Irish rebel who may be executed. I have often fancied myself in their situation & found it utterly impossible to make any decision. I have a great respect for my duty towards my neighbour, but there are cases, and I own that I think this is one of them, in which some respect ought to be paid to Ego. They have made another application for leave to stay in Germany which I hope may be successful. If the Question comes to go to England or France, I think they have partly determined (entre nous] to cut and run. I look forward with Horror to the day of their departure as those two houses are the only places where I spend a pleasant evening. I am sorry to live so much in an English set, but it is that or nothing as living with Saxons is out of the question, besides they are never visible excepting on Sunday, when they put on their clean shirt for the week in honour of the Elector, and in the evening the Ministers' wives light up a couple of Wax Ends, luckily it is now light at 4 o'clock, they are therefore saved the expense."

From the Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot 1st Earl of Minto 1874 p289

May 30th 1804

'You will see the account of Bounaparte's return to ferocity. The Peploe's are among the prisoners; but I apprehend no harm can come to any of them – only a great deal of vexation.' (Mrs Peploe was a daughter of Sir George Cornwall and was travelling with her husband through France when the English were arrested by order of Bounaparte.

From the Diary of Eugenia Wynne in 1804:

'Wednesday, 14th November. We took our leave early and arrived at Swanbourne pleasantly in good time--I found a letter from Caroline C. They are rather in affliction about Mr. and Mrs. Peploe.

The father Mr. Birch is dying and wishes to see his only son, who is a prisoner, and only allowed to travel on parole--this parole he dares not break particularly as Sir J. Crawford's having broken his [sic] has already proved so fatal to some of his fellow prisoners, and thus the situation of the Peploes becomes particularly distressing, they are going to leave Vienna and to spend the winter at Berlin that they may be nearer England in case Bonaparte is obdurate in refusing to plead in their favour and that he should consent to release them.'

That year the Greathead's only son Bertie died in Florence leaving an infant daughter to whom Samuel was made guardian. He was an artist and had been given permission by Napoleon to draw many of the art treasures brought to The Louvre. These were returned to the Greatheads after their sons death, and Bertie Greathead junior's daughter would eventually marry Lord Charles Percy.

It is not clear at what date Samuel and Kitty managed to return to England and if they were able to see John P.B. before his death in January 1805. He had been in failing health for some time spending an increasing amount of time at Single Street in Bath, and at his house in London, looked after by his youngest daughter Mary Peploe and sometimes Anne Webb. It was however at Garnstone that he died aged 63 and he was the first member of the Peploe family to be buried in Weobley Church.