

THE VILLAGE

By PETER MOFFAT

Produced by Company Pictures

For BBC ONE

PRESS PACK

**All interviews and information
strictly embargoed until 2 weeks
before TX – date TBC by the BBC.**

THE VILLAGE

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THE VILLAGE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

An epic drama series for **BBC ONE** starring **JOHN SIMM** and **MAXINE PEAKE** charting the life and turbulent times of one English village across the twentieth century. **THE VILLAGE** is written by BAFTA winning writer **PETER MOFFAT**. The camera never leaves the village. Births, deaths, love and betrayal, great political events, upheavals in national identity, ways of working, rules kept and rebellions made, sex, religion, class, the shaping of modern memory – all refracted through the lives of the villagers and the village.

One man, Bert Middleton lives across the entire hundred years and his life story from boyhood to extreme old age provides the narrative backbone. His last great act of remembering is our way in to an examination of our recent past.

The first series begins in 1914 and ends in 1920. Young Bert Middleton (introducing **BILL JONES**) is growing up in extreme poverty on a family farm in Derbyshire. His parents John (**JOHN SIMM** – *Mad Dogs, State of Play, The Devil's Whore*) and Grace (**MAXINE PEAKE** – *Silk, Criminal Justice, Shameless*) struggle to provide for Bert and his adored older brother Joe (**NICO MIRALLEGRO** – *My Fat Mad Teenage Diary, Upstairs Downstairs*). John is proud, unyielding and haunted by his past. Grace devotes her life to protecting her sons from the violence of his despair. Is her sacrifice sustainable? Is John capable of redemption? Will Bert's funny, gentle ways and rich imagination survive? Joe supplements the family income by working at the big house where he comes into contact with the troubled and deeply unstable daughter, Caro Allingham (**EMILY BEECHAM** – *The Runaway*).

The first episode opens with the arrival of the first bus ever to stop in the village. Everyone gathers to see it and off the bus steps the beautiful, headstrong Martha Lane (**CHARLIE MURPHY** - *Misfits, Love Hate*). Bert Middleton's world will never be the same again...

JULIET STEVENSON (*White Heat, Truly, Madly, Deeply*) plays Clem Allingham who lives on the edge of the village with her disfigured husband and adult children local MP Edmund, (**RUPERT EVANS** – *World Without End, The Little House*), poetic George, (**AUGUSTUS PREW** - *The Borgias*) and her unhinged daughter Caro. **JIM CARTWRIGHT** (writer of *Road, The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*) plays Peter the Landlord of the village pub. Other cast includes: **ANTHONY FLANAGAN** (*Prisoners Wives, Being Human*), **ANNABELLE APSION** (*Doctors, Shameless, A Mother's Son*), **JOE ARMSTRONG** (*Public Enemies, Hustle, Robin Hood*), **MATT STOKOE** (*Misfits*), **STEPHEN WALTERS** (*The 51st State*), **SCOTT HANDY** (*Hunted*) and **ALFIE STEWART** (*Merlin, Sadie J*) takes over as the teenage Bert Middleton from episode six.

THE VILLAGE was commissioned by **BEN STEPHENSON**, Controller, BBC Drama Commissioning and **DANNY COHEN**, Controller of BBC One. Written by **PETER MOFFAT** (*Silk, Hawking, Criminal Justice, Einstein and Eddington*), made by **COMPANY PICTURES** (*The White Queen, The Devil's Whore, Einstein and Eddington, Elizabeth I, Shameless*) and directed by **ANTONIA BIRD** (*A Passionate Woman, Priest*) and **GILLIES MACKINNON** (*Inspector George Gently, Hideous Kinky*). The series is produced by **EMMA BURGE** (*Shameless, Painted Lady*) Executive Producers are: **JOHN GRIFFIN**, **GEORGE FABER**, **CHARLES PATTINSON** for Company Pictures, **POLLY HILL** for the BBC and **PETER MOFFAT**. The six part series was filmed on location in the Peak District.

THE VILLAGE

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Writer	PETER MOFFAT
Director Episodes 1-4	ANTONIA BIRD
Director Episodes 5-6	GILLIES MACKINNON
Producer	EMMA BURGE
Executive Producers	JOHN GRIFFIN GEORGE FABER CHARLES PATTINSON PETER MOFFAT
Executive Producer BBC	POLLY HILL
Line Producer	CLAUDINE STURDY
Composer	ADRIAN CORKER
Editors	ST.JOHN O'RORKE ANNE SOPEL
DOP	DAVID ODD
Production Designer	MAURICE CAIN
Costume Designer	SHEENA NAPIER
Make-up Designer	JESSICA TAYLOR
Casting Director	BEVERLEY KEOGH CASTING
Sound Recordist	NICK STEER
Location Manager	CHARLIE THOMPSON

THE VILLAGE CAST

John Middleton	JOHN SIMM
Grace Middleton	MAXINE PEAKE
Joe Middleton	NICO MIRALLEGRO
Young Bert Middleton	BILL JONES
Old Bert	DAVID RYALL
Martha Lane	CHARLIE MURPHY
Clem Allingham	JULIET STEVENSON
George Allingham	AUGUSTUS PREW
Caro Allingham	EMILY BEECHAM
Edmund Allingham	RUPERT EVANS
Lord Allingham	KIT JACKSON
Gerard Eyre	MATT STOKOE
Crispin Ingham	STEPHEN WALTERS
Norma Greaves	AINSLEY HOWARD
Margaret	ANNABELLE APSION
Arnold Hankin	ANTHONY FLANAGAN
Agnes	CHLOE HARRIS
Robin Lane	SCOTT HANDY
Rutter	JOE DUTTINE
Polly	AMELIA YOUNG
Peter the Landlord	JIM CARTWRIGHT
Detective Stephen Bairstow (Joins from Ep 2)	JOE ARMSTRONG
Teen Bert Middleton (Joins from Ep 6)	ALFIE STEWART

THE VILLAGE

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Present day:

Old Bert Middleton (David Ryall) is the second oldest man in Britain (soon to be the oldest), and a documentary is being made about his life and his village. His story forms the backbone of the series and through his eyes we explore twentieth century English social history. Great historical events, change, progress, shifts in national identity are all refracted through the story of the village.

The Middleton family:

John Middleton (John Simm) – has lived in the village all his life, and the farm has been in his family for five generations. John is shunned by the village due to a dark event in his past that happened nearly twenty years ago. Since then he has spiralled into decline. The farm has fallen on very hard times and John is killing himself trying to get the harvest in on his own - work that should be done by a whole team. He has turned to drink, and takes out all his frustration and anger on his family.

Grace Middleton (Maxine Peake) – John's wife and mother of Joe, Bert and later Mary. She has suffered years of John coming home drunk and violent, with no food in the house and the children hungry. But Grace is a fighter; she wants to keep her marriage together, and will make every sacrifice to turn the fortunes of her family around. No matter how she pleads, John refuses to believe that she has forgiven him for the event that took place in their past, which has had a huge impact on their marriage. Grace is very close to her sons, Joe and Bert, who both adore her.

Joe Middleton (Nico Mirallegro) – the eldest son of John (John Simm) and Grace (Maxine Peake). At the start of the series he is nineteen years old, a strong, handsome young man. He is torn in half by his love for his mother and his little brother, and his yearning to escape the tyranny of his father. He takes a job at the Allingham's house to bring some money in, and falls in love with Martha Lane (Charlie Murphy).

Bert Middleton (Bill Jones Episodes 1-5 / Alfie Stewart Episode 6) – the youngest son of John (John Simm) and Grace (Maxine Peake). He is twelve years old at the start of the series, and his days are filled with school, his friends, working in the fields with his father and secret swimming lessons with his brother Joe (Nico Mirallegro), whom he adores. Young Bert, like his brother, also falls in love with Martha Lane (Charlie Murphy) the moment she arrives in the village. He is very confused as he watches the behaviour of his hero elder brother and the girl of his dreams. Young Bert Middleton is the younger self of Old Bert.

The Allingham family:

Clem Allingham (Juliet Stevenson) – The matriarch of the house, she runs the household, yet feels increasingly that her authority is being challenged by her eldest son Edmund (Rupert Evans). Strong, defiant and determined she is very much a woman of the Victorian era. Change scares her.

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CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Edmund Allingham (Rupert Evans) – In his early thirties, Edmund is the eldest son of the family and the local MP. Ruthless and ambitious, he divides his time between Westminster and the village. More than anyone else in the village, Edmund is aware of the realities of the war being fought in France because of the information he receives in the House of Commons.

Caro Allingham (Emily Beecham) – The only daughter of the family, Caro is a little unhinged. There is a sense that the family feels the need to protect her from the outside world.

George Allingham (Augustus Prew) – The youngest son of the family; thoughtful, delicate and halfway to being a poet. He has fallen for Martha Lane (Charlie Murphy), but quickly works out that Joe Middleton (Nico Mirallegro) is his rival for her affections. He is closest to his sister Caro (Emily Beecham).

Lord Allingham (Kit Jackson) – a recluse, whose face was disfigured at Rorke's Drift during the Zulu War. His face is always covered by a scarf and there's a strict rule that the staff of the house and the villagers should always turn their backs to him as he passes. No one must look him in the face.

The Allingham family staff:

Polly (Amelia Young) – the maid.

Mrs. H (Katherine Dow Blyton) – the housekeeper.

The Lane family:

Robin Lane (Scott Handy) – The village's Methodist minister and Martha's (Charlie Murphy) father, Robin is a relative newcomer to the village. A widower, he has an air of being mildly amused by the world and in particular by his daughter. This in no way undermines his natural warmth and kindly nature.

Martha Lane (Charlie Murphy) – Robin's (Scott Handy) daughter. She arrives in the village at the opening of the series. Strong-willed and opinionated, she wants to help the community and open their eyes to the changes that are taking place in the outside world. John Middleton (John Simm), in particular, is a soul she wants to save, mainly because she wants to be close to Joe (Nico Mirallegro). It is love at first sight when she lays eyes on Joe Middleton.

The school teachers:

Crispin Ingham (Stephen Walters) – The older of the village's two teachers, he's a brutish man who is not afraid to use corporal punishment to violently beat the children into submission. A patriot, he is fervently in support of the war.

Gerard Eyre (Matt Stokoe) – A young teacher, loved by the children and hated by Ingham (Stephen Walters) for his enlightened, modernising ways. A mentor to young Bert Middleton (Bill Jones), it is Eyre who introduces him to photography.

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CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

The Hankin family:

Arnold Hankin (Anthony Flanagan) – widower, father of Gilbert (young Bert Middleton's friend) and the local shop-keeper. He also owns the boot factory and is a business power in the village.

Norma Greaves (Ainsley Howard) – The shop girl in Hankin's Grocery, and a social climber; she very much wants to go up in the world. She is courting Arnold Hankin (Anthony Flanagan) and admires his standing in the village, but most of all she aspires to being included in the society of Clem Allingham (Juliet Stevenson) and Edmund Allingham (Rupert Evans) at the Big House.

The Boden family:

Margaret Boden (Anabelle Apsion) – a great friend of Grace Middleton (Maxine Peake) and mother to a large family that includes Paul (Luke Williams). She is followed around by her brood of small children. A strong female presence in the village.

Paul Boden (Luke Williams) – Joe Middleton's (Nico Mirallegro) best childhood friend. They are inseparable, to the extent that they join up and go off to war together....

The Villagers:

Peter Baslow (Jim Cartwright) – the landlord of The Lamb pub in the village, which is at the centre of village life.

Agnes (Chloe Harris) – A local girl and young Paul Boden's (Luke Williams) girlfriend.

Peggy (Margaret Jackman) – A very old woman in the village.

Rutter (Joe Duttine) – a local successful farmer determined to ruin John Middleton (John Simm) and take over the Middleton farm. Father to Alf (young Burt Middleton's classmate).

Doctor Ramsey (Paul Warriner) – The local doctor.

Len Burgess (John Paul Hurley) – The village bobby.

Outsiders:

Detective Stephen Bairstow (Joe Armstrong) from Episode 2 – Bairstow fought in France, and came back wounded. His world view has been scarred by what he saw at the Front. Instinctive, determined, enigmatic, he has no regard for social class or etiquette. He moves in to the village.

Doctor Augustus Wylie (Jonny Phillips) from Episode 4 – The psychiatrist who arrives to treat Caro Allingham (Emily Beecham). He insinuates his way into the Allingham family's lives.

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EPISODE SYNOPSES

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 1 - (Summer 1914)

Present day: The series opens on old Bert Middleton (David Ryall), the second oldest man in Britain, being interviewed by a director. A film is being made about Bert and his village. He takes us back to the long hot summer of 1914.....

Bert (Bill Jones) is twelve years old and his days are filled with school, his friends, working in the fields with his father and secret swimming lessons with his older brother Joe (Nico Mirallegro), whom he adores. Joe is nineteen and handsome. He works for the Allingham family (Juliet Stevenson and Kit Jackson) at the big house.

The Middleton family are poor: the farm has been in the family for five generations, but life is a struggle for the boys' parents, John and Grace (John Simm and Maxine Peake). John has turned to drink, and is killing himself trying to get the harvest in on his own - work that should be done by a whole team, but John is not a popular man in the village. Bert is the only help John has on the farm, and he tries to take Bert out of school. But Bert's teacher and mentor, Gerard Eyre (Matt Stokoe), refuses to let him: a boy needs an education.

The first ever bus to stop in the village arrives. Everyone in the village gathers to see it - and off the bus steps the beautiful, headstrong Martha Lane (Charlie Murphy). Young Bert Middleton's (Bill Jones) world will never be the same again...

George Allingham (Augustus Prew) is also smitten by her, but Martha really only has eyes for Bert's older brother, Joe.

Young Bert suffers at the hands of his father John (John Simm) and school teacher Ingham (Stephen Walters).

Grace Middleton (Maxine Peake) discovers she is pregnant again and with her oldest son Joe (Nico Mirallegro) due to head off to war, how will the family survive?

World War I has begun. When the talk turns to conscription, the villagers know they must prepare themselves for tough times ahead.

HISTORICAL FACTS

- In 1913 Unemployment and Maternity benefits are introduced in Britain.
- June 28 1914; Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife Sofia were assassinated.
- In 1914 the first everyday items made of stainless steel come into public circulation.
- The average salary in 1914 was £750.00 a year.

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 2 - (Winter 1914)

The Middleton farm has fallen on very hard times and John (John Simm) is drinking heavily as his desperation grows. The crop fails, baby Mary is born and there is a revelation about John's past mistakes.

At the Big House in the village, the Allingham family are thrown into crisis when Caro Allingham's (Emily Beecham) mental health takes a downturn. When John is seen chasing Caro out of the woods, outsider Detective Bairstow (Joe Armstrong) is called in to investigate and the dark secret in John's past is revealed. John falls into despair.

Kind hearted school teacher Eyre (Matt Stokoe) is confronted by the authorities; why did he not complete his national registration form? Will his conscientious objection to the war be his undoing?

Young Bert (Bill Jones) assumes responsibility for his mother and the survival of his family.

Cast joining from Episode 2

Detective Bairstow – Joe Armstrong

PC Burgess - John Paul Hurley

Doctor Ramsey - Paul Warriner

HISTORICAL FACTS

- In 1914 British feelings were high as Prime Minister Herbert Asquith declared 'it'll all be over by Christmas'.
- In 1914 the price of milk was 15p and petrol was 6p a gallon
- In 1914 Sir Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition set sail on the *Endurance* from Plymouth in an attempt to cross Antarctica.
- In 1914 the life expectancy of a man was 48 years and a woman 51 years.

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 3 - (March 1916)

Grace (Maxine Peake) worries when there is no news from her oldest son Joe (Nico Mirallegro) from the front line. She is elated when he returns to the village on leave. However, Joe's return brings with it the unwelcome news of the village's first war casualty.

George Allingham (Augustus Prew) tells Martha (Charlie Murphy) that his sister Caro (Emily Beecham) is pregnant. Clem (Juliet Stevenson) and Edmund (Rupert Evans) have already decided that she cannot keep the baby.....

Under the guidance of Edmund, Hankin (Anthony Flanagan) opens the boot factory, using cheap labour: Grace and the local women.

There are celebrations in the village as Norma (Ainsley Howard) and Arnold get married.

Teacher Eyre (Matt Stokoe) is brought before a tribunal to explain why he will not fight. In an attempt to help his mentor and teacher, young Bert Middleton (Bill Jones) speaks up. His intervention only makes matters worse, and Eyre is marched off to war.....

HISTORICAL FACTS

- Conscription began when the British government passed the Military Service Act in 1916. The act specified that single men aged 18 to 41 years old were liable to be called up for military service unless they were widowed with children or ministers of a religion.
- In 1917 English Baritone Peter Dawson recorded the popular song *A Bachelor Gay*.

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 4 - (Late Summer – 1916)

John (John Simm) and Grace Middleton (Maxine Peake) struggle to cope when baby Mary falls dangerously ill with scarlet fever. In a desperate attempt to save her, John steals some animal medicine from the Big House estate farm - but at what cost?

A surprising relationship unfolds between Agnes (Chloe Harris) and Bairstow (Joe Armstrong). He and Edmund Allingham (Rupert Evans) plot to use this for their own ends.

An important date for the village; today is the Rondo, an annual wheel barrow race run around the perimeter of the cricket pitch. Many of the village's men are away fighting so this year, for the first time in history, the race will be run by the local boys. Bert (Bill Jones) decides that winning this race is a matter of life or death; if he wins, his soldier brother Joe (Nico Mirallegro) will be kept safe.

Unbeknownst to the village, the date of the Rondo coincides with the first day of the Battle of the Somme. There's a rumour that a big offensive is about to be launched in France and that the local Pals' battalion is to take part. Bert has received a field service postcard from Joe, with a coded sign that means Joe will be "going over the top".....

Cast joining from Episode 4

Dr Wylie - Jonny Phillips

HISTORICAL FACTS

- In 1916 British duo William J. Newton and Morris Goldberg invent the light switch.
- The 1916 Olympics in Berlin were cancelled due to the war and not held again until 1920.
- From 1918-1920 the influenza pandemic infected over 280,000 people in Britain and over 500 million people worldwide.

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 5 - (Winter 1916)

Joe's (Nico Mirallegro) brief leave from the Front has come to an end. He has tried hard to conceal his shell-shock from the family, but Grace (Maxine Peake) knows that something is badly wrong.

Grace is waylaid at the factory by Chalcraft (Sam Hazeldine), the union rep. She describes conditions at the factory and he appears to be on her side, but when he later falls into conversation with the ever-calculating Bairstow (Joe Armstrong) his

true intentions become clear. He wants to ease back returning soldiers into work and get the women back into the home.

When young Bert (Bill Jones) learns that he is unwittingly responsible for his brother's state of mind he takes action, with disastrous consequences for the family...

Cast joining from Episode 5

Union Rep Chalcraft - Sam Hazeldine

HISTORICAL FACTS

- In May 1916 Britain initiates Daylight Saving Time, by setting the clocks an hour ahead of the standard time, to achieve longer evening light.
- The war ended on November 11, 1918.

THE VILLAGE - EPISODE 6 - (1920)

1920. The war is over, and the village tries to come to terms with its loss.

Eyre (Matt Stokoe) returns to the village on his release from prison as a conscientious objector. Everywhere he sees evidence of change. Returning soldiers want their jobs back and the women factory workers have joined the union. Bairstow (Joe Armstrong) has become Edmund's (Rupert Evans) political agent and is establishing himself at the Big House, much to Clem's (Juliet Stevenson) disapproval.

Bert (Alfie Stewart) is now eighteen. He invites his old teacher to stay at the farm, to John's (John Simm) evident hostility. The family is struggling to come to terms with Joe's death.

The date of the unveiling of the War Memorial draws close as the inhabitants debate how best to honour their dead.

Grace (Maxine Peake) learns that Joe will not join the list of the fallen. And Margaret (Annabelle Apsion) is distraught to hear that her boy's body will not be brought home. Divisions open up at the heart of the village community.

Cast joining from Episode 6

Teen Bert - Alfie Stewart

Mary Middleton - Ellie Grainger

Teen Alf - Nick Preston

Billy - Paul-Ryan Carberry

HISTORICAL FACTS

- In 1920 the first one hundred women are admitted to study for full degrees at Oxford University.
- In 1920 the first women jury members in England are empanelled at Bristol Quarter Sessions.

THE VILLAGE

John Simm (John Middleton)

TELL US ABOUT JOHN MIDDLETON

He's the head of the Middleton family, a very poor farming family who have had the farm for generations. He's got a lot of issues and is carrying around a lot of guilt, which becomes evident (and you find out the reason for this later). He is an alcoholic and very unhappy. John loves his wife (Grace – Maxine Peake) – needs her, calls her mother, desperately loves her but beats her as well. He's a walking contradiction. He is a very scary father and husband when we first meet him, but then he changes.

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS PERIOD BEFORE – DID YOU RESEARCH?

Yes, I researched into farming of the time and there was this brilliant book that Antonia Bird, our director, gave us *Milk, Muck and Memories* by Margaret Wombwell. The book was invaluable because they were first-hand accounts of working farmers and their working methods from the period. It might sound rather dull, but it was invaluable to look at. And also *Regeneration*, by Pat Barker, based around WWI – which I hadn't read – and this was a great excuse to read it. I also just read around the time, and took it from there.

THE VILLAGE IS ABOUT OUR RECENT SOCIAL HISTORY?

I've never touched on this period before as an actor, so it's very interesting to do something that I've never done before. I was interested mainly in the character, this guy – John Middleton. He's a very intriguing character – he goes on a huge journey of redemption and a couple of episodes in - he finds god. The character is completely turned on his head and becomes obsessed with preaching - and then the war comes – it's a hell of a part. Peter (Moffat) is such a brilliant writer, that it was a gift really.

THE CHARACTER, YOU SAY, IS VERY FLAWED.

Characters like that are much more interesting to play – flawed. As interesting as Cal McCaffrey in *State of Play* was to play – he was the character everyone else revolves around: though flawed he was the glue – they are interesting parts but just not as interesting. I much prefer the flawed character – the hero role is not always the greatest role to play. Take Tarantino's *Django*, which I saw recently, Jamie Foxx plays the lead in it – but he wasn't the most interesting character.

HOW HARD WAS IT TO LIKE JOHN MIDDLETON?

You have to find something in every character. You have to identify with them, or be sympathetic with them – even if it is only a tiny chink of light - you have to grab it...otherwise, if you don't believe it – you can't expect anyone else to believe what you're doing. I can find things like that with everybody I play and hopefully make them, not necessarily redeemable, but make an audience understand them and why they are how they are. With John Middleton he goes about it the wrong way – but deep down his passion is for his farm, for working, providing – good things. He is too proud and stubborn, and it's his undoing...but ultimately, underneath it all I can identify with him in some way.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST/ PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I've worked with Maxine (Peake) twice before – me and her were in the very first episode of *Clocking Off*, playing a married couple – very different, she hit me in that one actually – and it's taken this long to get to hit her back! We were also in *The Devil's Whore* together; where she played Elizabeth Lilburne.

WORKING WITH THE DIRECTORS ANTONIA BIRD AND GILLIES MACKINNON.

Antonia was fab. I loved *Priest*, the film she did with Robert Carlisle, I was a huge fan of that – with Jimmy McGovern’s script. And *Safe*, which was fantastic! I was really interested in working with her; I’d never had the chance to work with her before so it was a bonus on top of that brilliant script by Peter Moffat. All these things are taken into consideration – like who’s in it, is it a brilliant script, who’s directing it, who’s producing it...as you get older I do find these things more important – especially the Director. I’ve worked with some great directors, and there are some great directors I haven’t had the chance to work with yet – and she was one of them. I also didn’t know that Gillies MacKinnon was going to be coming in to direct the final two episodes – so that was fantastic, two birds, and one stone.

GILLIES MACKINNON MADE YOU WADE THROUGH THE RIVER IN HAYFIELD

Yes, on a night shoot. You just have to be ready for all of it. He needed me to wade through the FREEZING cold river – you just can’t say no – you just get on with it.

WAS THERE A MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU IN THE VILLAGE?

Memorable scenes for me – were the outdoor ones.

DID YOU ENJOY FILMING UP IN THE PEAK DISTRICT?

It was freezing. The good thing was I just kept thinking – I’m going to be filming for *Mad Dogs* soon in South Africa...think of the warmth! It was a great script and I find in jobs like this, that are quite challenging because you’re away, and it’s cold, that it’s important to work on the text. The scenes in the kitchen that me and Maxine had, as husband and wife, were so unbearably bleak that you have to have a laugh off set so that it’s fun to do. And then when we go for a take you focus on the brilliant writing, and Maxine is a brilliant actress – it really was a fantastic cast.

AND JIM CARTWRIGHT AS THE BARMAN...

Yes. That was a hilarious added bonus – it was an amazing coup that Antonia (Bird) got him to do that. I’d never worked with him before – but am a huge fan of his work – *Road, Rise And Fall Of Little Voice*.... I couldn’t believe it was him.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE PERIOD?

It was certainly challenging with those costumes, in that weather. But you know, we’re actors – it’s very easy for us, we have it cushy really. We had foot warmers, and when they stop filming you get a huge coat around you – it’s not the end of the world. You can’t really start to complain when you think it’s what people actually went through. Freezing cold farms in the midwinter – unheated bar one fire. It just makes you appreciate how hard it must have been.

DID YOU LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER

Scything – I can do that now – which is back breaking work. I was taught how to scythe and then I did a little practise before we started filming, which was invaluable. I really only did it for a couple days – but my god did I feel it the next day – really hard work! Quite satisfying – once you get to the end of the row that you’ve done all yourself – you look back and go wow – you’ve been working the soil – you can see the physical graft. John Middleton talks about it a lot – the earth and the land.

ARE YOU NATIVE TO THE PEAK DISTRICT?

The accent was an interesting thing – because Maxine and I have got slightly different accents. Mine is so watered down after living in London for over 25 years –

so all the Manchester has gone. I can bring it back – but it was different as the peak district, and we just tried to create a ‘northern accent’. We all tried to approximate the same kind of accent. Nico who plays my son Joe, is modern day Manchester and Bill, who plays my younger son Bert, is from Nottingham. All different accents but hopefully, it will all work out and merge – but it’s a fictional village so probably the right accent for them.

THE VILLAGE FEELS VERY REAL

Well I had mud coming out of my ears. It was fine. We had torrential, cold, wet, and muddy weather whilst filming. I wouldn’t choose to do it as enjoyment but there is one scene when me and Maxine are wading through that mud again and again – and fighting and being thrown down. But hey – these are the interesting things about being an actor.

RESEARCH FOR THE VILLAGE

Maxine dragged us around all these museums in Manchester – which was fantastic including the Museum of the Working Man and they were all fascinating. One was like a library – like I said, they’re the best part of my job – being able to do research and so forth.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Thermals. Maybe some really good boots, hand-warmers... electricity. Basically something to keep me warm and dry – maybe a 4 wheel drive with a really good heater!

THE VILLAGE

Maxine Peake (Grace Middleton)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play Grace Middleton who is a mother of two boys and wife of John Middleton (John Simm), who runs the local farm which has seen better days. Life is a struggle for them and they scrape by and the marriage is quite strained due to the desperate situation. Grace channels all her energy into her family with a focus on ambition and the idea of freedom for her sons.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS PROJECT?

The writer, Peter Moffat, was a big draw to be honest. He's an extraordinary writer and I've had the privilege to have worked with him on two projects *Criminal Justice* and *Silk*. The drama has two top drawer directors, Antonia Bird and Gilles MacKinnon, which added to the attraction for me and of course getting to share the screen with Mr Simm.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I find research one of the most enjoyable parts of any project. So period has an extra bonus - but at the end of the day it's the story that gets me excited. This is a period piece when we're not focusing on the decision makers but the working people, It is so great to see the other side - changes within social and political life, in minutiae.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I've worked with John Simm a couple of times. Very early on I worked with him on *Clocking Off*, which was my first serious role after *Dinnerladies*. I was so excited about being given the opportunity to move away from comedy and it was only a very modest role. We also worked together in *The Devils Whore* four years ago.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

We had one scene where a fight breaking out. This was all filmed in a muddy and mucky field filled with cow poo! I got in a tussle and was flung face down in the muddy mix umpteen times. I won't forget how cold and wet it was in a hurry.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

I've never filmed there before. It's such a beautiful part of Britain, which I think gets slightly over shadowed by The Lake District when people think of Northern beauty spots. When I was around ten, I used to go to a Unitarian church and they had a hostel in Little Hucklow. We'd have breaks there going walking and pot-holing. I'd forgotten how breath taking the scenery was until I started filming.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD?

I wasn't lucky enough to have lovely costumes. I literally had one costume that spans a period of 6 years! Our family are very poor but I did get a new skirt in 1920. I was very envious of Martha's (Charlie Murphy) costumes she looked stunning.

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS PERIOD BEFORE?

I've worked in this period several times most recently in the film *Private Peaceful* which was set again just before WW1 (when *The Village* starts), although the setting for *Private Peaceful* wasn't as bleak.

I did a play, at the beginning of my career, called *Early One Morning*, about a young soldier shot for desertion who was fascinated with the history surrounding WWI. It was such a shocking period in British history. The brutality was terrifying and slaughter of innocent soldiers should never be forgotten. The soldiers that went out to fight were nothing more than cannon fodder. Recently I went to see a fantastic production of *The Accrington Pals* at The Royal Exchange Theatre: the story of 700 men from Accrington who went to war with only 7 returning home.

DID YOU HAVE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER?

Lots of darning! I'm now an expert at darning socks. When we were filming I was supposed to skin a rabbit, which for someone who doesn't eat meat wasn't particularly appealing, but that got cut in the end. I also became pretty good at chopping vegetables, but it's the darning that I'll take away with me.

ARE YOU NATIVE TO THIS AREA OR HAVE YOU HAD TO LEARN THE ACCENT?

I used my own accent. That part of the Peak District can be a bit of a grey area for dialects with Derby, Sheffield and Manchester surrounding it. I'm sure the locals, where the drama is set, will be up in arms but I decided my character came over the Pennines, with her shepherd father, and settled there.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

We shot quite a few scenes with gas lamps and candles as the only source of light. It was a bit tricky doing certain scenes when you couldn't see the other actors you were talking to!

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Given the cold wet weather, an electric blanket would have been nice. Hot water bottles were my saviour when we were filming scenes in bed.

THE VILLAGE

Nico Mirallegro (Joe Middleton)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play Joe Middleton – who is the eldest son of Grace and John Middleton. Joe is the adoring older brother of Bert Middleton who he shares a close relationship with. My dad, John, is an alcoholic, so Joe takes on a paternal-like role towards Bert. He works at the Big House.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I've done a few period dramas including *Upstairs Downstairs* which is set in the 1930s and *Spike Island* which is set in the 1990s, but none in this period.

I love putting on the costumes. *The Village* is a completely different as everything is so stripped back and the focus is on the 'ordinary man'. The Middleton family have nothing - barely a roof - which highlights the harsh reality of the period.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I have worked with a few of the production team before – which is always nice. I worked with Maxine Peake on the BBC4 radio play *Craven* (which was the first radio play I did). I also played young John Simm in *Exile* two years ago.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

Definitely the scene in the lake - It was SO cold!! Me and Young Bert had to strip to our underwear and jump in. It was so painfully cold and a real shock that I couldn't even get the line out – and that has stuck in my head ever since.

Also the Middleton family dinners, around the table. They were very beautiful scenes that were made very real thanks to our director.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

I've never filmed in the Peak District and I really appreciated the beauty. I'm from Manchester – so it was nice to wake up in the country side.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY SOCIAL HISTORY?

My Granddad (mum's dad) fought in Burma – but I didn't get to speak to him, I've just heard the passing stories from family. The one that stuck out to me was - my Granddad had been shot in the leg – and apparently when he got back, the local kids used to put their fingers in it.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE PERIOD COSTUMES?

I was so shocked by how uncomfortable my soldier's costume was. It was so itchy and the minute it got wet, became so heavy – it would have been a nightmare to wear all the time (as they would have done during the war).

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS TIME PERIOD BEFORE?

I only knew what I'd learnt in school – but I really enjoy doing research. I read a few books that focused on the 1912-14 period – it's nice to know how we lived back then.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Manchester United - wouldn't have supported them + a good ol' meal – a fry up.

THE VILLAGE

Bill Jones (Young Bert Middleton)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play Bert Middleton who is about 12 years old in episode one (I've just turned 12). He lives with his family on a farm with very little money but he loves them all very much. He's a bit frightened of his dad but adores his brother Joe. He will do anything for his mother Grace. He's a very kind boy who works very hard and has quite a clever streak in him. I liked playing Bert as likes everyone.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

It was swimming outside almost naked in the dew pond. I can't tell you how cold it was. Also it was the only time I was allowed fizzy pop when filming. When I got out I had some coke to kill all the germs from the pond. Also I remember some of the sad and dramatic scenes, as Maxine and John were so good - it all seemed so real.

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY ABOUT THE LOCATION?

It was beautiful. Hayfield was a lovely village with really friendly people. The shops looked amazing after the production team had been at them!

DO YOU HAVE A SOCIAL HISTORY STORY FROM YOUR FAMILY?

Both my great grandparents were in the First World War. One was in the army (my brother Max is named after him) and we have a photo of him in the same type of uniform that the soldiers in *The Village* wear. My other great granddad was a gunner in the navy based at Scapa Flow in Orkney. We have been to Orkney several times and have seen where he was based.

WHAT DID YOU THINK TO BEING IN A PERIOD DRAMA?

The clothes were quite itchy and uncomfortable. I had my hair cut short but my brothers' thought it was really trendy. I liked using the old box camera and using the scythe harvesting was hard work.

DID YOU HAVE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER?

My favourite was learning to box with John (Simm) - it was awesome. I had to learn how to handle Big Molly (the horse) and how to drive the milk cart - which was very frightening at first. Doing my own stunts was great. I had to fall off a roof and be knocked out!

HOW WAS FILMING IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

The weather was a challenge as it has been very wet and cold. The location was quite bleak. I think I coped quite well and the production team always made sure I was warm as soon as I came off set. The worst bit was filming crawling through the mud on my belly with the temp at -1.

People think a studio would be warm and cosy but it was freezing! I think the crew did it deliberately so the acting was convincing. The school scenes were really cold and bare. It was colder in the classroom than outside.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

It would have to be my own pillow. It goes everywhere with me as it reminds me of home. If you can get a good sleep you can face anything the next day.

THE VILLAGE

Charlie Murphy (Martha Lane)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY AND TELL US A BIT ABOUT HER?

I played Martha Lane. She has just moved to the village because her father runs a Methodist Church there. So she's a bit of an outsider at the beginning. She's young and full of energy and morals. She becomes very hands on with the fallen characters in the village - trying to save their souls, but with all this she's still a young woman.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I worked with Matt Stokoe, who plays Gerard Eyre, on *Misfits* together last year. Also with the DOP, David Odd, on a few series' of *Love/Hate* in Dublin. So it was nice to see a few friendly faces at the start of filming.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

One of my favourites was with Nico and Bill in the forest. We started filming in the sunshine running down a hill then torrential rain came and for continuity we had to carry on running down the same track which had turned into a stream, we were slipping and holding each other up all afternoon, it was farcical but fun. That was our first scene together so we got to know each other very fast!

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

It was my first time there. It really is a stunning setting and although the weather was quite harsh we didn't get snowed in – which we were expecting.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

Jodie Fedell-Walker did my hair & make-up, she is so talented & fun to work with, I was very lucky. I think in daily preparation I enjoyed being in the makeup trailer the most, the women there were fabulous, even to watch them dress wigs for the other actors, or work on wounds. But costumes were fun too, with a time span of six years so it was exciting to start in 1914 and then slowly change to 1920.

DID YOU HAVE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER?

Not really...but I learned how to endure a corset for 10+ hours it that's a skill?!

ARE YOU NATIVE TO THIS AREA OR HAVE YOU HAD TO LEARN THE ACCENT?

I'm from Ireland. We had a voice coach to prep us. And I was lucky to be surrounded by some great accents between cast and crew so that helped.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

Oh god it was an eye opener. All the contraptions for daily life - I had this romantic notion of time back then, but I know it was hard work just getting by if you didn't have any money. People were made of stronger stuff.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

A washing machine!

THE VILLAGE

Juliet Stevenson (Clem Allingham)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY AND TELL US A BIT ABOUT HER?

I play Clem Allingham, the head of the Allingham family - who are the aristocratic gentry living on the edge of the village. I have a husband who was seriously disfigured in the Zulu war and walks around the house like a shell of the person he once was. He is a ghostly character and she is very much the head of the household. Clem has to take on many responsibilities that women of the time wouldn't have normally had to take on. She has three children: Edmund, George and Caro (who of course has her issues). Clem starts the series very much a product of her past, holding onto the status quo and is very resistant to progress or change. She is naturally a conservative person and there is very limited support for her – she is holding on with white knuckles to keep everything alright. But unfortunately, as war breaks out and events begin to unfold terrible things start to happen - Caro begins to fall ill and George becomes more and more alienated from her, Edmund starts to become very much an industrial business man and that includes new values (that are different from his family's).

Clem has to start thinking about how to adapt to circumstances, which is what *The Village* is about – adapting to external circumstances.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I love it because you have to investigate that period. For me, the greatest thing about acting is to make the imaginative journey to find out who they are and the further you have to go on that journey, the more interesting I find it.

DID YOU DO A LOT OF RESEARCH AROUND THIS TIME PERIOD

I read about it – I started reading E.M Forster, *Howard's End* and *Room with a View* – novels which were based in the exact time period about aristocratic families. I spent time looking at how different households of the time were run; the treatment of servants, what the schedule of the day is, how the household functions, who does what in terms of duties. Clem has absolutely everything done for her – she can't even do her own hair. I found the mix of behaviour in that class curious– they have utter dependency on other people for the simpler things in their lives, whilst also having this extraordinary power over people which they exert regularly. I looked at quite a lot of documentaries on aristocratic families. I also listened to a lot of recorded voices of that time period – as they spoke very differently.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I did a film with Augustus Prew, based in Budapest, 5/6years ago called *The Secret of Moonacre* which was a fantasy film. It was lovely to work with him again.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

What was quite extraordinary (not necessarily because of the content, as I had very little to do in it) but the scene where the war memorial is unveiled at the very end of the series. There we were gathered around this brand new war memorial- we are so used to every village, every town, every city in this country having their own war memorial – it is such a familiar site – with the boys of WWI on the one side and WWII on the other. It was amazing feeling to think that this memorial had been thought about, designed, erected for the very first time. And knowing what that is like, with the familiar losses and casualties – the gathering around and unveiling it – and the politics of who goes on it and who doesn't. It makes it all very poignant - all that's left

is someone's name scratched on a war memorial. It was very interesting to think about the complicated relationships brought on by the unveiling the war memorial.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

Yes I have and that was lovely because my very very first TV job was a series called *The Mallens* which was a highly popular series. I played the young girl lead, which was an amazing opportunity. Filming here is a really rich experience – very happy and memorable.

HOW WAS FILMING AGAIN IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

Equally grim, I associate being up there with shivering in a corset: I shivered in a corset 30 years ago, I shivered in a corset this time round.

DO YOU HAVE A SOCIAL HISTORY STORY FROM YOUR FAMILY?

My grandmother had to travel back to England from India with a baby in WWI she was married to a young British soldier in India. She had to travel by boat with a young baby which I believe was a very traumatic journey for her. That is my only familiar connection with WWI.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

I love wearing the costumes from the period and for *The Village* I had the most wonderful original dresses. It is an amazing thing, slipping into a dress worn by a woman from 1914. It fitted perfectly, as if it had been made for me, and I love the feeling of walking around in a dress worn by a woman over 100 years ago. Same shape, same proportions, and I just think – what did she do in this dress, what did she say in it, where did she wear it, you just have an extraordinary sense of continuity with fabrics that have lasted so long and there is a huge attention to detail in the dresses from the early 1900s which we don't have anymore.

HOW DID YOU FIND ACTING IN THIS PERIOD?

You get a good sense of how large proportions of the day were spent on managing the basics. The amount of time it takes to heat the room by the fire. How it will need to be cleaned from the day before and kept going all day. You change into a different dress three times a day, your hair is up then down, then up. The amount of time in the day that women spent on what we would consider trivia is unfathomable. Spending an hour and a half getting ready in the morning to do the same in the evening, or changing in the middle of the day for one event. When you have an inquisitive mind, which I believe Clem did, the level of boredom felt in dealing with all these menial activities, must have been quite high.

Being waited on 24/7 would drive me completely nuts. A high level of patience was required in that time, particularly by the women.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Antibiotics. I say that after a week of my family being ill in the present day.

THE VILLAGE

Rupert Evans (Edmund Allingham)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play Edmund Allingham, the eldest son in the Allingham family and also the MP to the surrounding constituency of *The Village*. He is an entrepreneur who is extremely driven and front footed. Edmund has a strong focus on maintaining financial stability for himself and his family and achieves this through any means – whether politics or business. Edmund has a very close relationship with my mother, Clem (Juliet Stevenson). I admire Juliet hugely and it was a great experience to be able to work with her. We formed a very close relationship in order to echo the special mother-son bond between Edmund and Clem which is very strong in the series.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I absolutely love doing period dramas. This is my eighth period drama and they have ranged from *Emma* to *Crime and Punishment*. I love the etiquette/ values/ dress and how people lived in the early 20th Century. A lot changed, the suffragette movement became stronger, technology developed at an extraordinary pace and the class system was completely different to what we have now.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

The dinner scene has stuck with me, and I'm sure will haunt me forever as there were 17 takes for the scene, which meant I ate a roast lamb dinner 17 times.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

I've never actually filmed in Derbyshire before, but I was brought up only an hour away from where we were filming. So it was nice to 'come home'. I did forget how beautiful this part of England is – a hidden gem.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE PERIOD COSTUMES?

I love this period wear - to look sharp and dress up. It made me feel powerful which was what I needed for Edmund - it gives you an aesthetic edge of control.

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS TIME PERIOD BEFORE?

I did research social etiquette for gentry families of the time. It was odd doing a lot of scenes with service – where you naturally want to address them as equals but must treat them as below (respecting the hierarchy which would have existed then).

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

It was very interesting really - experiencing (whilst on set obviously) how simple the times were – but how quickly the technology truly did develop. At the beginning of series everyone was on horses and towards the end we had a car. There was also very close attention given on set – I was given a pocket watch at the beginning of filming and towards the end had a wrist watch.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

I am a motorbike enthusiast - so my motorbike.

THE VILLAGE

Emily Beecham (Caro Allingham)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY AND TELL US A BIT ABOUT HER?

I play Caro. She is the 23 year old daughter of the big house. She is the middle child of the family but is closest to her brother George who accepts her quiriness more than the others. She is a little bored in the constraints of being a young lady in the house. She has affections for the young servant boy Joe and is quite bold about this.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I was in *Tess Of The D'Urbervilles* and *Miss Marple* which is closer in period to *The Village*.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

I had quite a lot of unusual scenes especially being on mountaintops in a nightdress.

DO YOU HAVE A SOCIAL HISTORY STORY FROM YOUR FAMILY?

My great grandfather, Fred Beecham was in the First World War. He was a stretcher bearer with the Northamptonshire Regiment and he served at the Somme. He brought back injured and dead from the battlefield. He was gassed whilst there and had to come back to London to recover. Whilst recuperating he met his wife to be, Betty, my great grandmother - her middle name was Emily. He went back to the war and fortunately survived otherwise wouldn't be here! The gassing left him with long term health issues though.

Before the war he worked as a traction engine driver (farm machines). My Great grandma was in service at the time - she worked as domestic staff for a wealthy family. After the war he became a builder and they had four children, the youngest of whom is my grandpa.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

All of it. I loved the dresses I wore. I had some beautiful high neck lace dresses. Quite restrictive and quite reflective of how women were expected to behave. It was interesting to see how much the outfits changed through the shoot. Towards the end the corsets changed which were much comfier. Apparently this was because women started riding bicycles and activities that previously men had done

HOW WAS FILMING IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

One particular scene we were shooting on a hill top and we could see a dark storm cloud very quickly approaching. So we were racing the cloud before we would all get soaked. My character was wearing a nightdress so was a touch chilly

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

A mobile phone

THE VILLAGE

Augustus Prew (George Allingham)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play George Allingham, the youngest son of the Big House. He connects his dysfunctional family together as is able to empathise with the sense of aristocratic duty that his mother swears by; understands though does not condone the Machiavellian tendencies of his brother Edmund and embraces the liberated eccentricities of his sister. He's a poet with Byronic tendencies, a lover of art and nature but mostly, a progressive who wants to help reform the world around him for the benefit of others. He's a wonderful character. He grows throughout the series from naive upper class boyhood to the harsh realities of a rapidly changing world.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

I love period dramas being able to plunge myself as an actor into a different time, a different mindset. It's wonderfully reassuring to realise that fundamentally nothing ever really changes. Human relationships and dilemmas and their emotional responses are timeless.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I had worked with Juliet before who plays my mother. It was wonderful to work with people that you respect professionally and even better when you have a pre-existing relationship. Nico and I were friends before and had always wanted to work together.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

I had never been to the Peak District before but I can't wait to return. It is stunningly beautiful; truly truly magnificent. The people there are so friendly and welcoming. Every location we filmed in, I always felt the sense of community and support.

DO YOU HAVE A SOCIAL HISTORY STORY FROM YOUR FAMILY?

Both of my grandfathers served in the war. You learn at school with facts and figures and dates to remember but I'm incredibly grateful to have been given the opportunity to reacquaint myself with the brutal, earth shattering human consequences of war because it renders in me, an unfathomable respect for those who served. It forced me to consider the true horror of what my grandparents had to face and live through and put myself in their shoes and question whether if it had been me, whether I could have served with as much honour and dignity as they.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

I loved my costumes and hair. I wish we still took as much pride as people used to in their everyday appearance. What struck me was that people would dress so formally out of respect for the people who they met and lived with. Learning how to attach a starched collar to a shirt is not easy, its unbelievably fiddly! There is a reason one needed servants to help them dress!

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

My iPod. Music was so hard to come by then. I listen to music the whole time. It picks me up and brings me down. It has such a profound effect on my mood and my outlook in life and I wonder how it would change me if I had to go without it.

THE VILLAGE

Matt Stokoe (Gerard Eyre)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I play Gerard Eyre who is the younger of two local school teachers in the village. Eyre is a modernising man with modern/conscientious ideals which unfortunately, come back to bite him when the war starts to break out. As his teacher, he has a very close relationship with young Bert Middleton which is important to both....

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I've worked with Charlie Murphy and about half the production team whilst working on *Misfits* – it's always nice to walk onto the set with a group of people you already know. It was a little reunion that none of us expected!

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

Probably Eyre's tribunal scene (Ep 3). It was the very first scene I had learnt - as I had to do it for my audition. It was the defining moment of the character. It is such a big scene in the Court Room. It took all day to film - which is rare in the TV world.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

No. It was a really lovely place to film and kept thinking how nice it would be to move out of London and live here with a lovely dog and a car... You never know – one day!

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS TIME PERIOD BEFORE?

I was really drawn to the project's focus on the indigenous people of the time in their local villages. I love *The Village's* focus on the regular British.

DID YOU HAVE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER?

Working with my camera was initially a riddle to me (a puzzle box). But the props team were so thorough and taught me exactly how to use the camera - including all the internal pieces that make it up. So when it came to my scene with Young Bert I was able to improvise with knowledge, rather than having to stock act.

HOW WAS FILMING IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

I was representing a time period where everyone would have been cold, so being cold myself on set probably benefited the character. It was a wet and windy environment and I wanted to show it was cold – if I can help it, I don't use thermals - I like to get a bit chilly.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS

In all honesty - I felt a bit like a cheat, doing the scene with the bare minimum and then you coming off set and look at your phone. I think it would be nice to go back to basics – a more simplistic time. I think we've become too conditioned in the 21st Century with commodities. Playing a teacher - I enjoyed thinking about creative ways I would have interacted with kids. In a way, it may have been easier to engage with children back then as there weren't as many things to distract them as there are now.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

A good book – *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. It portrays a similar imagery to Peter Moffat's writing – gritty, stripped back and exposes the realities of life.

THE VILLAGE

Stephen Walters (Crispin Ingham)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY AND TELL US A BIT ABOUT HIM?

Crispin Ingham...he is the teacher at the local school. Crispin is a complex person who in the context of his own authority thinks he is always right...I perceived his style of teaching and character in general as somewhat rigid and theatrical...something the Director Antonia Bird allowed me to develop and explore.

Mr. Eyre is the other featured teacher at the school (played by Matt Stokoe)...he is Mr. Ingham's opposite...kind, wise and smart...This causes deep resentment in Ingham who lacks Eyre's compassion and insight to connect to the children. I particularly enjoyed the verbal sparring between these two characters as each tried to outdo and undermine the other. I loved working with Matt and Bill who played Young Bert...both gave one hundred per cent focus...Antonia Bird is that rare breed of Director who allows her actors the freedom to create and express, whilst at the same time guiding you subtly in the right direction. Those 3 people were my main collaborators on this project.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I had worked with the writer Jim Cartwright (who plays pub landlord Peter) in a drama for the BBC which he had written (directed by Danny Boyle) called *Strumpet*.

DOP David Odd worked on my first ever job which was a children's drama *Ghost Story* and also *The Virgin Queen* and *Touching Evil*. Director Gillies McKinnon cast me in my second ever job for a BBC drama called *Needle* - small world.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

I enjoyed the location as it felt authentic to that specific time and environment

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

The wardrobe design was very specific to the period and this helped a lot in terms of finding/feeling the character. It was useful in a sense that the character of Ingham is uptight and the clothes were tight to say the least...but this helped me in the characterisation.

My moustache in particular was very accurate to the time as was the hair.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

If I had to take one thing back to 1913 it would be my Beatles collection!!...but I can't see that working somehow.

THE VILLAGE

Joe Duttine (Rutter)

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

Rutter is a strong farmer who owns the plot of land opposite the Middleton Farm. He is an outstanding member of the community and a successful local farmer. There is a tension between John Middleton and Rutter as he sees John wasting opportunities and neglecting both his land and family.

Initially I thought that Rutter would be a rather unpleasant character but as the story develops – really he just prioritised his family's wellbeing over anything else.

From the beginning of the series it is clear that I make it my mission to get John's farm off him. In the beginning I go about it slyly by paying off his bar tab, with the hope that he might drink himself into such a state that I'll get his farm.

The farming rivalry does trickle down to both Rutter and John Middleton's sons – as there is a constant competitive state between their two boys. Alf can see that his father, Rutter, doesn't respect John Middleton which results in Alf not respecting Bert.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

This is the first period drama I've done in a long time. *The Village* made a really nice change. It was refreshing to do such a unique piece – focusing on the working people of early Britain and the farming community.

HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ANY OF THE CAST / PRODUCTION TEAM BEFORE?

I have worked with one or two of the production team before and I am friends with John Simm. Our paths have crossed many times over, such as on *Life on Mars* and we trained at drama school together.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

I did love filming all the exterior shots in Edale I loved being on the hillside – acting outside – it brought a great enthusiasm to the set.

My favourite scenes were probably playing with the kids - chucking them around – I can draw on the emotions and connections that I have with my own family and recreate that honest playfulness with the young actors on set.

HAVE YOU FILMED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT BEFORE?

This was my first time filming in the Peak District and as beautiful as it was – it was EXTREMELY muddy. I don't live locally. I grew up just north in Sheffield – so could relate to the vibe of living in a small community.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

I did have to grow beards – so that it was completely realistic. For me, there is nothing worse than seeing an overly manicured actor playing the farmer. I wanted the whole character to look as real as he felt which meant he was somewhat dishevelled.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

I don't think I felt that I was going back to basics – I can recognise the challenges faced working on a farm in the early 1900s with limited equipment but when filming you have everything again the minute you walk off set.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

A car

THE VILLAGE

Joe Armstrong (Detective Stephen Bairstow) – joins in episode 2

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY AND TELL US A BIT ABOUT HIM?

I play a detective named Bairstow, injured in action on the front line and forced to return home early from the war. He's an angry, damaged man but his experiences have also contributed to a world-view that is more advanced than many of those around him. In some respects he's more free as a result, no longer caring about social or religious expectations or about what people think of him.

DO YOU ENJOY PERIOD DRAMAS?

It probably sounds horribly clichéd but it's just nice to be involved in an interesting, well written project. It's more about the stories than the period for me and Peter's scripts were a joy to read.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

Stumbling through a field for hours supporting Nico Mirallegro springs to mind (episode 5). It was fairly easy for the first 2 or 3 takes but then the fatigue really started to kick in. But it was a beautiful day in an amazing location and it didn't feel much like work.

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS TIME PERIOD BEFORE?

Obviously we weren't making a typical war drama as the camera never leaves the village but I wanted to have a better understanding of what it might've been like for young men on the front line, in part to understand my character's situation but also to gain a sense of how a small community might've been affected as a whole to see its young men sent off into such horrific circumstances.

DID YOU HAVE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL FOR YOUR CHARACTER?

Not really, no. My character spent a lot of time in the pub and that's nothing new when you consider that John had to learn to milk a cow.

HOW WAS FILMING IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

The weather was pretty changeable. There were some scenes that were physically tricky to film simply because you'd be slipping over in the mud or trying to stop your hat from flying away in the wind and there were certainly some cold days but nothing at all to complain about – you're making a show in which men have to spend months living in trenches so a few hours in a muddy field doesn't seem so bad. That's easy for me to say though - our lovely costume team had their work cut out.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

Perhaps it's more easy to imagine how it might have felt to exist a century ago but you don't really experience life without gas/ electricity etc because you're always surrounded by modern equipment – cameras, radio mics, gas heaters and whatnot.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Well, I didn't go back to 1913 unfortunately, that sounds more like Quantum Leap. I guess it'd be nice to take some fun stuff but if I were to go back to our village in 1913 I'd probably take a combine harvester with me.

THE VILLAGE

Alfie Stewart (Teen Bert) – joins in episode 6

WHAT CHARACTER DO YOU PLAY?

I take over as Bert from 18 years old. Bert loves photography and a lot of attention is focused on doing it well. **Spoiler pre Ep 5** - When I enter the story my brother is dead and the girl I'm in love with, Martha, is in love with my dead brother.

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE SCENE FOR YOU DURING FILMING?

First scene I did on set, which was in the institute, where I had to stand up for my brother and mother. It was a really emotionally charged and profound scene where I'm feeling incredibly lost but wanting to take charge. It was a great way to start on *The Village*, a real challenge, being thrown in at the deep end, which I thrive off. Starting with my hardest scene also meant that everything was a bit easier from then onwards.

It has been such as great experience working with John and Maxine, who are brilliant actors and I hope it rubbed off on me, and I hope I don't look like an amateur in their company.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT OUR PERIOD COSTUMES?

I love getting into period costume, I feel much more into character as it's so far from what I'm used to. In contemporary dramas you're not as thrown into your role as you are with the period costume. I also had the old fashioned Camera – which I had to learn how to use.

DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS TIME PERIOD BEFORE?

Learnt about WW1 in school – which meant I had been to lots of museums. I knew what a mangle was...but probably lacked a greater sense of the time.

ARE YOU NATIVE TO THIS AREA OR HAVE YOU HAD TO LEARN THE ACCENT?

I am London born and bred. I learn through copycatting. I just listened to everyone else and watched videos on YouTube. I learn best through hearing and emulating other actors. I then make sure I just go over it to myself – repetition.

HOW WAS FILMING IN THE TEMPERAMENTAL WEATHER?

I had fun roaming in the fields especially the scenes where I was chasing the sheep...wouldn't of wanted to do too much more, but the little doses were really fun.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING BACK TO BASICS?

I think there is something quite nice about talking to someone face to face if you want to find something out rather than always using phones. Everyone thinks they're more connected now – but ironically we're less. With Facebook and everything – we see actual faces less! I also enjoyed having a house completely lit by candlelight.

ONE ITEM THAT YOU WOULD TAKE BACK WITH YOU FROM 2013 TO 1913?

Something I could show everyone that would freak them out, like a gadget that can make objects levitate.

THE VILLAGE

UNUSUAL FACTS

- Whilst writing *The Village*, Peter Moffat was very moved when he visited the Imperial War Museum and held the original field service postcards sent home by troops from the Front.
- As soon as Executive Producer John Griffin visited Hayfield he knew he had found the main set for *The Village*.
- The real local shops in Hayfield that were dressed for the filming of *The Village* have kept their early 20th Century shop fronts post-filming.
- Norma's (Ainsley Howard) wedding dress in Episode 3 of *The Village* is an original dress from 1910. It was tiny, but it fitted Ainsley perfectly.
- The oldest piece of clothing in *The Village* is a blouse worn by Emily Beecham (Caro) which was bought from Portobello Road. It was made circa 1900 and is still in perfect condition.
- The music composed for *The Village* was recorded in some unique locations, from St Lawrence Chapel in Ashburton to the Southampton Arms pub in Kentish Town and Reykjavik in Iceland.
- The character of Bairstow (Joe Armstrong) arrived in the second draft of Episode 2 purely to solve a mystery, but Peter Moffat and production liked the young actor so much the character grew and grew.
- When Peter Moffat visited the Middleton Farm up on Edale his first reaction was "that it was incredibly beautiful and at the same time very wild. EXACTLY as I'd imagined it. Then when I met the farmer Roy, who is in his 80's and was born there and has never left, fiction and historical reality joined up."
- Director Gillies MacKinnon showed one of his earlier films, *Regeneration* (1997), to Nico Mirallegro who plays Joe Middleton. This was for research and character development to prepare him for Episode 5, when Joe returns from WWI with shell shock.
- Gillies MacKinnon saw the river in Hayfield and wanted to find a way to work it into the story. The desperation of John and Grace Middleton as they search for Young Bert in Episode 5 was the perfect opportunity to get a night shot of John Simm (John Middleton) wading through the freezing water.
- The hotel where the cast stayed whilst on location was apparently haunted – with more than one actor asking to be moved out!

THE VILLAGE

KEY LOCATIONS

Location

Edale Train Station, Edale
 Tattondale Farm, Knutsford
 Tatton Park Farm, Knutsford
 Highfield Farm, Edale
 Bowden Hall, Chapel-en-le-Frith
 Village Centre, Chapel en le Frith
 The Kings Arms Hotel, Chapel-en-le-Frith
 The Playhouse, Chapel-en-le-Frith
 31 Market Place, Chapel-en-le-Frith
 8 Terrace Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith
 Moorfield House, Glossop
 Field Adjacent to Moorfield House
 Hayfield
 Derbyshires Fruit & Veg Shop, Hayfield
 Rosies, Hayfield
 The Old Vicarage, Hayfield
 Hayfield Cricket Club, Hayfield
 The Royal Hotel, Hayfield
 Hayfield Library, Hayfield
 34 Kinder Road, Hayfield
 Farm Track with Loan Tree, Hayfield
 Charlesworth Congregational Church, Charlesworth

 Charlesworth Congregational Church Minister's
 House, Charlesworth
 Far Coombes Farm, Charlesworth
 Old Duke of Norfolk Primary School, Glossop
 Glossop Parish Church, Glossop

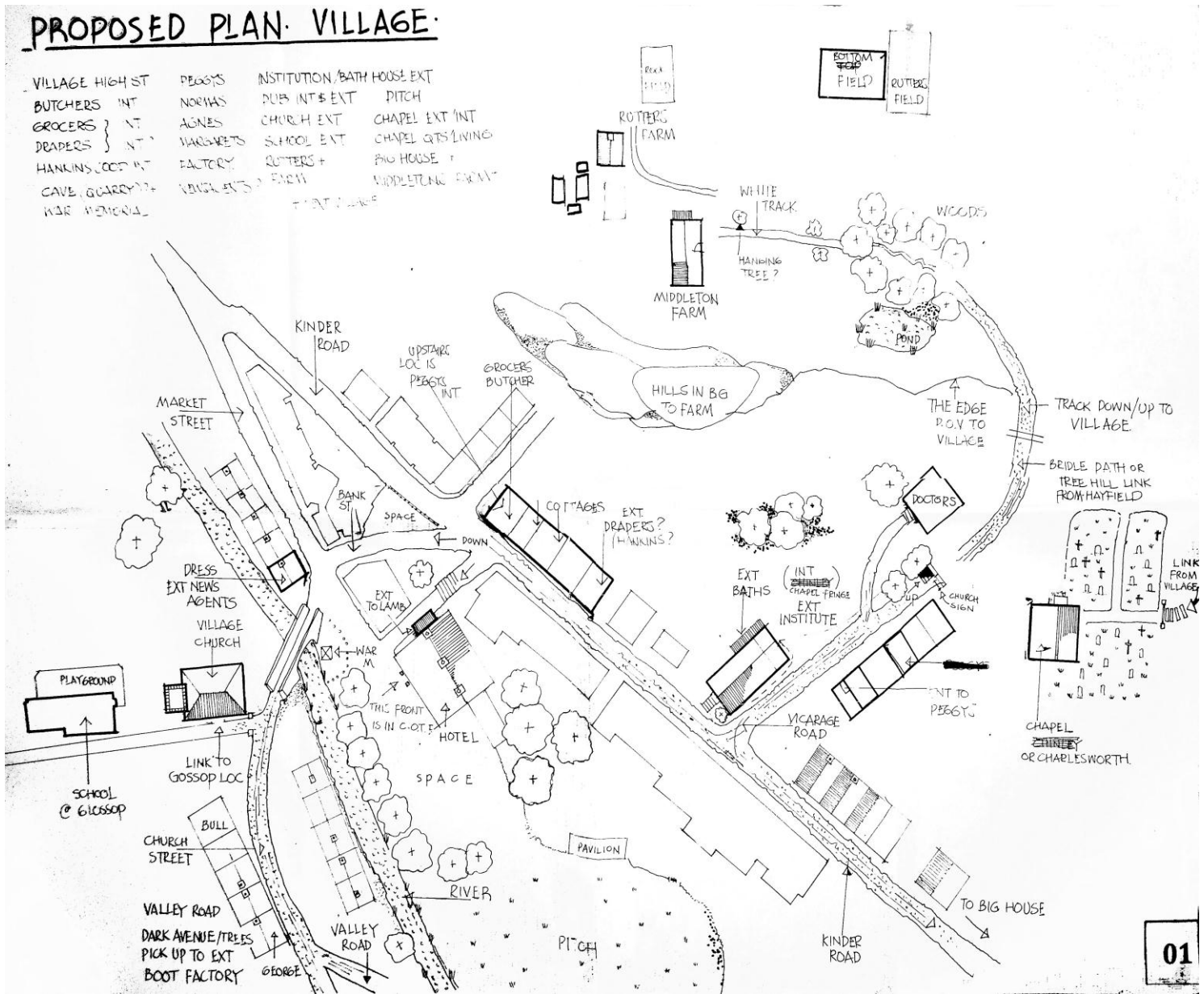
Set

Train Station
 Middleton & Rutter Fields & Crops
 Estate Farm & Kitchen Garden
 Middleton Farm and Rutter Farm
 The Big House
 Extension to Village
 Int / Ext Pub
 Int Institute
 Int / Ext Margaret
 Int / Ext Peggy's
 Big House Wall, Woods & Gates
 Opposite of wall & woods
 Various Village Locations
 Exterior Hankins Co-op
 Exterior Shop
 Doctors House
 Cricket Club
 Ext / Int Pub
 Ext Institute & Build
 Exterior Shop
 Track 1, Shelter & Trenches
 Ext Chapel
 Ext Graveyard
 Interior Minister's, Norma's ,
 Margaret's
 Dew Pond
 The School
 Interior & exterior Church

THE VILLAGE

CONCEPT MAP OF THE VILLAGE

This is the concept map for The Village to help bring the fictional village to life for the production team.



THE VILLAGE COMPANY PICTURES

Company Pictures is one of the UK's largest independent film and television drama production companies. Television production highlights include: *Women In Love* starring Rosamund Pike for BBC4, BBC Two's *The Shadow Line*, *Elizabeth I* (winner of three Golden Globes), 11 series of *Shameless* (Channel 4: BAFTA and RTS Awards), *Skins* – six series for E4, Martina Cole's *The Take* and *The Runaway* (Sky One), *Einstein and Eddington* starring David Tennant (BBC1/ HBO), *Generation Kill* (HBO), *The Devil's Whore* (Channel 4), *Wild at Heart* – seven series (ITV1) and the US version of *Skins* for MTV.

2012/13 includes: *Secret State* (Channel 4), *The Village* (BBC1), *Beaver Falls* (E4), *Inspector George Gently* (BBC), *Skins Redux* (Channel 4), the final ever series of *Shameless* (Channel 4) and the adaptation of Philippa Gregory's bestselling novel *The White Queen* for BBC1.

Other past Company Pictures productions include: *The Lakes* by Jimmy McGovern, *A Young Person's Guide to Being a Rock Star* (RTS award Best Serial) for Channel 4 and Warner Bros, *North Square* (Channel 4: winner Best Series Press Guild), *Not Only But Always* (Channel 4: winner Best Series Press Guild, BAFTA Best Actor winner for Rhys Ifans), *The Rotters' Club* (BBC), and *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers* (HBO: winner of two Golden Globe Awards for Best TV Movie, Best Actor for Geoffrey Rush and 15 Emmys). Company has made five feature films with some of the UK's leading directing talent including films by Roger Michell, Stephen Hopkins, Penny Woolcock, Shane Meadows and Lynne Ramsay.

Among its numerous awards, Company Pictures won Best Independent Production Company at the 2005 and 2008 *Broadcast Awards* and the European Producers of the Year Award at the 2004 Monte Carlo Awards. Since October 2004 Company Pictures has been a part of the All3 Media group.

ALL 3 MEDIA

ALL3MEDIA is Britain's largest independent television production company. It was formed following the acquisition of Chrysalis Group's TV division in September 2003, led by Steve Morrison, David Liddiment, Jules Burns and John Pfeil. In September 2006, Permira became All3Media's majority shareholder.

ALL3MEDIA comprises a group of television, film and digital production companies from across the UK, US, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia. It also includes international distribution companies 'ALL3MEDIA International' and 'Optomen International'. ALL3MEDIA International represents third-party producers and broadcasters together with its own production companies.

ALL3MEDIA is also the largest producer of broadcaster multiplatform content in the UK, producing award winning websites and online dramas such as *Embarrassing Bodies* (BAFTA), *The Well* (BANFF) and *Britain From Above* (EMMY).