I Remember, I Remember ...

by Barbara Gibbs

i

Contents

INTRODUCTION (1)

Darling Loveday, 1978

It must be more than two years ago that you asked me to write my autobiography. I thought it a crazy idea and put it away as impossible. My life? Interesting to whom? What have I ever done, written or said, that could be of the slightest value to anyone, ever? But while I was still laughing over the idea the tiny seed that you had sown must have put out a little fibre of a root and something began to happen. I talked, still jokingly, to Harry Yoxall about it and he did not laugh at all but was serious and interested. In fact, later, he asked me to write a cooking article for his Wine and Food Society Journal which I did ("Cooking with Love") and that began to make me want to write again.

So now the little seed has put out of the ground a minute white hair —like growth on top of which is a miniscule little leaf. Will it grow? Will it develop? Have I the sticking power, the industry, the flogging capacity to achieve such an undertaking? Let me try. Not because my life is of any general interest, but I can see it is to you and a few others. I know how deeply I regret not having paid more attention to Nain and Aunt Alice's rambling stories; regret that I never questioned Taid or showed interest in the few facts about his life that he dropped and that I never bothered to pick up. So that now their lives are already dim and uncertain, clouded by time and inaccurate memories, disfigured or beautified by my all too vivid imagination. And here I should warn you that in many cases I cannot check my facts. In many stories I

may be proved wrong. I can write only as I remember — or think I remember — for I am hopelessly inaccurate in every way and my imagination and love of a good story will over—rule the sober truth every time. So you must remember that.

FIRST DAYS: CLOCK HOUSE

I was born at Clock House, Byfleet, Surrey on November 15th 1900, eleven months after my sister Joe. I was the third daughter and there was no son. That must have been a disappointment to my parents, though my Mother would always deny it fiercely whenever it was suggested. Her interest in us certainly seemed to wane as we arrived, and when Catherine put in an appearance, three years after mine, although she became by far the prettiest and most attractive of the four girls, the parents never showed much concern for her. Loveday, the eldest, with a four year start, was their pride and joy, and her early death was a terrible grief to them both. She was the light of my father's eyes. Joe was plain, straight—haired, wore spectacles and was always producing strange illnesses, in the cure of which I had to share; but she was our Mother's darling and pet; she defended her from the pushing, bumptious little sister that I must have been, calling attention to myself, playing up to visitors: a real little show—off. My Father found me amusing. My mother did not. But this all developed and became apparent only as we grew older, arrived at the dining room for meals and left the blessed shelter of the orderliness and certainty of the large nursery wing that our Father had built on to the old house.

Clock House was renamed by my Father from "The Lodge". He was not the sort of man who would care to live in a lodge. The clock was a large black and gold clock in a tower facing the road and was still there when I last drove past. The house must have been the lodge originally of the ancient Manor House, which had been royal Tudor hunting box and was about a quarter of a mile down Sandy Lane.

There were no houses between our house and the Manor then, but the land has been built over now and the Manor divided into flats. So part of Clock House was old, with great oak beams in the cellars. It had been re-faced and built onto before my parents went there in 1896 and its main feature was a black and white check marble terrace, from which steps led down to large lawns, and an ornamental lake which had a bridge over it and an island in it. Most of the family snapshots were taken on the terrace and it features in many of the excellent photographs that my Father took and developed and printed himself.

I do not remember the nursery wing being built though I do remember my Father last extension going up, which was a long passage from the music room where a darkroom was installed and which led into the garage opposite the old stables and bothy.

NURSERY YEARS (2)

Those blessed nursery years stretch out in my mind in endless repetition. Darling Nanny Brown on whose flannel apron all my distresses and fears and ills were soothed and comforted away. I had been sick, I had had a nightmare, but there on Nanny's knee, in front of the glowing night—nursery coal fire, I would be hugged and petted and washed and dried, wrapped in a warmed, soft blanket. "There, there," Nanny would console me, "It's all right now" and I would be rocked and soothed and the horrible experience I had had, whatever it was, would vanish. Curious nightmares, when the furniture and the flickering firelight would grow enormous and menacing and would advance towards my brass—knobbed cot, or would recede and diminish to alarming littleness. "Shut your eyes and it won't come...." but through my tightly closed lids it would happen just the same, larger now again and larger, nearer and nearer till "Nanny! Nanny!" would rend the air, and Nanny would come flying to my rescue, the epitome of comfort and reassurance and consolation, which I still wish I could find and count upon when confidence has fled.

Darling Nanny Brown. She was engaged by my mother before Loveday was born in 1895, in Park Street in London. The baby would be in Nanny's complete charge and she was never to leave it, night or day, for two years. My Mother would never knock on the nursery door. She would enter whenever she chose. Those were the accepted terms. I suppose Nanny was never to be ill: it was understood that she could not be. As far as I know, for sixteen years she never was.

She was small and flat chested, with long, black, straight hair which on wet days, as a great treat, we were allowed to brush. There were little hair-tidies hung on each side of the dressing-table mirrors in those days and in these she would place her hair combings neatly rolled up. For years I thought they were curls that had fallen out of her head. Her hair was always straggling over her forehead, out of her large pinned-on hats. Her teeth could surely not always have been false, but I only remember them as having a fascinating and unreliable movement of their own, when they would drop inexplicably with a click from the roof of her mouth to be quickly returned with an upward thrusting movement of her lower jaw. I adored her. She was the ultimate in all wisdom and goodness. I never remember doubting my certainty about this while I was a child. I found clay feet in all my gods quite quickly and very early. But not in Nanny's feet. She left when I was still only ten and life was never predictably certain arid utterly sure again. With Nanny and her flannel apron, my confident childhood came to an end.

I think that she and my Mother were not in great harmony but when I caught words of criticism between them I knew that Nanny was right and was sorry for my Mother that she could be so misguided. But it was my Mother who suggested and telegraphed for Nanny to come out of her retirement and look after my first baby (David), when he was four months old and ailing. She came and stayed with us until my second baby (Loveday) was coming. She died in 1931, when she retired for good. I wish I had given her the same consideration that Churchill gave his old Nanny. But Wiltshire, where she lived out her life, was a long way away, and I was young and selfish and did not

deserve the love she gave me nor the china plates she left me. However, I keep up a curious correspondence with her nephew who was in David's brigade in the Guards' Armoured Divsion, an extraordinary coincidence I only discovered a few years ago, and which somehow salves my conscience.

The nursery years, which seem in retrospect so endless, consisted of four little girls in the Clock House nursery wing. Loveday, the eldest, was always a little apart. Four years older than Joey, five years older than I, she must have been all of eight when Catherine arrived and she had by then a German governess (Fraulein) who gave us lessons in the school room after we had mastered the pot—hooks and first letters between double lines with Nanny. I could read when I was five and the first word to lead me in to the ever—enchanted world of print was "Tatler". This was mastered in the dentist's waiting room with the help, rather surprisingly, of Nelto, our cousin. "C.A.T. - come on, you know that. Now T.A.T. What's that? Tat? yes, that's it. Now L.E.R. You know H.E.R.... her. So L.E.R. What's that? ler? Yes! So, Tat—ler. What's that? Yes! 'Tatler!' You've read it!" And all literature became mine.

So it could only have been for a short while that the four of us were all ruled by Nanny in the nursery and had all our meals with her and the Scots nursery maid, Maggie Hay, whom we all called "Da". My mother had engaged her in Forres, Scotland, when my father was shooting there one Autumn. I learned a great deal from Da. She was better educated than English girls of her class, better educated I

expect than Nanny was. I think there was an under-nursery maid as well at one time for I well remember a black girl called Bella, of whom we were very proud as she had a great rarity value. No—one else had a black maid. Where had my Mother found her? Perhaps she only came when Da was away on holiday. But was Da allowed a holiday? I doubt it.

All our meals came up on trays from the kitchen downstairs. We never had butter and jam on the same piece of bread; butter or jam. There was a home farm, and I suppose butter was in short supply; understandingly it would be at certain times of the year, for my Father did not own a large herd. The cows of course were hand milked and we had our own dairy. That was the only place we children saw cream until we reached the dining room for meals and then my Mother's eagle eye was always watching its circulation. There was a fat old cook called Mrs. Cunnington. Her husband, Cunnington, was the butler. They had their meals in the house keeper's room with my Mother's lady's maid. My Mother had a lady's maid all her life. She never went anywhere without one till after the first war. The first night of her married life the maid was told she would not be required and must join the young couple on the train to Scotland. Sometimes Nanny and one of us children would be invited by Mrs Cunnington to tea in the housekeeper's room. That was a great adventure. There was a footman in plum—coloured livery which had brass buttons with my father's crest on them and a Boy who was only allowed a black suit when he came in to wait. Mrs Cunnington rode a tricycle and had a pug dog. I suppose all the servants were under forty but to us they seemed as old as time itself.

I remember the monthly nurse "Jar" (Mrs Jarvis perhaps?), arriving for Catherine's entry into the world. She wore very starchy clothes and a little frilly cap. Nanny held her in great esteem, so we were all impressed by her. She stayed with us for all of six weeks, and my Mother kept to her bed for a month after the baby arrived.

Old Bowden the head gardener lived in a thatched cottage near the bridge over the river with Mrs Bowden and their family. One daughter was the dairy maid. The cottage had a frowsty smell and I didn't like going there. Bowden had a white square beard and always called Catherine "Miss Catherine" to rhyme with wine. She and I were his favourites. Long after he had left us he appeared at my wedding in London and stood at the back of the Church as we went out, calling "God bless her! God bless her!" And so He did.

How can I for a moment or two crawl back into those halcyon early dream days when my "trailing clouds of glory" were still only evaporating? I look at those first photographs, at those little girls in stiff starched long white dresses, large frilled hats with elastic under our chins, black socks and buttoned shoes. I gaze at one labelled "Barbara" with the cheeky little upturned face, round as the moon, with fair silky curls, all smiles and confidence. I had only been in the world three years and it seemed to be all mine to enjoy. I suppose I was naughty sometimes. Wetting my knickers was a constant grief. I was scolded then and I would cry. Once I was

threatened with having my wet drawers hung round my neck as the big poodle dog had a dead hen hung round his "to teach him not to kill chickens". I was suitably appalled at the prospect which I think only my Mother could have proposed. But it came to nothing and I continued to wet my drawers. Prayers were a hazard. Three of us — Loveday, Joe and I, or perhaps it was Joe, Catherine and I — would kneel at Nanny's knees in the large bathroom to learn to say our prayers. "Our Father", "Gentle Jesus Meek and Mild" and "Jesus Tender Shepherd Hear Us" made up our repertoire. The last was confusing because some cousins, the Denison Penders insisted that this last was "Jesus Pender", which seemed possible but gave them an unnecessary advantage. But that came later. The time that I am trying to recapture was before such theological questions could be entertained. Now as we knelt in our hideous claret-coloured dressing gowns, trimmed with Nottingham lace, we would be assailed by giggles. Before the end was in sight one of us would start tittering. "Now, now," Nanny would chide us "Come along! Don't let's have any giggles tonight!" But the giggles would spread and soon all three of us would be shaking like little jellies, our heads burrowing into Nanny's flannel apron to stifle the now incoherent lines, until we could finish with Nanny's disapproval and our feeling of relief, mixed with a little shame. Sometimes visitors in resplendent evening dresses would come to kiss us good night and would wait for this ceremony. If we let Nanny down then it was truly awful, so we would hurry at a great pace through the meaningless words and perhaps an honourable finish would prevail. But that was the extent of naughtiness that I can remember and the disapproval that would follow. Once I remember being shaken by an infuriated

nursery maid till my teeth rattled. I donut know what I had done to deserve such an onslaught but I was more astonished by the experience than repentant. The expression "Shook him till his teeth rattled" has always meant a great deal to me. I can still remember how mine really did rattle in that encounter, and I suspect it did more good to the nursery maid than it did to the startled child. Only one other crime and punishment can I recall. In our lavatory there was a clothes basket with a plait of rushes which went in and out of upright canes which formed the plaited basket My delight was to unthread this whenever I was left alone on the large mahogany seat. When this was discovered, an uproar broke out. "Such mischievousness!" and I and the basket were taken that afternoon and placed in the summer house to rethread the plait, which was almost as enjoyable for me as unthreading it. We all loved this summer house, which was on the far side of the lake. It was built in the Swiss Cottage style with split logs, and had a dark central chamber with coloured glass windows and a gallery all round. Sometimes we had our tea out there in the summer as a special treat, and Nanny would have a spirit lamp with a leaping mauve flame and boil a kettle on it. The greatest joy was to be allowed to 'spring clean' the summer house with buckets of hot soapy water and grown-up scrubbing brushes. A lovely dusty damp smell would result, wet pinnies, flushed faces and deep delight.

Another, I suppose annual, joy, would occur when Aunt Alice, our Father's youngest sister, would bring some of the women from her "District" in Shepherd's Bush down to Clock House for the day. This was the time when Church ladies would go "slumming" and adopt a

"District" which they would visit, to take food and clothes where they were badly needed. These were alien figures which would emerge from the horse-drawn drays, very different from the cottage women round about. Their faces were yellow and they had a funny smell. Some were very thin and small, and some enormously fat. There was a large meal provided and they would be taken on the lake and would go on our swing and see-saw. Once, when a little thin woman was up in the air on the see-saw, her friend on the ground at the other end suddenly got off. With a terrible bump, the poor woman who had been on the other end came crashing down from what, to me, was an immense height. She hit the ground with a great thump, her hat flew off and she let out piercing screams. Everyone gathered round. Nanny tut-tutted and walked us away from the scene. I was appalled by such a dreadful accident and it clouded my day, though I never heard that the poor woman was any the worse for her experience.

Morning walks, holding onto the pram that was now Baby Catherine's carriage, would often take us past the Blue Anchor. I didn't like the 'public house', as it was always referred to, because of the fights that took place outside on Saturday nights, when the men, their wages in their pockets, would get drunk and quarrelsome. From my night nursery I could hear their shouts and grunts, and would pull the sheets over my head. After we had left Byfleet the Blue Anchor achieved great notoriety as the scene of a famous murder.

My favourite walk was when Nanny went to the brewery to order her Stout. The smell of the brewery was marvellous to my little nose: heavy and sweet, heady and enveloping. I found it quite delicious and whenever I come across it again, even now, I am once more walking along a dusty road, holding on to the pram handle, with Nanny safely beside me.

There were four families that Nanny approved of and that we would meet on our walks and often visit for tea. The favourites were the Stoops at West Hall, where Nanny Pegrum ruled the nursery. Mr Fred Stoop was Dutch, had staked almost all his money in oil to help his brother and been richly rewarded. It might have been the same brother who became such a magnificent donor to the Tate Gallery. He had seven children and the eldest boys were "A.D." and "F.M. the famous Harlequin Rugger players, already grown men. Nesta and Cora and Kathleen were the youngest girls and they were close to Loveday's and Joey's age. We hated A.D. Stoop and cried if he spoke to us. But Cora and Kathleen were our great friends. Then there were the Richardson Gardners across the road. Vivi was Loveday's age and Rupert was Joe's and mine. Their Nanny was Nanny Wenham who didn't dress, like a Nanny, but wore coloured blouses and tweed skirts. Both their parents were beautiful to look at. Also very close was Mrs Beazley-Robinson who lived with her old father and he still bathed in the mill pool when he was ninety. Claude was Mrs Beazley-Robinson's son and he was Loveday's great friend; Monica, the only daughter, came between Joe and me. Claude fixed up some sort of early telephone between his and Loveday's bedrooms, across the road. My Mother objected to this on the grounds that it was improper; but

she could not explain why. But that was all much later. Their Nanny was called Gray, tout court and was a stiff lady's maid type with whom Nanny had little in Common. Nanny Skinner who belonged to the Tennants at Broadoaks, on the way to West Byfleet, was quite another matter. She was highly approved of by us. She had gone to Sir Charles Tennant to look after his children by his second wife. They were Peggy, who became Lady Wakehurst, Catherine who is Baroness Elliot of Harwood in her own right, Nancy and Jean. They were half-sisters of the then Mrs Asquith and her small boy, known to us all then as Anthony and to the world later as "Puffin", was often at their parties. He was a very peculiar looking child with a mass of fair, African fuzzy hair. When Sir Charles died, at a very great age, his widow married again, Nanny Skinner took on yet another generation. But that was still to come. In our day the four little Tennant girls were all in the nursery and though they were rather far away for us to meet on walks, we were always at each others' parties. They had especially good parties. Once from their Christmas tree I was given a wooden paint box. I was beside myself with joy but all I could say to the donor was "Oh, has it got rose madder? I am sure it will have rose madder!" And it had, But why did I want rose madder so badly? And of course I was told that that was not the way to say thank you.

The year that our own Christmas tree was lit by electricity was the best party of all. No one had ever seen such a thing. Candles leaning precariously over, sponges and jugs of water at the ready and cries of "Take care! Take care!" were part of all Christmas tree parties. But not ours in 1905. The chauffeur, who had

once been the coachman, had arranged it all beforehand and coloured bulbs festooned the dark tree, hung with magical decorations of glass and tinsel. After tea in the dining room, we all went up to the dark nursery and waited in breathless anticipation. "NOW!" cried my Father and pulled down the switch. There was a gasp of astonishment as the tree burst into coloured lights illuminating it from the fairy at the top with her crown and her wand to all- the unwrapped, labelled presents lying around the tree. I felt very proud of my family that we could achieve such a wonder.

Christmas was a lovely time, the house full of visitors who would come to see us. We would see them when we went down after tea in the evening to play with the best drawing room toys. Aunts and Uncles, cousins and friends, all older that we were since our family was the last of the grandchildren on both sides. The Walter Agnews with Charles and Phyl and Dick; the Arthur Bloomfields with Nanny and Diana; Arthur Trevor and the Don Wauchopes, the Lockett Agnews ("Spoof" and "Big Joe") were among the many friends.

But what I enjoyed most about Christmas time was, once a year, just before the great feast, the sweep would come to sweep the nursery chimney. He would come so early that we could not have breakfast as usual but had to have the meal in our bathroom. For some reason, this to me was bliss unparalleled. We had our usual chairs but Da sat on the side of the mahogany bath and everything was upside down and in unexpected places. The chimney would be clear for Santa Claus: Christmas was surely near at hand.

Aunt Anne and Aunt Alice always came for Christmas. They were certain visitors. Aunt Anne (Reid) was my father's eldest sister and greatly loved by all her family. She was widowed early and lived from then with the old, also widowed, grandmother. Aunt Alice Williams, thrice engaged but never married, shared the menage, as did my father until his marriage. Aunt Anne had three children. The eldest was in a lunatic asylum and the second a dwarf. These tragedies had been caused by a nurse who had drugged them to keep them quiet. The third, a boy called Cecil, was by this time well on his way to becoming a judge in India. He was brilliant and took scholarship after scholarship so that his rather impoverished mother had no education fees to pay.

Aunt Alice was my godmother and made a great pet of me, which petting Nanny encouraged and which irritated my Mother. She called me her "Welly-Own" and singled me out for every favour, gift and kindness. I blossomed and bloomed under such affection and returned her love with delight. She travelled a great deal and always brought me rare presents from abroad: a musical chair from Switzerland, dolls in national dress from each country that she visited, a complete set of Dickens' novels. I wish I still had some of them. But my Mother got rid of them all. I suppose I was asked. I don't remember either protesting or acquiescing. When we left Clock House, they just disappeared. Aunt Alice would take me in the punt with her, on the lake, and study the lines on my hand and tell my future. I suppose I satisfied her own motherly instincts. She had once been

engaged to my very good looking godfather. Perhaps I was her dream child.

After Christmas there would be two outings to London. One was Anne's treat for us to see the pantomime at the Coronet Theatre in Notting Hill Gate (now a cinema). It was an exciting day and lunch with Aunt Anne at 19 Iverna Court was always enjoyed. Roast chicken with bread sauté and then meringues, all cooked and made by Elizabeth, her cook general, who shopped and cleaned and still was able to open the door to us in a black dress and spotless apron and cap, and wait on us at table. Aunt Anne had engaged her when grandmother Williams had died and she had had to set up her own establishment. When the time came to engage a cook she went to the registry office where there were eight cooks sitting in a row, waiting hopefully to be chosen. Aunt Anne had made a splendid choice.

The second outing was to Aunt Florrie de la Rue, who lived in grand style in Belgrave Square as well as at Six Mile Bottom, near Newmarket. We all loved Aunt Florrie, but she did not come often to Clock House. My Mother thought her paunchy little husband, Uncle Ernest, was rather vulgar. I expect he was. He used to put golden half sovereigns in the brandy snap for us to pick out and loved to ask us riddles. "If you were going over a ditch on a plank of wood, Child, and you met a bear coming towards you, what would you do?" "I'd turn round," one of us answered "What! With a bear behind?!" My mother went very pink and looked cross but it was a long time before

we saw the joke, although we joined in nervously with his roars of laughter. But that was all a good deal later. He never appeared before the matinee in the huge dining room where the food was marvellous and strange. (Aunt Florrie was well known as a fashionable hostess and kept a remarkably good table.) Each year we would be asked what we would like best to see and the answer was always the same — "Peter Pan!" I adored it and was transfixed from the moment that the huge curtain went up. I identified myself of course with Peter. I was Peter. Tinker Bell was fairy. It was my life she saved when she drank the poisoned medicine and I could hardly cry "Yes!" aloud to save her life when the question came "Do you believe in fairies?" because my throat was choked with tears. How proud I was when Peter won his duel with Captain Cook and how ecstatic I became when the last scene showed Peter in the tree tops with Wendy about to spring—clean his house. We saw it the second year that it was produced, with Pauline Chase as Peter Pan, and must have gone for about five consecutive years and loved it more each time. I had a toy theatre of the play. I tried to fly. I knew bits of it by heart. We used to travel up by car from Byfleet, through Esher and Kingston and over Hammersmith Bridge. Once the fog was so thick we had to go home by train with Nanny and Da. Little boys ran about with torches to show the way. They were the 'crossing-sweepers': barefooted small boys, in torn clothes. Poverty was very real in London and very close. The buses were horse-drawn as was nearly all the traffic: drays and carriages, cabs and hansoms. Once we saw straw lying thick outside a house. Nanny told me that someone must be very ill and the straw would stop the noise of the traffic. The knocker too was tied up in a cloth.

In time of course, I took my children to Peter Pan. The magic was not the same. The old sets had become part-worn and the lovely white enamelled nursery furniture had become chipped and shabby. Gladys Cooper's twangy voice - "Twink! Twinki Where- are you Twink?" — on her entry through the night nursery window shocked me. Those were my own reactions; I knew sadly that I could not give the new generation the pleasure that I had had. The grandchildren, when in turn I took them were even further from the magical experience that had been mine. They had already seen so much on the television and cinema that the impact of astonishment had gone. Real pleasure must have an element of surprise and somehow, somewhere, that had fled. Maybe I am wrong. Emma, one of my grand-daughters, assures me that the magic was there for her. How can the grown-ups know what is going on in the mind of the child who sits so quietly, so silently beside them?

Peter Pan was I suppose the beginning of my love for the theatre which has endured all my life. My Father had been a keen theatregoer in his bachelor days and had seen everything that he could from the cheap gallery seats. My Mother could have had no interest in it. Neither of them ever took us children to the play. At school I loved to act, had elocution lessons and recited whenever I was given the opportunity. Later I enjoyed public speaking. Obviously I enjoy hearing my own voice! I never cared for pantomime and preferred drama to musicals. As a school girl and young teenager, I was given very little opportunity to go to the play; but

I read everything that I could about the contemporary shows, knew the names of all the plays and the actors taking part in them. Shakespeare was my passion; I think I have seen every play he wrote. I studied the photographs and cartoons and I knew what the stars looked like so much that I could discuss them with visitors who came to the house as though I had seen the shows, hoping they would think that I had. This, quite reasonably, annoyed my Mother: I was "putting on airs".

SEASIDE HOLIDAYS (3)

Nanny was a great believer in the seaside, so twice a year we were taken for the good of our health to see the sea and breathe the good ozone. In the Spring we would go to Cliftonville, the smart end of Margate, where the air was believed to be very bracing. We would go for a fortnight to 'rooms' in a terraced house and take possession of the bedrooms and a sitting room where our meals were served. It was too cold to bathe but early in the morning a horse-drawn float would appear and huge men wearing thick black oilskins tramped up the stairs carrying on their shoulders battered churns of hot sea water which would be tipped into the painted, once enamelled, bath and we could have the benefit of salt water. Tidemann's Sea Salt was an alternative which Nanny also believed in and used for tiny babies.

The Summer outing was far more exciting. There was a great deal of packing and preparation before we started off for Paddington, to a carriage specially reserved for us, with white clean antimacassars far above our heads and our own lavatory opening out of it. At some point a large wicker hamper would arrive which had been ordered beforehand from the Great Western Railway. It contained rolls and butter for us all, knives and forks and plates, and always, among all the other delights, a cold roast chicken. The first thing that had to be done was that the nursery maid had to dust and clean the carriage. Although it was not dirty as the carriages are today with paper and rubbish lying about, the coal smoke from the engines made the window sills and ledges black and Nanny insisted on all the smuts being wiped away. Then we would

settle down to the long exciting journey. Once Da was nearly left behind — could it have been at Crewe ? — when she went out to fetch cups of tea for Nanny and herself. I can see her still in her long white skirt and shirt waist, trying to run with the two brimming cups of tea in either hand, our carriage door alone still open, the guard's whistle up to his lips. My heart stood still with horror and terror. What if she did not make it? What if she were left behind? The anguish was, unbearable.... But after what seemed hours of suspense, Nanny took the cups from her, she clambered aboard, the door slammed and we were off again. I still cannot bear any of my party to leave our train for any reason.

We were bound for Llandudno, or later, Barmouth, where there were bathing machines, donkeys on the sands to ride, and friends that we seemed to meet year after year and never saw again.

There was a Punch and Judy and sand competitions and a troupe of pierrots who acted and sang on what seemed to be a band-stand. We used to learn their songs and once I won a prize for giving a solo rendering of 'Daisy, Daisy'. I tried to master "She sells sea shells on the sea shore" but it was beyond me and my singing career ended with that one triumph.

So much has been written recently about horse—drawn bathing machines that I can add nothing new. But it was exciting. Undressing in the cramped wooden hut on wheels, in such close proximity to the grown—ups, the floor boards damp and sandy, the funny smell of bodies, wet towels and sea. The awful shouts and yells when the horse was harnessed up, followed by the fearful lurch when it got under way and we all fell about, screaming with excited alarm. The

splash of the water which told us that we were now in the sea, far enough from the shore to be unobserved by prying eyes, and were left there while the horse was taken on to another machine. Then after a great knock, our little door was opened, some steps were put down into the water, and our bathe could begin.

But whether it was Llandudno or Barmouth, where we were again 'in rooms', that was only the beginning of the great joy still in store. First, another short and totally delightful journey when the train chugged along flat and marshy land where the sea and the reeds and rushes met, where sea birds waded and rotting stumps of ancient posts held rusty wire together for no imaginable purpose, where far away the sky appeared to join the water and a salty, marshy, strange and foreign smell excited and welcomed us. The train we were in now was different to our grand London carriage. We were allowed to stand in the corridor and drink in the half-remembered, strange yet familiar scene. This was really Wales. Our father was Welsh, both his parents were Welsh so he was all Welsh, that made us Welsh. Other people were just English. This was the land of our fathers, so Loveday instructed us. I was very proud of this news and my self-importance, seldom at low ebb, blew fiercely upwards. Now there were whitewashed, small cottages, with grey roofs and bright flowers in the little gardens. Old women in grey shawls came out and waved. We waved back. Nanny and Da began to collect our luggage from the racks above the seats. Our travelling pinafores were taken off, we were washed and our coats put on. Hats were placed on our heads and the horrible elastics snapped into place under our chins. We were arriving! This was Mynffordd Station and we were lifted out. There was a car to meet us with Spooner, the chauffeur, and soon we were

going up the mile-long rhododendron-lined drive to Deudraeth Castle, where my Father had been born and where our Uncle Osmond and Aunt Eva Williams now lived.

DEUDRAETH

The old Welsh Manor House, now called "Castel Deudraeth", had been turned by my grandfather into a castellated Victorian mansion with turrets and lancet windows and a rustic wooden outer stairway which led up to the rooms allocated to us children. We found it all romantic and improbable and marvellous. There were geraniums growing everywhere and the garden paths were made of small grey flat pebbles, that could be easily shuffled by small feet in sand shoes, within the confines of the thick box borders. Later the Aunt and Uncle moved to Borthwen on the estate, where Michael and Benita Williams live today. This was a smaller, whitewashed house, nearer to the village and to the water. The Castle and most of the property was sold to Clough Williams-Ellis, a nephew of Aunt Eva, and so Portmeirion was born.

Here we found bliss unparalleled: the cream of the whole year. Aunt Eva, tall and thin and, I suppose, plain, was everything an aunt should be. She taught us the names of flowers and drew and painted them for us. Now we were dressed in our seaside clothes: hideous navy blue serge dresses trimmed with white braid, and knickers to match, that prickled. ("They should have linings", my Aunt said to our cousins, Olwen and Nelto. Both goddesses in our eyes.) Huge hats, also of navy blue were carried on our heads, steadied by the inevitable elastics. But down on the empty yellow sands where the dark slabs of warm rocks made platforms and steps

and stairs, we were allowed to take off our clothes and splash and paddle in the blue, shallow, warm estuary water. This was heaven! This was joy! Greatly daring sometimes we went "right under", and then Nanny would be calling us with a large rough towel with which she would rub us dry, our teeth chattering until a ginger biscuit was popped between our blue lips to restore us. Water and rocks and golden sand and beyond, against the sky, mountains: real unassailable mountains of unimagined mystery and terror. Pen—rhyn—deu—draeth. I would spell out the enchanted name to myself. This was the high peak of the year — looked forward to and backward at: the Shangri-La of my childhood. But was it perhaps because Loveday felt so passionately about Wales that I was copying her? For Loveday's influence on me was enormous. What she said I treasured. What she thought I must think too. What she admired I found admirable. What she disliked I must find detestable. She was my lode-star, my protection and my introduction to the world beyond Nanny's lap. She was always my champion and it was to her I turned for advice and comfort when I had been snubbed by my Mother or frightened by my Father's coldness. Loveday went to meals in the dining room long before we younger ones qualified and brought me news from that remote, grown—up world. "Mummy said that you always wanted admiration, but Daddy said that wasn't true: all you needed was justice." I was greatly flattered that I had been discussed, and impervious to my mother's perception.

LOVEDAY

Loveday must have been an unusually endearing child. She died so young that naturally a halo grew around her memory. Not only did her parents adore their firstborn but everyone seems to have recognised a very sweet and strong character. She was not particularly pretty: short, with fuzzy brown hair which she wore tied back with the then fashionable black silk moire ribbon, very little colour, small grey eyes, large round teeth and a very pretty little figure, just beginning to develop, which I would watch with fascination and would wonder if my own flat chest could ever produce such lovely little hummocks. She was very amusing and intelligent and was, I think, the only one of their children who had any real communication with her parents. She and her Father had a marvellous 'in-language' of their own, which they would laugh and laugh over, leaving the rest of us, including our Mother, bewildered but infectiously amused. She loved literature, poetry and plays and would read and recite to me all her favourites, while I would listen spellbound. No doubt this was inherited from our Father and he may have encouraged her as, later, he did me; but I think a great deal of it came from the Williams cousin, Nelto. Nelto was a few years older than Loveday and longed to go on the stage though only progressed as far as Miss Fogerty's School of Drama at the Albert Hall. Nelto and Loveday may have been together to see the dramatised version of Conan Doyle's "Speckled Band", for I remember Loveday returning from a matinee and acting the whole play (or so it seemed to me), for my benefit. "The Speckled Band! It was the Speckled Band!!" My hair stood on end. I could hardly prevent myself

screaming. My eyes must have stood out of my head. What an experience for the nursery child: what an audience for the schoolgirl! For now she must have graduated from Nanny to the German governess, Fraulein, whom we called "Pop". Now there was a school room where Joe and I later went for some lessons. I learned to write in the old German script, but not a word of that language do I remember today.

From the schoolroom at home, when I suppose she was about thirteen, Loveday went to Miss Pott's boarding school at Eastbourne. It was suddenly the fashion for girls to go away to school. Vivi Richardson-Gardner was going to Miss Pott's and so the arrangement was made. It only lasted a year. I don't know why, for she was very happy there and made many friends. She moved to St. Monica's at Banstead, near Epsom, where Cora Stoop had gone or was going.

When Loveday was entered for school in about 1908 when I would have been seven. My safe, secure and predictable world began to show some cracks, and when the day came at last and she drove away with my Mother and the new school trunk in the landaulette, with Church, the chauffeur, at the wheel, I felt betrayed and bereft. Everybody seemed so excited at Loveday's emancipation and she herself was thrilled by the whole prospect. But I wept silently into a damp pillow and only my Nanny and Da knew my grief. I still have a scrap of paper on which is written in my round childlike hand:

> Is there a storm without a wind?
> Can a paper stay on the wall without being pinned?
> No. Nor can Loveday from old Byfleet part
> Without a pang to every loving heart."

It is the only record of my desolation.

"She will be back in July", I was told. "It's only three months and she will be home again". Three months? But that was eternity. A day was for ever. A week was endless. A month I could not envisage. "Three months!" How could that comfort me?

But of course she came back, full of school stories, of the friends she had made, of the quarrels and jealousies I listened, spellbound, enthralled and felt I knew them all. Elinor Glynn's two daughters were there and secretly used papier poudre which was very wicked and must not be told to anyone..... but I could be confided in: I was Loveday's confidante.

Now another carpet of my life on which I had thought I could stand for ever was sharply pulled away from under my feet. Nanny was going to leave. Nanny was going to leave for ever.

Strangely, I don't remember much about it. Had I, in fact, grown out of Nanny's necessity to me? Had she slowly but inevitably transferred her attention to the new baby, to Catherine? And had I attached my dependence to Da, the dear nursery maid, who belonged in a way to Joey? I remember so little of the emotion of her going. Perhaps it had been cleverly broken to me so that I became used to the idea before she left. I had had typhoid the year before and had been nursed in the best spare bedroom with two trained nurses to look after me. Nanny had hardly been allowed near me through those long nightmarish, starving weeks. Perhaps the fact that Loveday had gone to school and had returned had braced me for future partings. I don't remember. There are letters from the three others to Nanny after she had left, written for her birthday, kept by Nanny till she died and returned at last to me, but nothing from me who loved her

so passionately. Had she re—read it till it fell apart? Had I never written? That I find hard to believe... I was already nine and the world had invaded the nursery. Even so, it must have been a blow and a grief when she left. Worse was to follow.

Nanny must have gone soon after the last magical summer visit to Deudraeth for I remember the train journey home with Loveday crying desolately as we left the adorable familiar countryside. I, of course, had to cry too. But why did she weep with such total desolation? She had never done this before. She was happy at school — now St. Monica's — to which she would soon return. The summer holidays would come round again. Deudraeth was there for ever. Why weep so grievously? Nanny shook her head and tut-tutted. Da made encouraging sounds; but the tears fell pitifully. She was very fond of Nelto. Was the parting with her so sad? No—one will ever know.

But the following summer we did not go to Deudraeth. Nanny having left, we went to Eastbourne with our parents and with Da. We were in rooms again, in Southfields up a little rise, west of the Grand Hotel and towards Beachy Head. My Father came and went. When he was there he took us all prawning at Birling Gap, a desolate piece of coast at the bottom of huge chalk cliffs, where large tumbled rocks lay strewn about. We paddled and fished with our prawn nets and caught fine transparent prawns with prickly whiskers and black disconnected eyes. It was 1911, one of the hottest summers. My Father went back to work. My Mother stayed with us. Loveday fell ill. She had a bad pain. Her temperature rose and the doctor came. The Doctor diagnosed a chill coinciding with a period and prescribed among other things, hot poultices and hot water bottles. But it was an abcess on the appendix, which of course the treatment

exacerbated. My Mother, realising that something was seriously wrong, telegraphed to her sister, Jinnie Fullerton, who ran a well-known nursing home in Mayfair. She arrived with a Dr MacGavin, who diagnosed appendicitis. A surgeon came down from London and my father returned.

Loveday was operated on the kitchen table, moved into our sitting room. The operation was successful. We children were sent back to Clock Rouse with Da. Loveday was better. My Father, from Eastbourne, came to tell us the good news. Our happiness was short-lived. [illegible] set in and in ten days from the beginning of her illness, Loveday was dead.

I don't remember being told that Loveday had died. I remember very clearly our Father coming into the bedroom where Joe and I then shared to tell us that she was better. I remember bits of our conversation then. But who told us she [illegible], how we learned it, I have no idea. My memory there blanks out. I remember we three children being dressed from head to toe in black, the nursery [illegible] drawn as the funeral procession went past. The sun poured through the Holland blind but I did not want to look. Relations, all in deepest black, came and went. They kissed me frequently. 'Poor little Barbara! You will miss her!" How did they know anything about it? How could they know that my childhood had come to an end? That there was no—one, no—one, that cared as she (and long ago Nanny) had cared for me? I could not believe that life could go on, could continue without Loveday about and around to turn to and to share all my secrets and joys with.

I cried and cried and cried and was reproached and then scolded for taking so much grief to myself. I must think of my parents whose suffering was so much greater than mine, and see how brave they were! It made no difference: I continued to cry.

For some time now Da had been engaged to be married to the under chauffeur, Cecil Maim. We were all very intrigued by this situation and longed for the marriage to take place. They were to live in the bothy over the garage and presents began to store up for them. Aunt Alice gave a very handsome armchair with green loose cushions. Eventually the day arrived and Da wore a grey tussore tight—fitting dress. She was married at the village church but for some reason we children didn't attend and I only heard afterwards that Mr Money, the vicar, had forgotten the date and arrived, after being fetched, half an hour late. A baby was soon expected and our excitement ran high. But tragedy came again. The little girl was born, but there were difficulties; the doctor had an infected hand; blood poisoning set in and our dear Da died. Nothing any more must be counted upon. No-one whom I loved must leave my sight. Everybody was vulnerable. Anybody could die without warning. The confidence of my childhood was disrupted. I would walk warily all my life.

EDUCATION (4)

From pot-hooks with Nanny in the nursery to real writing between four ruled lines (In between the little lines for the little letters, then right up to the. top for the letters with loops and right down to the bottom line where there is a loop at the bottom.....) — I enjoyed all of that. From there we graduated to Loveday's schoolroom. But when Loveday went to school, Joey and I joined up with Monica Beazley-Robinson (now Mrs Pen Lloyd) and did lessons in a room in their garden with a stuffy old governess, Miss Evers. Miss Evers was always delighted with Monica arid only slightly less with me; but she was mean to Joey and always finding fault with her. Were Joe's eyes already finding it difficult to read? She wore glasses later on for astigmatism and it is possible that her eyes were already hindering her. I reported Miss Evers' "unfairness" to my Mother and the lessons came to an end. Monica, Joe and I then went for a short while to a day school in Weybridge. We bicycled in together; it must have been over two miles, up and down hill and seems to me rather odd, now, that that was allowed by our parents. But I suppose there was very little traffic and the hazards were few. I don't remember learning anything there, except that the sewing mistress mistook my too large 'running' stitch for tacking. But that first taste of school lasted a very little while and our education was next handed over to a Miss Fieffer who bicycled every day over from Cobham. She was sandy haired and pink faced and again I remember no lessons, only playing croquet with her, losing my temper and chasing her with my mallet. We played a great deal of croquet and had our own lawn as our Father played in

all the big croquet tournaments and his lawn was naturally sacrosanct. We did not cheat much in that most cheatable of games, but we had fearsome arguments and fights over the endless matches. At some point I made up my mind that it was unfair to pray that my shot would succeed. I suppose it was when I discovered that Joe was also praying for the opposite result. We agreed, I think wisely, to leave God out of it. It seemed hardly fair on Him to ask for this participation.

When it was decided that Joe and I should go to boarding school, it was arranged that Joey should go to St. Monica's with Loveday, but in case I trod too fast on her heels, and the younger sister overtook her, I was sent off alone to Leatherhead Court, where a Miss Tullis reigned. (It is now a home for the disabled.) I must have been only nine and I hated it. There were acres of shiny parquet floors and a child in my bedroom told me that she often drank her "number one" which I thought, quite rightly, very disgusting. I had a nonspeaking part as a page in "Love's Labour Lost", acted out of doors, but even that did not console me. If I learned anything I have forgotten what it was. I cried a good deal, which naturally annoyed everybody. Miss Tullis sent for me and asked me what the matter was. (Were small girls not usually homesick?)

It was in those summer holidays, 1911, that Loveday died and it was decided that I could then join Joe at St. Monica's as she had now had a term's start.

But my start was a bad one. Miserable over Loveday's death, I developed what was diagnosed as appendicitis, taken off to Aunt Jinnie's nursing home in Hampstead and operated on by Sir William

Bennett. (My poor parents! They must have wondered if they were going to lose a second child!) But the operation went off well and I seemed to recover; but then I had relapse after relapse. No-one knew what was wrong. Twice my mother was sent for from Byfleet as I was thought to be dying. Twice life flickered up again. I think I must have wanted to die. Finally my Father took my life in his capable hands. He booked rooms at Hindhead, arranged for Joe and Catherine and Da to go there, ordered an ambulance and I was driven down with a nurse to look after me. His decision was right: slowly I recovered. I had to rest a great deal — and a whole hour after lunch without a book. That was a real deprivation for already I was a compulsive reader and read anything that I could lay my hands on. But I grew strong and Joe and Catherine and I had a happy time going for lovely walks above the Portsmouth Road where, long ago, a sailor had been cruelly murdered, and playing in a pretty stream where red clay was easily modelled into trays and bowls. Sir William used to visit me for a long time afterwards and sent me little presents and cards. So life began again and I returned to St. Monica's with Joe after the first strange Summer holidays without Loveday. We spent them touring in the West Country, all of us in one car and ending the holiday at Eastbourne again. I hated going back there and still do not understand how the parents could have borne it. But they did and returned there many times. I suppose they liked the place. I never forgave it for Loveday's death and never wanted to see it again.

So at last my school time at St. Monica's really began. I was very happy there and enjoyed the six years that I spent under Miss Heath Jones and Miss Bervon's kind surveillance. I made two lifelong

friends: Betty Cumming who married Arthur Miller-Stirling and Gwyn Grimond who married Billy Corbett, later Lord Rowallan.

We woke to a bell clanging in the passage outside our rooms and had to be out of bed before it ceased its noise. A 'head of room' was responsible for our obedience to the rules. Eight was the most in any one bedroom. No one was allowed to speak. In silence we stripped our beds, turned the mattress and allowed the bedclothes to air. Baths were rationed to three or four a week by a timetable, and we were allowed only ten minutes for them. Other mornings we put a screen round our washstands where each basin had had some hot water poured in by a maid, stripped naked and washed ourselves completely with soap which we then rinsed off with water. We said our prayers by the side of our beds before making them. Bed making had to be neatly, done and the bedspread put in place. I think we were expected to read a passage from our Bible before the next bell went and we all rushed down to the Assembly Hall for roll call and school prayers.

Each week we put our dirty laundry in our own laundry bag, entered the items in a book and it was sent to the wash. Our chests of drawers were regularly inspected: everything had to be tidy and in order.

It was good discipline. Cleanliness, holiness, house-pride, all in a silent hour. Why was it allowed to lapse? Why did the head lose sight of these virtues? They probably began o be dissipated during the war when many schools were evacuated and had to give way

to difficult conditions. My grand-daughters' schools seem to have completely lost sight of such discipline. I have seen with horror beds pulled up and untidily covered over, the blankets and sheets unaired and unstraightened after the night; wash basins with no privacy; washing and hair—brushing ignored. Prayers neither expected to be said, nor, I suspect, said. Clothes borrowed and stuffed into crowded chests, crumpled and grubby, and for travelling into plastic bags. And the result too often is that the children return with dirty, alien clothes, their hair a mess, their hands and necks grey. Is that perhaps how hippies and dropouts emerged?

With one or two exceptions I suspect that St. Monica's gave as good an education for girls with our sort of background as any other available at that time. None of us except for the headmistresses' nieces had any idea of earning a living. We were destined, at the best, for a 'finishing school' and then to live at home, help our mothers arrange the flowers, get married and live happily ever after. I had aspirations to go to college but it was discouraged at home and I never seriously set my mind to work for it. Miss Bervon's niece, Vera Britain, who was educated at St Monica's, became famous as the author of "The Testament of Youth" and later as the mother of Shirley Williams, but I can recall no other careerist. Some of the brightest of us were entered for the Junior Cambridge Examination in 1916. I passed in that successfully but the next year I failed in the Senior Examination; my mathematics were my undoing. I never tried for a public examination again. The headmistresses were keen that I should get a degree. They once confided in me that they wanted me to take on the school when they retired. I thought little

of the proposal and was unaware of the implied compliment. They may have made it to many others. It certainly had no appeal for my parents.

Our "maths" and games mistress was Miss Edith Street. She was a splendid character and we would unanimously have described her as "ripping"; but she was unable to explain the mysteries of arithmetic to me.... Geometry and Algebra were more understandable but figures alone seemed to paralyse my mind. I suspect with all the changes of governesses and schools I had had no real grounding and I am sure did not care or concentrate enough. Miss Street used to get furious during our lessons and would throw the black board duster at the offender. But though I enjoyed such display of temperament it did not help me to search for the square root of a number which was detached from any known object. I think she scared us all. Once I remember at mental arithmetic she turned on some one even more paralytic than I. "Come along! Come along! What's the answer? What's the number?" There was a long, long, silence. "What is the matter? Can't you speak? Are you dumb, child?" Miss Street was about to explode I thought, excitedly. But at last the victim spoke. "Oh, I have done the sum. I do know the answer; I can't remember the number's name!" The class collapsed.

History and literature were my two passions and they were both well taught, especially the last by Miss Olliff who married a missionary 'and died untimely'. We played cricket and tennis,

lacrosse and netball. In the summer we went once a week to a swimming bath.

Except for the wretched mathematics I did reasonably well. I became head of a bedroom and was head girl for over a year. Betty Cumming, almost three years older than I who was also head girl, was my dearest friend and we wrote long letters to each other every holidays. She came to stay with us at Clock House and later at Pynesfield when we moved. I was one of her bridesmaids at her home in Scotland when she married Arthur Miller-Stirling. But soon after they went to India for four years and when she returned I was already married and our lives took different paths.

Joey put up with my aggressive successes, went in for cooking and dressmaking, which of course I despised, knowing no better. She left contentedly in 1916 when she was sixteen.

Catherine, who became "Katie" after she joined us at St Monica's, decided that when I left in 1918 she needed "a broader outlook". This amused my father enormously and she went on to St Felix in Southwold. She had been sent to join her two sisters at the tender age of nine, so perhaps what she really needed was a change. When I left, the headmistresses presented me with the Titanic Webster's Dictionary, handsomely bound and inscribed, which I have to this day. I have had to have it rebound once and if it is to be preserved, it will soon have to be bound again.

Every school has I suspect its inner dramas, love affairs and intrigues. The young girls must have 'crushes' for the older girls. It is, after all, one of the first manifestations of sex. The child-girl falls in love with the elder girl because she is looking for protection, stability and guidance, all of which she will look for when she grows up and falls in love with a man. The elder girl is seldom interested and often unaware of the child's adoration. With boys the opposite takes place. It is the older boy who falls in love with the young one: is besotted about him because he needs to protect, to care for, to look after, which when he grows up is what he will want to do the girl that he will one day love. Often the young boy substitute is nervous, unaware, apprehensive. It is a sort of rehearsal and can be innocuous. With girls almost certainly so. Unluckily boys too often want to take the whole affair into a more dangerous context.

I had one or two 'crushes' on girls which I recognise now as such. But as I look back they seem to have been in both cases for girls of peculiar physical unattractiveness: a boiled-looking skin and hair that was straight and greasy seem to have been irresistible. Later, when I in my turn received admiration from juniors, I was quite unaware of what was taking place. Finally when one poor child adored me so much that she stole my underclothes it was years before I discovered from some psycho analyst handbook that this was a manifestation of love and not a kleptomaniac on the prowl.

But among the teachers themselves who knew what went on? Miss Heath Jones and Miss Bervon were two splendid women. I believe that no one would want to deny that. Deep bosomed; heavy footed; both good looking in a massive way, Miss Bervon especially. She had fine chiselled features and remarkable, large, dark eyes which her great niece, Shirley Williams, has inherited. Miss Heath Jones was the spirit of the School. "Service and Sanctification" was the motto she had chosen for us: Saint Monica should be our prototype. She had a good degree, taught history, scripture and current events and preached sermons to us every Sunday evening. Miss Bervon was social and practical, an administrator and a caterer. Once a month her brother "Billy Bervon" came down from the Bank where he worked, to audit her books. They had started the school with little beyond faith and courage. They had built it and added on to it as time went on and the numbers increased. Right at the beginning, they once told me, they were at their wits' end for cash: there was nothing with which to pay the next demand. They prayed together for a solution. It was found in a cupboard that they had overlooked: a five pound note was lying on the shelf.

But even when I was there Miss Heath Jones was becoming a little odd. Her lessons were hard to follow as she whirled us across continents, embraced aeons of immeasurable time and then dived into the psychological difficulties that Abraham's wife, Hannah, must have encountered. At one evening sermon she talked to us on the importance of modesty in our dress. Our school uniform was green

shirts with collars and ties worn with navy blue skirts. In the evenings our dresses had to have high necks and long sleeves — topless girls were still fifty years away. Imagine, then our surprise when she leaned earnestly over her reading desk and in a clear voice adjured us all "Never, never show the Nipple!"

Then into this happy duet of the two ladies erupted, perhaps as a result of the war, a vibrant, attractive, small, jolly lady Mlle Manileve, with tiny hands, tiny feet and a brain as quick and clever as a monkey's. She soon dominated the scene, broke through the holy door which divided the Heads' private residence from the school, and was always darting down, in her high heeled shoes, the sacred passage to their sitting room where they shared evening meals together, and enjoyed coffee and cigarettes. Miss Bervon was enchanted by her. We girls all fell under her spell. I was one of the favoured ones who was given "les leçons particuliere, which taught me a great deal and which I thoroughly enjoyed of course.

This was all towards the end of my time and she gave me, when I left, a handsome "Petit Larousse", which I treasure and consult to this day. But now to add to the emotional confusion in high places, Mlle Manileve imported a M la Fontaine for weekends who used to walk in the rose garden with her while we girls watched with romantic eagerness from behind our bedroom curtains. Miss Bervon became more infatuated, Miss Heath Jones more distraite.

After I left Miss Heath Jones had some kind of nervous breakdown, stalked the garden in no clothes at all, (alas! for the lecture on nipples!) and had to go away to a clinic for a time. The school was sold to a group of schools. Mlle Manileve returned to Paris where she set up a successful finishing school. Miss Bervon returned to her first love and lived with Miss Heath Jones until she died and did not survive her very long.

A board of governors was appointed for the school and I was invited and agreed to become one. I served on it till the second world war came in sight, when it was taken over by the insurance company who by then owned the group, for their offices. I fought hard, but ignorantly for its survival, to no good. It was at one of their speech days that I met and grew to know and admire Miss Lilian Faithful, famous headmistress of Cheltenham Ladies College, who persuaded me to join her on the Council of Malvern Girls' College, which I did — but that is another story.

1914

I remember the 1914 war being declared. I remember at breakfast one morning at Clock House, when the dreadful news seemed inevitable, my Father announcing "I shall be ruined", which struck terror and dismay to my thirteen year old heart. War was declared, we read in the newspapers, when we were all staying at Bettws-y-coed on our way to Penrhyndeudraeth for the summer holidays. My Father had taken Brondwyryd from Mrs Andrews for August. I have a vivid picture of all the grown—up young people, after we had been welcomed on our arrival, being so excited at the news. "What fun!" "How exciting!" "We will all join up and show the Germans who we are!" "We'll go to France!" "We'll march to Berlin!" "We'll be back in no time!" But Aunt Eva who had two sons, one to be killed at Loos, turned to my Mother. "They don't know what war means...."

It was that September, when we were home again, that I can remember rows and rows of khaki—clad soldiers marching in a cloud of dust past Clock House; the sound of their boots on the yellow road; their voices as they went by — "It's a long, long way to Tipperary..."

In 1916 we were at Brondwyryd again and had the happiest of holidays. Aunt Eva and Uncle Osmond had left the Castle and were already established at Borthwen. Because of the war a number of Williams relations were in houses all around. Nelto was married now to her and our cousin, Gordon Beazley. He had joined up and Nelto was living with her parents with baby Sam, whom she had recently

produced. He was the thinnest, most naked, baby we had ever seen and in great contrast to Penelope (now King) who was the same age but well covered with both flesh and clothes. Her mother Olive, neé Currey, (Gollywog to us), Elliot-Smith was at Plas Penrhyn while her husband was at sea. Aunt Alice was at Cae-Canol with her faithful adorer, Miss Laming. Inevitably Aunt Alice had flung herself into every local activity and had opened the first Women's Institute Hall to be built in the country. She went on to win the Bardic Chair which is now in the W.I. hall together with a rather charming bust of her. Olwen, recently returned from splendid work at Royamount was, equally inevitably, put out at finding another "Miss Williams" organising the village. But that all passed over our childish heads and the holidays were greatly enjoyed.

1916 (5)

It was that year that my Father decided to leave Clock House. He was successfully building up his Friesian herd and was the dynamic President of the society of that breed. Byfleet was on poor sandy soil and could do nothing to add to the butter fat of the mji.kin herd. Butter fat was of paramount importance and so he decided to move to pastures new. He chose a farm at West Hyde on the borders of Hertfordshire and Middlesex, between Denham and Rickmansworth. The house was an old, small manor house which needed a great deal doing to it, but the farm buildings were in good order and ready for occupation. So the farm implements and the stock were moved in stages by road. By April 1917 it was the turn of the milking herd, the young heifers and bull to make the journey. For some reason it fell to my lot to join this adventure. Joan Williams, a greatly loved cousin who was then acting as my Father's secretary, was to go with me and two herdsmen, a seed drill and a manure rake machines, both of which were almost the width of the road. It was fine, sunny spring weather. We walked most of the way with occasional lifts on the drill or the rake and of course enjoyed every moment of it. The bailiff was always around in, I think, a small car or on a bicycle. We spent the first night in a pub on the way and the second at that in West Hyde. In those days pubs only offered bacon and eggs and beer and that was our diet for the two days. I don't remember how we got back. It must have been in some sort of vehicle. Nor do I remember why I and not Joe, who was a farming enthusiast, was chosen for this expedition. She was not strong and had mysterious diseases, so perhaps that was the reason.

I wish my diary had gone with me, but the pages are blank. I only remember very clearly that I was covered with fleas when I reached home.

I suppose it was necessary for my Father to be near the farm once it had moved, and as the house that we were to live in was far from ready, he bought as a temporary home for his family, a small property called Troy Cottage, in the same straggling village, from a Mrs. Rose. He bought it as it stood s all its furniture in it. Mrs Rose must have been a lady of taste for the furniture was good old country stuff much of which is still about in our families today. The old desk at Dolphins, at which I am writing now and, which I gave to Cherry many years ago and which she has again (1980) - came from there. So did the oak gate legged table at Dolphins, which I gave to Loveday.

He sold Troy Cottage, changing its name to Troy Orchard, to Tommy Humbert and his wife when Pinesfield, our new home, was ready in December 1917.

Pinesfield's, name was also changed to Pynesfield Manor. (Had my Father some folie de grandeur about house names? It almost seems he had, though it is quite out of character.)

I did not care for any of the moves. I believe all children resent leaving their birthplace, being transplanted. Asked what I thought of our new home I said it was a pokey sort of place and it was nicknamed "Hokey Pokey" among us from then on.

That September (1917), we three girls were taken to stay for the last time at Clock House and help with the packing up. My diary reads:-

"September 1st, 1917. Clock House, Byfleet.

After a vile journey (we missed the 11.20 from Waterloo), we arrived here and ever since hard at sorting the furniture into groups of — 'to be sold' — 'to be stored' — and — 'to be left'. Not so grim as I thought but how Mum can openly exult at leaving it all for Hokey Pokey I can't think.

Sept. 2nd
We finished sorting furniture and after lunch we sorted books. A great deal of worthless stuff went but very little that I regretted. For ten minutes we went through the garden — after tea. The place is a wilderness....oh but it is a dear, dear place. If only it was not in Byfleet it could not be left — yet it is too big. The back premises are dreadfully unkempt. There must be heaps of servants. The nursery parts were dreadfully sad. That little staircase, the gate at the top ; the window which I used to long to see the Virginia reach (now it's thick), and the board where Da used to put the meals. Oh it's like a dream — or a book — not like a life lived.

Sept. 3rd
Pack — pack — pack. We had to unearth poor Loveday's things today. It was dreadfully heart breaking — all the things I'd made her and the little notes I sent her. How I adored her — do adore her. It was not so difficult — Loveday dear...

"Not so difficult". In fact the grief was growing dim and my adolescence resented it.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

My school years coincided very closely with the 1914-1918 war. The horror and the despair of it never came very close to me. Towards the end my diary makes mention of the worldwide concern for the losses of lives and the losses of territory that were then filling the papers. In 1916 I remember the school being told, in accents of doom, that Lord Kitchener had been drowned on his way to Russia; the ship he was in, the "Hampshire", and every man in it went down off the north of Scotland. We were all sent out to play cricket after the announcement and I remember feeling appalled and wondering, perhaps for the first time, what would become of us. About that time Miss Street's brother was killed and I, full of distress for her, saw her hurrying through the rose garden on her way home to her Mother. At the beginning of the war poor Betty lost her eldest brother, Lewis, in the Black Watch and very soon afterwards her second brother, Kynoch, was seriously wounded and taken prisoner with the Cameron Highlanders and was held until the war ended. It was some time before they had news of him and I well remember our joy and relief one Sunday morning when she heard he was wounded but alive. She had been to early Church that morning and it seemed to us that her prayers had been answered.

Our family, considering its size, had few casualties. Ossie, the eldest of Uncle Osmond and Aunt Eva's four children, died of wounds received at Loos and that shook and distressed us all. (His daughter, Anne Williams, was born soon afterwards.) We all loved him and he came to Clock House a great deal. He was a splendid creature and was among the first to help form the Welsh Guards. Curiously

enough he commanded the Prince of Wales' company which later, Arthur took over. Aunt Eva continued to knit and to send parcels to the officer in charge until the war ended, but it was not till we became engaged that Arthur discovered that the "Lady Williams" he had been writing to was my Aunt Eva.

A Currey cousin, whom we did not know very well, Winnie Daniels, lost her young husband. He was missing at the beginning of the war and was never heard of again despite Aunt Alice's valiant efforts in Paris with the Red Cross, where she virtually began the missing relatives' section by sitting herself and Miss Laming down at a wooden table with card indexes and ink and taking down all the particulars that distraught relations could provide her with.

Towards the end of 1917 I notice with horror in my diary that a girl who had recently left school and become engaged had heard that her fiancee had been killed flying. Victoria Wingate's brother was killed; she was Sir Reginald Wingate's daughter and a good friend of mine. Vera Britain's fiancée was killed. But it was all a little remote. I suppose having no brothers and being too young to be in love with any man made a difference. When Betty Cumming developed the decimating 1918 'flu my diary floods over with concern and anxiety. But by then the war was over.

I was never conscious of being short of food. Living on a farm of course made things easier, but even at school I never felt hungry or deprived in any way. Our cook at home was a wonderful manager and I suspect that Miss Bervon at School was the same. We had to mow and

roll the tennis lawns ourselves both at school and at home; but that was no hardship though we grumbled about it.

The Christmas holidays of 1917 were the first holidays that Katie and I spent at Pynesfield. By now I was enjoying every moment at school and the holidays were taking second place. I was into my last precious year with a number of good friends, plenty of responsibility, enjoying my work, enjoying my games. The Headmistresses and all the Staff were extremely good to me and I had many privileges. I had been confirmed in the Easter term by the Bishop of Kensington at Walton, and though I was upset that not one of my family except my cousin Joan came to share my experience, I was very glad of her company: (It snowed so hard that she had to stay the night). I loved acting and debating and must have been quite good at both, though not outstanding. I wrote endlessly: letters, essays, my diary. Some of the entries are quite amusing and when I read this, written after I had waited outside Miss Bervon's office, I wonder if I should have been a journalist!

October 22nd. 1917
"Hello! Hello! - Is that Skhoolbred's? - Please talk a little louder! — Well send someone who can hear — yes! — send someone who understands the telephone! I am Miss Heath Jones and Bervon. I want one tin of dubbin. Yes Dubbin! Dubbin!
d,u,b,b,i,n, dubbin. Dubbin! dubbin for boots — boots!
D.U.B.B.I.N. — dubbin! — I've spelt it twice. Yes! And two kegs of soft soap — soft soap — soap! Yes! — Yes! Yes, dubbin! Now can you send those today? Are you sure? Well, if you can't, kindly say so, so that I'll know where I am. Last time you said you'd send a sack of flour and it never came — that was a fortnight ago! Please be so kind as to send it today! Yes. That's all!"

Skhoolbred's was in Tottenham Court Road and St Monica's was near Epsom.

On March 14th 1918 there is this entry which brings the bedtime scene so vividly back to me that I can see it all again:

> "Gladys is reading a letter and doing her hair again with one hand; Kathleen has curled down to byes already; Mary is darning stockings and Eileen is studiously learning her scripture. I'm still out of bed waiting for Miss Blandford (the Matron), whom I can hear talking now. There's a train puffing Londonwards outside. It's very still in here; Gladys has finished her letter and is already half asleep, and Mary's put away her stockings. Miss Blandford is a long time coming. Two maids are saying good night outside my door."

In July 1918 I left St Monica's, if not in a blaze of glory, with a feeling that I had done reasonably well. I had been head girl for a year and had been given the Loveday Lamp that my Father had presented in Loveday's memory to be awarded to the girl who was most helpful in the school. I still have the little replica on the gas fire in my bedroom. There was a large collection of books given me by friends and mistresses of which I was very proud. But my pride was short-lived. Hardly a word was said of my little triumphs. I was hopelessly school-sick and longing for a planned future. The headmistresses were still trying to persuade me to go to College and I was keen to try; but my parents would hardly discuss it. Nothing for my future education was planned. Instead of the cry of parents today which goes out so anxious "What are you going to do?". No one asked me that question that I was longing to discuss.

I must have been a difficult and tiresome girl, writing endless letters to my friends, living for the postman who would bring me as many as five or six letters a day; reading books that my Mother disapproved of as I read them so rapidly that she illogically complained that they were being "skipped". On the other hand I did try to adapt myself to the life that she and Joe were leading. I gardened and looked after the chickens and ducks. Both of us were allowed to have our school friends to stay but tensions rose and at last, in order to get rid of me I suspect, it was arranged that I should live at Aunt Anne's flat at 19 Iverna Court during the week and go home for weekends. My time would be spent going to lectures at King's College, having coaching in mathematics, French lessons with Aunt Alice's friend, Miss Laming, dancing with Miss Nash and Miss Honeywell and elocution lessons with Mrs Matthey, who had given recitals at St Monica's and whom I admired greatly. All this was to be supervised by an imaginary tutor, who would work out a timetable, supervise my work and keep an eye on me. Aunt Anne would act as chaperone when the mathematical gentleman came to give me lessons at her flat.

The tutor never materialised. As I was left to engage her, that was not surprising. Nor was it surprising that with no timetable, no supervision or advice that, except for the elocution lessons, I learned absolutely nothing. I was thrilled to be in London. I went to every theatre that was possible. I accepted every invitation that came my way. I saw my first cinema — Les Miserables at the Coronet Theatre in Notting Hill Gate, and fell, for ever, in love with London.

The London "education" only lasted two terms. The letter writing phase turned to visiting, to parties, to dances. When Betty Cumming was married in June 1919 I was allowed to do a round of visits on my own, unchaperoned, without Joe. I went to the Oakshotts at Bedstone, Cheshire, to be fitted for my bridesmaid's dress at Brown's of Chester. Catherine Oakshott had also been at St Monica's and was a great friend of Betty's and of mine, and she too was to be a bridesmaid. It was a lovely wedding and I enjoyed myself very much. From there I went to Rowallan to stay with Gwyn and Billy Corbett for the Ayr races and the dances. I began and ended the round by staying with Nelto and Gordon Beazley at Eastham on the Wirral. Little Sam was now three years old and, used to come early to my room in his miniscule pyjamas and demand to be read to, which suited us both very well.

All of this was a great adventure for me and a good experience. I was growing up. I discovered that people that I had not met before, who were older than I, found me amusing. I discovered that I could make a large party round a dining room table laugh and listen to some ridiculous story that I told. It was wine to my head and I loved it. I was absolutely innocent, sexually quite ignorant, as many of the girls of my generation were. And somehow one's innocence was a protection. Looking back, later on, I could understand the jokes and stories which were really innocent enough but were then completely over my head. But no one ever tried to involve me in the jokes. Alice Bengough wrote to me the other day

about the innocence of our generation. "I knew how babies got in, but I didn't know how they got out." She was one up on me: I didn't know how they got in. So innuendos and risqué stories passed clean over my stupid head. My Mother had told me that if a man ever said something that I felt to be improper I must draw myself up and say "I'm afraid I don't understand that." I did it once; but never again: the man then explained the story. My Mother's advice was not good.

THE GIBBS BOYS (6)

In December 1919 Joey and I were asked to a dance nearby, given by a Mrs Gordon with whose daughter, Kathleen, I had been at school. In those days girls were expected to bring their own partners. This made it much easier for the hostess, but it was a great disadvantage for the girls who had no brothers. Whom to ask? This was always an anxious question, for mothers and daughters. My Mother did her best to renew acquaintances with people who had sons of the right age, which we, who should have been grateful for her trouble, deeply resented. Now she wrote off to Mrs Gibbs to Birtley House at Bramley in Surrey. Mr Gibbs had acted for my Father as the jobber when he formed the H.M.V. Company and they had become acquainted over that. The wives met and were on visiting terms. Their children came to our parties at Clock House and we children went to theirs. But none of us had met since 1910. They had four children, Arthur, Bryan, Winifred and Marjorie, the youngest by seven years. So now my Mother wrote enquiring after the family. Had the boys come through the war? Would they care to come and stay the weekend and go to the dance with the girls? Of course Joe and I were indignant. We didn't want boys we had not seen for ten years. Why not ask those we knew already? Ronnie Cumming, Dick Agnew, Claude Beasley Robinson? But the Gibbs boys came.

My diary for Tuesday, 30th December 1919 reads:—

> "Arthur and Bryan Gibbs came after tea for the Gordon's dance. They were both awf'lly nice. I liked Arthur best tho' — he's a dear and so nice looking in a kind of attractive ugly way. The dance was great fun — both the boys danced well but, again, I like Arthur's style best. So all round he got most marks — we laughed a great deal. S'pose I was eight when I saw them last. Just Joe and I and they went. We got back about 4 a.m."

With the entry is the little dance programme with green and white ribbons still attached.

Arthur had joined the East Sussex regiment early in 1915 from Oxford. In reply to a request from Bill Murray Threipland he transferred to the Welsh Guards, which Bill had helped to form. He was in France longer than any other officer in the regiment, was wounded once, won the M.C. and was retired in 1919 with the rank of Captain. Bryan also joined the Welsh Guards when his age permitted. He was always asthmatic and was badly gassed, so that he escaped a good deal of active service.

When peace was declared their Father arranged for them to join the stockbrokers' firm, Sir R. W. Carden & Co. It was a small but well established firm of which Mr Pleydel Bouverie was head.

1920

At the end of 1919 my Father had plans to move again. The farm and all the carefully built—up Friesian herd was to be sold (at a great profit, surely) and he was to buy a house in London and wanted nothing better than to live there always. My education at Iverna Court had petered out. But first we were all to visit South Africa with him where he wanted to arrange an importation of their cattle to this country. However his rather crackpot doctor brother, Uncle Leonard, announced that Joe would never survive the journey; my Mother was likewise warned that the drains and the flies and the heat and the dirt were one and all appalling. With this dire warning it was decided that she and her maid with Joe and Katie should go to Switzerland and the South of France while I was booked to go alone with my Papa on the South African expedition at the end of 1920.

Meanwhile, the Spring of 1920 found us all still at Pynesfield and Joe and I occupied ourselves with tennis parties and dances and excursions to London, to lunch with friends and to go to theatres. The hens and ducks occupied a great deal of my time and once I collected as many as fifty two eggs.

I had my hair bobbed by Truefitts in Bond Street and was very pleased with myself though my Mother assured me that I was a 'sight'. In April our parents gave a dance at the Knightsbridge Hotel for their three daughters to celebrate their Silver Wedding and my programme shows that I danced twice with both Arthur and Bryan Gibbs. I went to my first Fourth of June celebrations, which fell on a Friday that year, with the Golds. Angela Gold had been at school with me. I wore a black satin dress with a sash lined with

pale blue and thought I looked stunning. I probably did, but not in the sense I hoped. We stayed for the fireworks and my hand was held in the car on the way home by Mr Gold and I was not at all sure of the implications.

On May 7th 1920 my diary has this entry:—

> "Arthur and Bryan have come for the weekend - both arrived looking like a couple of good undertakers but they are very nice."

They came wearing long black overcoats and they were both very dark: their hair really black, hence, I suppose, this witticism.

The next day, Saturday, reads:-

> "Not very kind weather when we want to entertain! Tried to rain but when we'd mowed and rolled and whitened all the grass land around, had fortified ourselves with oniony peppermint creams and chocolates from the P.O., we had some quite good Sets. Billy & Gwyn (Rowallan) arrived late for lunch in their very beautiful new car and we all played again. They are a nice couple and very popular here.... We danced in the hall with the rugs pushed back after dinner. The Gibbs's are good dancers."

And on Sunday:—

> "I instructed Bryan in the 'hen art' in the morning and he became very enthusiastic, over the ducklings especially. We all went to Church and played tennis, all the afternoon. Perfect day. Blue sky and white clouds and sunshine. I did enjoy it so. Both the Gibbs boys are so nice. I don't know which I like best. Bryan improves 'in the hand' so much and Arthur's a dear...."

On June the fifth the Gibbs boys came again. I came back from London after my Fourth of June outing. Joe and Arthur met me at Denham station. We played tennis all day and danced all evening.

On Sunday:—

> "Mum and Joe went to early Church so the rest of us escaped eleven o'clock and played tennis all day with intervals for

doing the hens and ducklings etc. Bryan's interest was sustained and he did the rounds most faithfully each time."

Then came an invitation for Joe and me to go to the Gibbs' home — Birtley House, in Bramley, near Guildford. (It is now a nursing home for old people).

On June 25th I wrote :—

"Joe and I lunched at Waterloo and she and Bryan and Miss Tatham and I went down by the 1.50. Poor Winsome was in bed with a chill and Mrs Gibbs didn't appear till tea—time so we had a foursome tennis between ourselves. Mr Gibbs, Arthur, Mr Dilberoglue. Mr Harrop and Mr Burrows arrived for tea when we played tennis again. Dance in the evening — about fifteen couples altogether...."

Saturday June 26th.
"Bryan took me down to see the ducks directly after breakfast. Mr Dill, Harrop & Burrows came too. Mr Gibbs said he'd take us three girls to Wimbledon but Miss Tatham said she'd been and wouldn't go. So the men drew lots Joe & I & Arthur & Mr Burrows came. Tilden beat Kingscote after five sets. It was a wonderful game. I enjoyed it all tremendously. We drove there and back in an open car: my hair flew! Lovely Rolls Royce cars Mr Gibbs has. We danced to the gramophone in the dining room after dinner, Mr Griffiths and Mr Keeling joined our numbers!"

The exclamation mark was justified: "Mr Keeling" was Jack with whom Arthur had been at Eton.

"Sunday, June 27th. Birtley House.
Tennis all day, all the time. Poor Winsome still stayed in bed..... After dinner some played billiards and bridge but Arthur and I danced and played the gramophone till the others' came and joined us. Joe had to go early in the afternoon to go with Mum and Daddie to Darlington... Mr Gibbs is very sweet. We got matey and he asked me to stay on tomorrow and go to Wimbledon again, after a consultation with Mrs Gibbs. It's awf'lly kind of them.
Monday June 28th, Birtley House.
Everybody left, except me, by the early train. Mrs Gibbs had had a bad night so said that she wouldn't go to Wimbledon after all. I sat with Winsome all the morning and we made each other's acquaintance. I like her very much. So I drove alone to Wimbledon and saw some wonderful tennis. Mr Gibbs, Arthur and Bryan and Mr Keeling joined me there. Arthur came back in the car with us and we danced.

Mrs Gibbs very sweetly asked me to keep her company and go to Wimbledon again tomorrow. I said 'yes!'.

> Tuesday June 19th. Birtley House.
> Mr Gibbs and Arthur went up early. I sat with Winsome till Mrs Gibbs was ready to start at eleven. She had to see her doctor first at Surbiton. We lunched in the car. Tennis was more wonderful 'n ever. Shimidzu beat Mavrogordato 3—1. Mrs Lambert—Chambers beat Mrs Mallory and Miss Ryan Mrs Patton. (Wot figures!) Tilden beat Garland in the semi—finals. And we saw Patterson play with Lenglen in the doubles. Mrs Gibbs was so nice to me. They are a nice family! Winsome was up when we got back."

The next day I was at Henley with the Gilbey family to watch the Regatta from the Stewards' Enclosure. "Mr Harcourt Gold took me the whole length of the course in the Umpire's steam launch." (Surely I meant 'motor' launch). The Gibbs boys were with us again the next weekend and Mr and Mrs Gibbs and Winsome came for lunch. More tennis and more dancing. And on....

> "Monday July 5th. Pynesfield.
> I'm missing something or somebody: I don't know what or whom but it's rained all day — such a cold rain too — Arthur and Bryan left early of course.."

We went up to London to choose wall papers for the house that had been bought in Pont Street and that was to become our home.

"I chose a grey for mine — and let us hope - Katie's room."

Meanwhile my visit to South Africa with my Father was drawing inexorably nearer. We were to sail in November.

There were many diversions and many young men around in July but Arthur was with us again for another weekend at the beginning of August. He confided to me that Winsome wanted me to be invited to stay with them all in Scotland, which threw me in to some confusion.

> "It's very complicated my knowing. What is Mum going to say if they do ask me and not Joe?... Perfect day — I have loved it."

The following Tuesday there is a
"Very depressed 'hospitable roofer' from Arthur, envying David Evetts (who was still in the army and going out to Mesopotamia), and wishing to come again, for which Mummy seems to hold me responsible! I wish I were!"

The longed for letter did not arrive till August 17th. My Mother and I had filled up the interval with sad rows and disagreements, so perhaps she was thankful to get rid of me. I am of course excited beyond words.

"If I can get a sleeper I am going on Monday! I am sorry they've not asked Joe, but she is perfectly sweet about it — absolutely ripping - I do admire and luff that woman."

If it had not been for my poor Mother's endless defence and jealousy for Joe, how much better the relationship between the two sisters could have been.

MY MOTHER

From my account of my recollections of my childhood and teenage years it is easy to form an unfair impression of my Mother. Let it be said first and fore that she was the most devoted and excellent wife. She adored and idolised my Father. "Daddy says so: that's enough!" The familiar phrase may have irked and infuriated a rebellious girl but it expressed her own faith in his infallibility. She had refused sixteen proposals of marriage and waited with very little encouragement for his for many years. Thus she did not marry till 1894 when she was thirty two; Loveday was born the following year and I not till she was forty one, old enough to be a grandmother, which may have accounted for a great deal.

She flung herself wholeheartedly into all her "darling Trevie's" interests. She endured all the real discomforts of his early motoring fever with enthusiasm. That included having to build a roadside fire in order to make some poker red hot which then had to be inserted in the innards of some early steam machine before it would resume its journey. At the end of every account of their tedious motoring adventures she would write "Trevie drove beautifully!". When his farming interest first began with the home farm at Clock House, she went in for poultry farming and ran a most successful poultry farm, breeding White Wyandotts and Rhode Island Reds that swept up prizes at all the shows He loved dogs. She bred them and won championships, at Crufts, first with big Poodles and later Dandy Dinmonts. Their last loves, when they had given up showing, were Corgis. She would give up days to watch him play in his croquet tournaments and applaud his prowess. She kept a very

good table and the dishes he preferred were those most often presented. There was always a cold creamy rice pudding, no matter what the other sweet might be, at lunch time. When in his later days he turned to gardening, she made it her great interest and learned all that she could, listing and memorising the long Latin names and working for hours on end in overalls and boot and gloves and vei1s in the woods at Dromenagh. When she was well over sixty she moved huge boulders to make a rockery of staggering beauty. Eventually the Dromenagh wood garden at Iver Heath became quite famous and it was due almost entirely to her unflagging love and interest and very hard work, and this despite her real love which was for herbaceous borders, roses and garden flowers.

She was entirely unintellectual although she had a very pretty handwriting. Socially the Fullertons were above the Williams family, in that class—conscious age, knowing all the huntjn', shootjn' and county sets; but except for being teased about it by my Father she never volunteered the slightest hint of it herself. One of her ancestors was George Downing, a politician of little merit. But he gave his name to Downing Street and to Downing College, Cambridge, where the family portraits now hang that I remember as a child in my grandmother's (later Aunt Nell's) dining room in Pennington Chase.

She did what she thought was right in the village. She started and was the president of the Women's Institute. She attended the parish Church, St Margaret regularly and in her old age was on the Parish Church Council and was the People's Warden of the Parish from 1929 until 1941. She took a generous and leading part in improving the interior of the Victorian Church. But what I like best to remember about her good works is that she gave regular evening

lessons to a village boy who she found could neither read nor write, and persevered until he was literate.

Her house was always open to convalescent nephews and nieces. She put us and our children, our nurses and nursemaid up at Christmas and Easter and in the summer for as long as we found it convenient to ourselves to be there. And we took it for granted.....

Looking back from my great age now, I realise that I showed her far less gratitude and loving understanding than she well deserved. No doubt that I was self—willed, "too-clever-by-half" and an irritating child. Somehow we were both unable to draw from the stream of affection which was common to us; we were both conscious of it but could never synchronise our attempts to drink from it. She had the experience of age to help her; I possessed but chose not to use, in this case, the intelligence which should have helped me. Thus we never communicated at any but a superficial level; I would brush aside her attempts to come closer to me and she was quite unable to understand my thorny approaches to her.

I missed a great deal and only old age has convinced me that much of the fault lay with the child and not by any means all with the parent.

GETTING ENGAGED (7)

The Dornoch visit to the Gibbs family came up to all my expectations. It was my first experience of travelling at night and the comfortable little sleeper with all its mysteries delighted me. Breakfast in those days was handed in at Aviemore, packed in a wicker basket. I changed at Inverness and Mrs Gibbs met me at the station, curiously called "The Mound". 'Mr Gibbs owned Grange, a large house overlooking the golf course and the sea. (It is now a hotel.) Everybody played golf; I was the exception. Arthur tried to teach me but I decided that I was better cut out to be a caddy. Joyce Wethered and her brother Roger were staying nearby and her marvellous golf was already claiming attention. We went for splendid walks, played a lot of tennis and were taken for really beautiful drives in Mr Gibbs' exquisite cars. In the evenings we danced to the gramophone or played paper games.

It was at Dornoch that I came to know Arthur well; to admire his gentle, courageous character and finally to love him. He was always calm and unruffled in a family threatened with storms; we shared our sense of humour. We found we had a taste in common for poetry arid books. He seemed to me to be a "very gentil parfit knight." He left a week before I did and it did not seem to be such fun after he went.

On my way back I stayed again at Rowallan for the Western Meeting. There was a large house party of amusing people and we danced into the small hours.

Returned to London, I found the move to 53 Pont Street well under way. The first evening Arthur and Bryan took Joe and me to see "Wedding Bells" with Gladys Cooper and Owen Nares playing the leads.

Although we pushed and dragged furniture and sorted books by day, the evenings were happily occupied with dances and theatres and concerts. We heard Tetrazzinj. sing at the Albert Hall and Heifetz give his opening concert at the Queen's Hall. (Arthur was there).

September had arrived, and our sailing on the "Walmer Castle" for November 19th had been confirmed.

> On November 1st 1920 my diary has this:—
> "Arthur. rang up at crack of dawn, having arrived in Town at 3 am from Welsh Wales — wanted me to go to the Crystal Palace War Museum. Mum was furious. I said yes and told him to come quickly. Critical breakfast wherein Mum hurled abuse and quoted 'fast girls' to me. Katie was sent with us as chaperone. Arthur arrived at 9.45 and shook the dust of this place off our feet quickly. Awf'lly int'resting place the Museum. Lunched there.....Arthur stayed here for dinner."

I have no recollection of poor Katie tagging along as chaperone. I suspect she went off on her own business.

The plans for wintering abroad were getting under way and I went off to obtain my Father's and my first passports in order to Sail to South Africa on the 19th.

> On <u>Tuesday 9th November</u> there is this entry:— "Arthur rang up during breakfast: said he wanted me to choose my birthday present at Briggs in Piccadilly and have tea at Rumplemayers. I demurred but consented. Mum was very doubtful when I told her. However I went. We walked back. I do wish I knew whether he cared at all or not. Mummy says he's a monster if he doesn't; but this is so foolish. Still, I wish he wasn't quite so secretive.
>
> But on the 10th:
>
> "The dance. The marvellous thing happened. Arthur does love me. Of course I've loved him all along really. We're going to be married. it was the most marvellous dance. Olwen and

Neville (Smyth) gave a dinner party first at the Hyde Park. We danced and danced. And walked home."

We walked back to Pont Street down Pavilion Road and under a lamp post, just before the turning, I had my first kiss.

The next nine days were a whirl of happiness and congratulations and letters, of goodbyes and farewells and partings. Till, finally, on November 19th on board the "Walmer Castle" I wrote:—

Friday 19th November 1920
Mum and Joe and Kate and Buckledee went first. Daddy and I by the 11.10 from Waterloo.....The Needles in the moonlight looked so lovely as we came away — Why have I come? O Arthur — —

SOUTH AFRICA

It must have been disappointing for my Father to find himself saddled with a companion who was a lovesick girl obsessed with the arrival and departure of the mail-ships and counting the days to her return, instead of the not unattractive daughter of just twenty years old who could enter wholeheartedly in to the excitement of his South African tour. I hope I disguised my feelings better than my diary exposes them so clearly. There was one moment when he decided to prolong our stay by a week when the diary becomes almost hysterical with frustration, self pity and grief. A whole week! Can't he understand? How can I endure such disappointment? I didn't cry though there was a struggle to keep the tears back when the passage was finally altered and as sulking was never my forte perhaps he was unaware of my seething bosom.

I am not going to write here of the extraordinarily interesting journey that we embarked upon as it is all written up in the day by day diaries of 1920-1921. Also, perhaps easier to read, are the letters that poured out almost daily to Arthur during that time, which, ten years later, I edited, had typed and bound in hardback and gave to my Father as a memento of our time together. They are bound in dark blue half leather titled "Letters from South Africa" and are on a shelf in my bedroom with my other writings. I think you would find them worth reading, especially if you ever go to that beautiful, intriguing and now deeply unhappy country.

Although the contemporary opinion was that the importation of fresh Friesian blood was not so successful as that which, again, my Father was responsible for in 1914, time has proved otherwise. In

"British Friesians a History of the Breed" by J.K. Stanford, you will read on p.100 "Among those imported, one a yearling, was destined under his later name of Terling Marthus, to become more famous than any other bull in the history of the British Friesian breed, before or since." He had been bred the year we were there in the Golden Valley Citrus Estates in Natal.

After we had landed for a few hours in Madeira, the sea became calm and the skies blue and even the silly lovesick girl could not be otherwise than excited and delighted. You must remember I had never been out of England before. In those days the voyage took nearly three weeks. When we arrived at Cape Town we went straight to the Mount Nelson Hotel, which was still a quite small family hotel. There my Father was met by the South African members of the Friesian Society and his itinerary was discussed and planned. We went for many drives from there and were shown all the nearby Friesian herds. We landed the first week in December and by the time that we left in March we must have travelled thousands of miles by car and train. We stayed with farmers of all income groups: rich prosperous men with lovely houses and farms and with small Boer farmers where it was not comfortable at all. Sometimes we were in big cars bumping across the veld where there seemed to be no roads, sometimes in crowded hot trains where we had to share sleepers and where the red dust seeped in covering us and the already grimy carriages. My Father was an excellent traveller and hardly ever complained while I found everything novel, extraordinary and very good fun. We went to East London and Port Elizabeth, to Maritzburg, the Mooi River and Durban. We saw the Howick Falls and passed through Ladysmith, famous for the siege in the Boer War. We travelled through Natal, where we visited

the Golden Valley Citrus Estates, and stayed at Durban. We crossed the Karoo desert and stayed in the Orange Free State. When we reached Bulawayo, we visited Government House and drove out to the Matoppos Hills. We stayed several days at the Victoria Falls and crossed the Zambezi River. The altitude at Johannesburg upset my Father but nothing affected me. On the way out we met Cicely Noel, whom we always called Harriet, and who later because Chance; also on the "Walmer Castle" were the Albu family. Alice was among them, who later married Nigel Bengough and both Alice and Harriet became my life—long friends. Sir David and Lady Graaff (Eileeri) entertained us at the Cape when another real and lasting friendship was formed.

THE WEDDING

The 19th March we set sail for home, Arthur and my Mother met us at Southampton. Arthur and I drove to Birtley. It was 4th April and the beginning of one of the rare hot Eng1ish summers.

Then there was all the excitement of the wedding arrangements for June 24th which was Arthur's birthday. Invitations, presents, house hunting and plans of all sorts were made. I had a fine trousseau with a dozen of everything: chemises, drawers, bust— bodices and nightgowns of fine lawn and lace, threaded with ribbons wherever possible. After many discussions and arguments between the two fathers as to who was to pay the one thousand pounds premium for it, we took a flat, number 18, in Culford Mansions, Cadogan Gardens, near Peter Jones.

Our wedding day was beautiful. We were married at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street from 53 Pont Street. Joe and Katie, Winsome and Marjorie and Catherine Oakshott and Angela Gold, school friends, were bridesmaids. Bryan was Arthur's best man. We went to Lynmouth, in north Devonshire, for our honeymoon. At the last moment my Father gave me five pounds so that we could have a private sitting room at our hotel. This set the seal on our happiness. And so we lived happily ever after.....

HONEYMOON

After the wedding reception at 53 Pont Street, we drove down to Birtley where my sweet Mother-in-law, Leila, had arranged a lovely little dinner for us before we drove back to Claridges. The next day, rather bemused by all that I had learned, we took the train from Paddington. Although it was such a hot summer I wore a grey worsted coat and skirt, a silk jumper, grey suede lace—up shoes and silk stockings and, of course, a hat and gloves. I must have felt very hot. My grey going—away dress with its green lined cloak, that later Orpen painted me in, I suppose was considered too smart for travelling. The guard took one look at us, pulled down the blinds and told us he was locking the door till we started. I thought that very kind of him. Arthur had bought me a box of Nestlé's chocolates, each individual piece done up in red silver-lined paper. I offered him one which he refused. I ate first one and then another. When I started on the second row Arthur looked concerned. "Are you very hungry?" he asked. "No" I replied, "not really." I continued eating. When the box was finished Arthur looked anxiously at me. "Did you really enjoy all those?" "Enormously", I replied "I have never before been allowed to eat chocolates without sharing them. I have never had a whole box to myself in all my life and it is a great treat to eat them all myself." Married life I thought was very good. I wonder what Arthur thought.

Our honeymoon at Lynmouth was a very happy one, though I was disappointed to find that the sands were grey not golden. We walked and bathed a great deal. A boatman used to row us to a little cove which was inaccessible except by water and there we would picnic and

bathe and spend the day. I demonstrated the joys of bathing naked and Arthur was surprised but followed my lead with delight. From Lynmouth we went to stay with Aunt Nell Fullerton at Penrtington, where my Mother and Joe were waiting to meet us, Joe met us at Brockenhurst station and told us that Mr Pleydell Bouverie, the head of Arthur's firm, had died suddenly. Arthur had to return to London at once. Overnight he had become senior partner of the firm. It was a great responsibility and his experience seemed insufficient. But he managed to control the situation and under his leadership Sir R.W. Carden & Co became one of the leading stockbrokers in the city.

Our small flat in Cuiford Mansions had a small drawing room, a smaller dining room, a small bedroom and much smaller dressing room; two bathrooms & w.c.'s, a kitchen, a maid's room and a spare room. It was exactly what we wanted. We crammed two maids in to the maids' room and what they occupied themselves with I do not rightly know, except that the cook stole the milk money and the house parlourmaid at our first party put the toast rack ring on her little finger and went round the table crying "Toast! Toast!". Arthur was bitterly ashamed: I thought it rather funny.'

I suppose that I was little different to my contemporaries who also were married when they were barely out of their teens, but no-one could have been less equipped to run any establishment, however small, than I. I knew absolutely nothing. I had never troubled to watch the cook prepare a dish. I had never washed even my stockings out. I had no idea how to set about cleaning a room. I still can't scrub a floor nor am I to be trusted to clean out a bath properly. Servants did everything, and servants were always there. Anything that had to be cleaned, mended, cooked or disposed of, the

appropriate servant would be asked to do it. And all the servants that I had met knew how to do things correctly. They were professional experts. But those my Mother engaged for me, Pullen the cook and Tuckwell the house—parlourmaid, were poorly paid, even for those days and were not, despite their references, expert at anything. Poor Arthur! I was quite happy. I didn't mind what I ate, nor what the food was like. If we had boiled potatoes without butter or parsley, every day, why worry? Arthur learned to carve at Olliffs the butcher but I didn't learn how to produce a good roast. It seemed to me unimportant. Life was lovely. Arthur was lovely. Everything was lovely. My only anxiety was that I should prove barren. Six weeks of married life and I had not started a baby. Despair set in. A baby was now what I most longed for. I did not have to wait long and then my cup of happiness was really full. I would sit in a bus and look at everybody and say to myself "You don't know what I know! You don't know that I am going to have a baby! No-one knows except Arthur and me.....My baby!-. Our baby! On it's way...."

ORPEN'S PORTRAIT OF ME

Among the many regular visitors to Clock House when I was a small child, was Mr Johnson. But he was different. At first he came always alone. Later Mrs Johnson might come and last of all when we were about nine or ten, Fenimore their only son came, whose age was between Joe's and mine. Mr Johnson was a very large, heavy man with a quiet voice and an American accent which we children had never encountered before. Eldridge R. Johnson had been an inventor and the owner of the Improved Gramophone which he had needed to sell over here. My father formed a small company in order to buy and market the machine.

If you want to read more about the beginnings of "His Master's Voice" you will find it all in the Monograph I wrote about my Father and of which all four children and some grand children were given copies. Also "The Fabulous Phonograph" by Roland Gelat which is in the glass—fronted bookcase.

It was thus that a close and enduring friendship was formed between the two men as they built up between them the huge business known later as "His Master's Voice"; this friendship lasted all their lives. So from time to time Mr Johnson would appear and was, I imagine, captivated by our way of life and the four little girls who would gather round him to stare at this amazing stranger from so far away. For some reason he fancied me and when he arrived he would bring presents for each of us: three of them were all the same but one was always different. "Here", he would say handing the three little parcels to my sisters, "these are for you; but Barbara, this

is yours." And mine was always a little different, a little better, a little 'special'.

One year they were diamond brooches, another gold compact boxes, (still has mine), once we all had gold pencils and one year we had enamel Cartier clocks. Mine alone had diamond hands and studs and still keeps the time for me in my bedroom. Later on Fenimore came to stay with us by himself while his parents travelled on the continent. Joe and I had good fun that Summer when he would take us in the canoe and we fell in and out of the lake.

Later on still, I had the impression that Mr Johnson hoped that Fenimore and I would marry, but I am only sure of that because when I went to tell my parents that Arthur and I were engaged my Father, who was shaving at the time, said "Good God! What will Johnson say!" If Mr Johnson was disappointed about it, he was very generous, for he wrote to my father to say that he wanted to give me as a wedding present my portrait painted by the best artist available and the price didn't matter.

A little while before that my Father had had his portrait painted by Sir William Orpen as a recognition of the work he had done for the Friesian Society. It was an excellent picture and my Father had enjoyed his sittings. There were however other contestants. Our cousin Charles Romer Williams (Aunt Dora Williams had married Romer Williams, who was a solicitor and no relation). Charles was their only son, a good looking fascinating, unreliable character, who had been in the Welsh Guards with Arthur and was in 1920 working in Agnew's Gallery in Bond Street, Arthur and I went to his flat in St. James's Street frequently and were very fond of him.

He wanted James McEvoy to paint me, or Oswald Birley. I imagine that Agnews were agents for them. We met McEvoy and Birley with Charles several times and McEvoy did two pencil sketches of me. One still exists in one of my portfolios; the other unfortunately was done on Charles' marble mantle piece. But his scheme came to nothing. Arthur and I preferred Orpen's portraits and he was my Father's choice. (Oswald Birley eventually painted my Mother's portrait, which is now owned by Donald Hutchison.) I was rather disinterested and would have preferred the fifteen hundred pounds which was the price named. But then I had a letter from Mr Johnson. I wish that I had kept it. What he said, in effect, was you know you would rather have today the pearl necklace that the artist's fee would buy you; one day in the future your husband will give you those pearls but he will never be able to have you painted as you are today" That letter should and did console a greedy girl.

So I was painted by Orpen and sat for him directly after my wedding. We both enjoyed the sittings. After a while I confessed to him that I was having a baby and he was full of care and anxiety and consideration for me. On one occasion when he thought I looked a little tired he insisted on taking me home in a taxi. He drew a very funny picture of it in his autobiography, which he gave me with an amusing dedication, which book David now has. I sat five or six times for him that October and the portrait was hung in the Royal Academy the following Spring. It was a good picture and it has given us all a great deal of pleasure. I still have the catalogue. For some reason it was reproduced in the Children's Encyclopaedia within the next year or two. In February 1926 Sir William Orpen wrote to me asking to have another look at this portrait of me. He had, he said,

been ill in 1921 and believed his colour values at that time were faulty. I took the portrait round to him in his studio, gave him two sittings, and he lightened the colour of the skin, as we see it today.

DAVID IS BORN (8)

The year 1921 was the last that I kept a large diary. After that come the 'Year by Year' Books: five years to one page with little but facts recorded.

On May 10th Nurse Gibson, the "monthly nurse" arrived and was crushed in to the tiny spare room that was now to be the day and night nursery. Somehow I had been inspired to try and sew, which had never been a strong point with me, and I now managed to produce little nightdresses and frocks, with insertion and lace and tucks, all of course long, hanging a foot or so below the expected baby's feet. Flannel petticoats, with scalloped edges, worked over a mauve transfer, were raade by my delighted hands. My family were astonished at this sudden flowering of an unsuspected talent.

On May 26th, Friday, David was born at 1.30 pm in our flat, Sir Sidney Beauchamp, who had endorsed my belief in the child's conception, had been tragically killed by a bus two hours after my last appointment with him. So now Dr Drysdale officiated. Twilight Sleep was the fashionable drug at that time; and it was really a complete anaesthetic. When the pain became bad I was "put under" completely and knew no more till I heard a baby crying (that most magical sound in the world) and then the doctor shouting — "Wake up, Mrs Gibbs! Wake Up! You have a baby!" "Ah! Ha!" I said drunkenly, "A baby! That means it's a girl!" "No, it's not," the doctor shouted again: "It's a boy! Did you want a boy?"

Did I want a boy? I had never thought of any else. Yet I must have had doubts, for that first reaction exposed my anxiety. But a

boy it was, already named David Arthur after my two grandfathers and his father.

He cried unceasingly. I could not nurse him though I tried and tried till I cried too. He would not, could not, suck. So all the misery of drawing off milk and bottle—feeding resulted. In fact having a baby was fine; but having had one was not all joy. My Mother insisted on my being Churched so I was unwillingly taken in her car to Holy Trinity and hated every moment of what I considered a barbaric service. Is any woman ever churched today? On our wedding anniversary David was christened, again at Holy Trinity. I don't remember much about it, but from the photographs it is all too clear that I had not had my going away cloak ironed, which I wore for the occasion, I didn't feel well. The reliable, dear monthly nurse left; an unreliable, not endearing, nurse came, called Nurse Levy. I felt so peculiar that I had to see the doctor, who told me to go to bed and lie on my face for four days. I had a prolepsis of my womb, he said. I had no idea what he meant. He said he could insert a rubber ring which horrified me. I have never made any headway with rubber contraptions and this one was a nightmare. But the nightmare didn't last long. My womb recovered its poise, and the rubber ring went to the back of the medicine cupboard.

My parents took a house at Eastbourne from the Heneker Heatons and we went there to stay at the end of July with David and the nurse. David still cried and grew thinner and it was then, at my Mother's instigation, that darling Nanny Brown came to our rescue. She said he was having food that was too rich; she cut down his diet, gave him less more often, and he stopped crying and began to put on weight. We stayed out of London, visiting Olwen and Neville

Smyth at Marazion in Cornwall, as well as Eastbourne, until the middle of October.

Christmas was spent at Birtley, the Gibbs' house, and I began to discover for myself the cracks in that unhappy family ménage.

NEW FRIENDS

During the first months of our lives together, I met Arthur's friends, made enduring friendships for myself and rejected others. The Lisburnes, the Allan Perrrins, Walter Bonn, Bob Bonsor, were among those that I liked best. Crosswood in Cardiganshire, the Lisburne's place, was the first house that I visited with my young husband. We went there for a shooting party and travelled all day by train. I wore my new Busvine coat and skirt that Arthur had given me, but Reggie (Rowena was her Chilean name) was wearing black satin when she rose to greet us from behind the silver tray, covered with silver tea things. The house was huge and had all been done up by them since their marriage just before the war. All the Victorian bamboo furniture was banished to the attics, and the Chippendale, the old oak furniture and some four—posters, rescued from the servants' rooms, attics and cellars and from cottages on the estate. Reggie had unerring taste and a fortune with which to gratify it. She taught me, with Arthur, about furniture, decoration and clothes. I owe her an inestimable debt. We became close friends and saw a great deal of each other from then on to her death in early 1944. Ernest Lisburne had been in the Welsh Guards with Arthur, who became his stockbroker and adviser. Visits to Crosswood became a regular feature of our lives, as did week—ends with the Perrins at Hartlebury, near Worcester. With the Borins I met Mrs Henderson, a strange, rich old widow who lived in Rutland Gate. She was a philanthropist and introduced me to hospital— visiting in Poplar, scolded me for having a second baby; she had financed the Windmill Theatre, the "Music-hall That Never Shut", so that music hall

artists who were out of work, because of the new popularity of the cinema, managed to survive. One often heard of Van Damm who ran the "Windmill", but never of the redoubtable Mrs Henderson, who had financed what appeared to be a hopeless venture but which proved a huge financial success, and a life—line to the music—hall tradition.

THE WIRELESS

Not only were cinemas changing the pattern of entertainment, but the so-called "wireless" had arrived. On January 17th 1923 my diary records (squeezed into six short lines) :—

"Dined in Pont Street. Eric Dunstan there with a portable 'listening—in' set. Heard by wireless Melba singing as 'Mimi' at the Opera House in 'La Boh' Amazing. Could hear applause and calls. Danced afterwards at the Mullens' in Belgrave Square."

Later Arthur made his own wireless set and on April 23rd 1924 I took a whole page at the back of my diary to write:—

"I listened on Arthur's little home-made crystal set to the official opening of Wembley all the morning. It was most wonderful. I heard everything — the massed bands playing, the cheering of the crowds, the singing of the ten thousand voices of the choir — an aeroplane droning above the stadium and then tumultuous cheers as the Royal carriages arrived heralded by a fanfare of trumpets. It was most moving. And then every syllable of the Prince of Wales' address of welcome as President of the Exhibition — even to slight huskiness as he began his speech. And the King's reply, most beautifully enunciated, so that no fraction of a word was lost, as clear and distinct as though he were talking in the room to me.

Finally the Bishop of London's collect and the familiar words of the Lord's prayer and then more singing — "Land of Hope & Glory" — more massed bands — more cheering from thousands of throats — and "London's Calling:" that finished the programme.

We all went to Wembley often than summer and explored its many entertainments, its restaurants, exhibitions and amusements. It was great fun and the smart thing to do.

ALBION STREET 1924

We had moved from the flat in Culford Mansions in June 1923, having bought a house in Albion Street, north of the Park, from W.L. George, the novelist. It was a three storey, double fronted house, where we could have a night; as well as a day nursery. It looked over the old churchyard at the back, which was then being used as an archery ground; it was very close to the Park and suited us well for the next two years. In the war our house, number 26, suffered a direct hit and was never rebuilt. The space where it once stood is now the entrance to the new complex behind Albion Street.

Meanwhile my family had left Pont Street. My Father had bought Dromenagh at Iver Heath, not far from Denham and West Hyde, where we had lived before. They moved there in March 1923. My parents lived out their lives there and both Joe and Katie were married from there in 1926.

"New house, new baby". In February 1924 I found I was having another child and, though this time I felt wretchedly sick, was delighted at the prospect.

But the next month I had other concerns. My dear Nanny Brown fell desperately ill with pneumonia. This was long before the time of even penicillin and she very nearly died. Although we were living economically — (1922 and 1923 were the beginning of the slump) — we had no hesitation in hiring a day and night nurse for her and, later on, when she began to recover and was mercifully out of danger, in sending her to Aunt Jinnie's private nursing home, The Nook, in Hampstead, to convalesce. How impossible that would be today for any young couple of slender (or affluent) means! These were the days

when there was no National Health Service. Hospitals were held in some horror, and as soon as my Nanny became seriously ill, she implored me "Don't let them take me away to hospital!". But when she did recover she felt she could not continue to look after David and another new baby, so sadly decided finally to retire and go back to her home in Wiltshire. There followed a succession of temporary nurses, and not till Loveday was born were we settled with Nurse Hunt, known henceforth as 'Nanto'.

PRESENTATION AT COURT

Moving house and illness are both expensive, so when we were asked if we would let 26 Albion Street for fifteen guineas a week for the season, we agreed. We found a pretty, old house in the centre of Denham village, which belonged to Basil Loder and his wife Kate. They only asked half the rent that we would be receiving which suited us very well. It was near the station so that Arthur could walk by a footpath across the fields to catch his train each morning, and David and I would go to meet him in the evenings.

We had a very happy summer there. Dromenagh was only two or three miles away. Katie had acquired a pony and trap and she used to visit me and take us for drives. Lady Victoria and Frank Braithwaite lived across the road and were kind to us. She was the mother of the large Plunket family, some of whom Arthur already knew; I came to know "Mike" (Mrs Effie Smith) and Eileen Plunket very well.

As Arthur had been in the Brigade of Guards, he was entitled to go to the Royal Enclosure at Ascot; but I had never been presented at Court, and this was necessary if we were to go, as we

planned to do, the following summer. My Mother had failed to present any of her daughters, though she had been the seventh daughter presented by her Mother to Queen Victoria. The war no doubt was the excuse, but I think she had not been presented on her marriage which of course she should have been. So Reggie Lisburne, who was always good for a party, and wanted to present her sister, offered to present me at the same "drawing room". So on June 27th, four months pregnant, but undaunted, I set off in my new finery for Buckingham Palace in the Lisburne car, with Reggie and "the Flapper" her sister who became Mrs George Phillipe. The Court dress followed rigid rules laid down by the Lord Chamberlain's office; "long evening dresses with Court trains suspended from the shoulders, white veils with ostrich feathers will be worn on the head.....gloves must be worn. Veils to be no longer than forty five inches. Three small white feathers — the Prince of Wales Plume — must be worn slightly on the left side of the head."

It was very exciting, and once inside Buckingham Palace a wonderful sight to see. There was one moment, after the presentations when the alarming curtsey was safely over, which I still remember vividly. The Royal Party had disappeared for their supper and now reappeared to walk in procession through the big drawing room. We had all been marshalled in there, making a deep corridor through which they could pass. As King George Vth and Queen Mary went by, the ladies all curtsied deeply, and the rows of white feathers dipping in sequence and unison looked for all the world like breaking surf. It was glorious. The women looked magnificent and Reggie, who was a notable beauty, more than held her own. She had come out just before the 1914 war and was one of the last great

beauties that people stood up on the benches in the Park to see drive past. Her dark eyes were enormous and her mouth perfectly shaped. Orpern and Birley and Kelly all painted her — Gerald Kelly several times.

LOVEDAY BORN (9)

After what seemed to me a long wait, (Nurse Gibson had been with us since October 13th), Loveday was born at Albion Street on November 1st 1924. I had chloroform for the last half hour and she weighed ten pounds. She was strong and splendid and had no difficulty in helping herself to the goodness that I was able to produce so generously. We were very happy, cuddling, and well satisfied; this excellent arrangement went on to the beginning of April.

I did not get up out of bed for three weeks; such was then the comfortable fashion. I went, when the baby was over a month old, for my first drive in a hired car, which cost thirty shillings. Loveday Catherine was christened on December 10th in the little chapel of Ascension which was next door to Albion Street, facing Bayswater Road. It was, sadly, wrecked by a bomb in the war and was never rebuilt. There was such a thick fog that day that the Birtley party, driving home by car, had to stop the night in Wimbledon: it was impossible to drive further.

Meanwhile a very pretty and amusing Irish girl, known to us as Rosebud, had come into our lives. She was the eldest daughter of the Earl of Carrick; the family name was Butler. She had married an unexceptionable chap called Lionel Gallwey-Robertson. They had a small son called Patrick.

Arthur and I first met her at a dance that the Swaythlings gave in Kensington Square, very soon after we were married. We met, went to each other's houses, liked each other. But soon Bryan began to go about with her, and we watched with some dismay, his

entanglement. None of us had the sense to get him to ta1k about it. I still believe that had Arthur or I done just that, things might have turned out differently. It became known that she was unhappy with Lionel. The now inevitable divorce took place. Bryan announced his intention of marrying her, and they were married on June 9th 1925 at the Kensington Registry Office. Arthur went to the ceremony but I was in Devonshire.

1925

Somerset was born a little too soon afterwards. We were told that his finger nails were not quite formed; but no-one checked up on that.

That next year (1925) we gave our first dinner party of eight for the Hoys, the Akers-Douglas and the Keelings. I took the babies to be photographed by Speaight. We watched tennis at Wimbledon and went to the races and filled our weekends with pleasure. Although Arthur was most conscientious and devoted to his work at the office, he could take days off when he wanted. We let Albion again that summer and I and the two babies stayed at, and Arthur commuted from, Dromenagh and Birtley. Papa Gibbs lent us his house, Mollycombe, at Thurlestone in Devonshire for a month and I took David and Loveday there for a seaside holiday. Arthur came for two weekends and old Nanny Brown and my Mother visited me. We went there again and again and after Mollycombe and continued to visit it from the Links Hotel until 1935.

On November 19th, back in London, my diary records "Tea with Dot (Kee1ing) to see new baby Michael."

Christmas was spent at Birtley; it was a disastrous holiday. Open war between the parents was going on, and Papa would not join us for meals, but had his served in the morning room, alone. We never spent Christmas there again.

1925 was a very happy time for us. We went to the theatre a great deal and saw marvellous plays, musicals and cinemas. I had loved the "Immortal Hour". Now as I became more sophisticated, the Noel Coward plays delighted me. We saw him act in his first play that year "The Young Idea" and I was put off by his clipped, staccato way of talking which was very pronounced even then. Cecily Courtneidge's father, who owned a number of theatres, had put it on, and as it was hanging fire, he lent a box to the Keelings. Dot's parents knew the Courtneidges, so Dot and Jack took us. We had no idea then that we were seeing the birth of a star that was to entertain us all our lives. "The Young Idea" was followed by "The Vortex", which we went up to Hampstead to see. We saw Hardy's dramatised "Tess" at the Barnes Theatre. Arthur took me to see it, but I cried so bitterly in the bus on the way home that my young husband grew quite concerned. We saw "The Ware Case", "The Last of Mrs Cheyney", "The Moon and Sixpence", "The Man in Dress Clothes", "The Co-Optimists"; Binnie Hale in "No, No, Nannette" was hitting the headlines that year. Charlie Chaplin was showing in "The Gold Rush". We went to "Chauve Souris" and had the excitement of the Russian Ballet. We always went to the play with Billy and Gwyn Rowallan when they came to London, and they sometimes stayed with us.

Many years after, in 1933, I went with a friend to see "The Lake". We sat in the Dress Circle. At one point in the play the

heroine, played by Marie Ney, and her young lover decide to elope. A dreadful car accident kills the young man but the girl, shaken and shocked, survives. An argument takes place on stage as whether she shall be told when she arrives of her lover's death. We hear her approaching and one character announces that she must be told the terrible news and that it his duty to tell her. But I, in my Dress Circle seat, decided differently and rose in anguish crying out "No! No! Don't tell her! Don't tell her!" I was hurriedly pulled back into my seat and could not, for a moment, think what had happened. Quite recently I met Marie Ney, now an old lady, with Sam Beazley, and told her the story. She was delighted. "I must have given a very good performance!" she said. And so she had.

We dined out and played bridge; we played tennis. We danced in private houses, at the Savoy and the Cafe de Paris, the Berkeley and the Embassy. Before the war we always wore long dresses in the evening, for dining out or going to the theatre, and the men wore dinner jackets and stiff shirts or white ties for first nights or the opera. The theatre was a social evening. One always knew two or three couples in the audience. There was time for a short dinner beforehand and supper afterwards. The plays never began before eight. There was no difficulty then for actors and stage hands getting home by public transport. Many of them lived out of London and could count on trains taking them back to Brighton or Maidenhead well after midnight.

ROWALLAN AND HOLIDAYS

Every year, from 1923 until 1933, we went up to Rowallan for Arthur's holiday, taking David at eighteen months old and Loveday when she was under a year. The first year David and his nurse went in a double first class sleeper, while Arthur and I sat up in a third class carriage. But by 1925 we could afford two double sleepers: Gwyn would keep the babies for us when we went off to shooting invitations, and they settled in with Nanny McKinnon in the large nursery suite. Each year it seemed we had more invitations and went to St. Andrew's where the Grimonds, Gwyn's parents lived; to the Perrins' shoot at Damore, Alness; the Mackie-Campbells at Stonefield on Loch Fyne; Murthley Castle, which the Jack Mullens took for several years; Stobo which belonged to the Murray Philipsons (Monica Beazley-Robinson had married Hiltie) and to old Bill Murray-Threipland in Caithness. Arthur was a very good shot and I suppose I was not such a social dead-weight as to cancel his popularity. After one or two of these excursions, we would return to Rowallan, stay a few more days there, collect the babies and return south. This easy pattern for our summer holidays, made possible only by the Corbetts' endless hospitality, generosity and kindness, included the children and Nanny, until Cherry was born in 1928. She went with us, still in arms, that first year of her life. After that we arranged seaside holidays for them while Arthur and I went to Scotland, at Sea View on the Isle of Wight, West Worthing and then Frinton for six years running. It surely must have been a relief to our long suffering hosts, although after missing one year at Rowallan, David did continue to come with us there. Attie Corbett

was only a month older than Loveday, so David came between him and Arthur Corbett and was hardly noticed as their nursery filled with boys. Joe and Johnnie were the same age as Cherry & Jennifer; but the last two, Bobbie and Fiona, were "war babies".

SHEFFIELD TERRACE 1926

1926 saw more milestones. On May 3rd the General Strike was declared. I failed to get a job to help defeat the unemployed. My motives were not at all clear as I look back today, but at the time I believed I was very patriotic and wanted to "save the country". Arthur was a soldier at heart and had no doubts. He became a porter at Paddington Station and handled milk churns most of the day with Ronnie Cumming, Arthur Greig and Jack Keeling, for which Arthur was rewarded by the grateful Great Western Railway with a silver, inscribed, ashtray that I have to this day. The smell of sour milk pervaded the house for some time afterwards.

Arthur's sister, Marjorie, and Wilfred House were married on June 29th. They had met at Dornoch. She was only twenty and he was ten years older than she. He was already a Don at Queen's College, Oxford after a most distinguished war, in which he was awarded the D.S.O. When he asked her father for the hand of the adored youngest daughter he confessed that he had no money. Papa replied "Money has nothing to do with happiness." He knew. And he gave his consent.

We had been offered a two thousand pound profit for Albion Street and decided to accept it. Somehow we had never settled there, and we began to house hunt again. I was given a house on Campden Hill to look at, a district we considered miles out of town and one of the last places that we wanted to live in. but the price was within our means; so one morning in July, Katie and I went to look over it. It had all the room we wanted. It was near Kensington Gardens, which Arthur and I both loved. It looked on to a large and unexpected garden at the back. It was sunny and roomy with big

windows. The address was 37 Campden House Court. Katie and I looked at each other. "It's what you want", she said. I was meeting Arthur that afternoon to go to the Buckingham Palace garden party with him. We were thus privileged because Arthur had been in the Brigade of Guards and I had been presented. While we were there I told him all about the house. He was interested. So about half past five on a warm summer evening, Arthur and I in all our finery for the Palace party, (Arthur in his top hat and morning coat, I in a long dress, long gloves and a large straw hat) crossed, for the first time together, the threshold of the house which was to be the home of our family for nearly fifty years. The maid who had opened the door in the morning was surprised to see me again. The Bosmans, the owners, were away. "It has been rather long on the market," I said to her. "Is it because of the noise?" The buses with their, then, solid tyres thundered up Church Street and the house was near the corner on to it. "Oh, no Ma'am", she replied. "I think it's the stairs." But in those days people thought little of stairs and I was surprised. True, there were six stories and no lift except from the basement to the dining room, and that only a food lift which rose flush from the parquet to present a square three sided box with two shelves. (I always wanted to produce a pantomime in the dining room and bring a rather squashed fairy up in the lift; but I never did.) The nursery was on the fourth floor where, as well as in the drawing room, there was a coal fire. Coals had to be carried up; cinders and ashes carried down. As the nursery increased trays of crockery and food for six mouths had to be carried from the kitchen by a fourteen year old nursery maid up the four long flights of stairs. But we never thought about it. Servants were there, would always be there,

to carry and fetch and to be on duty. They cooked, laid up, washed up, cleaned and dusted and polished and did some of the laundry at home. They didn't have to shop: the tradesmen delivered to the basement. When one servant went out, another did her work. I only stood in for Nanny's day out. Only Arthur had a latch key. I rang the front door bell when I came in and the parlour maid opened the door and took my parcels. I never had a latch key until the war. I suppose my Mother never had one all her life. We didn't think about any of it. We had inherited that way of life. There were six servants all together: the cook, parlour maid, house maid, and between maid, beside Nanny and the nursery maid. Fifty pounds a year was a high wage for a cook.

So we bought the seventy year old lease for £3,000 and moved in on October 8th 1926 and were delighted then, as always, with our purchase.

Our furniture was small and meagre and looked like dolls house stuff moved into normal rooms. I could not think what was wrong. Then Reggie Lisburne came to see me and looked with astonishment at the large drawing room with its tiny pieces of furniture. "Darling," she said "you must get bigger things; sofas and chairs and tables. Everything here is too small." And so, slowly, we did.

The original Campden House stood in the northern half of the centre of the present garden. It had been built originally by Sir Baptist Hicks in 1612. He was a Cheapside merchant and it is said that he won the land by a throw of cards. Later he became Lord Campden and took his title from his estate in Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire. The house changed hands several times. Queen Anne

sent her babies from Kensington Palace to Campden House for the better air, thought to be due to the gravel pits nearby. The little Duke of Gloucester lived there till he was eleven years old, the longest lived of all her seventeen children; but then he died like the rest of her ill-starred babies. Eventually it became a young ladies' boarding school. The school fell on hard days. The house was burnt down. Arson was suspected and a long legal battle ensued.

After we went to live there the addresses which had been based on this old property (round whose burnt out ruins the new red brick houses had been built in the eighteen-nineties) were sensibly changed. The houses facing Church Street remained Campden House Terrace, but those facing Gloucester Walk on the south side of the garden and those on the north side facing Sheffield Terrace, took their names. From 37 Campden House Terrace, we became 3 Sheffield Terrace. "It is not nearly such a good address", my Mother said. I felt let down. But it was much easier to find.

Houses have atmospheres. Number Three was one of the fortunate ones. It made us very happy and I like to think that our many friends who came there, outside our own immediate family, found the same benison that we did. It adapted itself to all the traumatic changes that lay ahead for us; but in the early days it gave itself up to parties in the house and in the garden, dinner parties, children's parties, committee meetings, school reunions, bonfire parties, Christmas parties and dances.

Two of our children were yet to be born in the house. All four were married from it. One grandson, Alexander Hudson, was to be born in it. Thomas Keeling was christened from it. There was endless

echoing of laughter and delight to come from it; there were, too, bitter tears and grief to overcome from it but always it proved a refuge and a strength.

After the war and Arthur's death, when I was really impoverished, I took in lodgers - girls on the top and nursery floors. Buffy Williams-Ellis (now Baer), Joanna Prescot and the three Taylor girls succeeded one another. Eustace Guinness was in the nurseries for eighteen months. He was married from there. "We had a bridegroom in our midst", which was published in "Good Housekeeping", is in Vol 3 of my Commonplace Books and gives a rather inventive description of that time. Bill Llewellyn, who became Bishop of Lynn, was married, made a deacon and ordained from our house, though he never lived with us. When Eustace left David moved up into the nursery with the girls above him, and Mabel Grimmer, a cook, arrived and was put in David's old room which was on the half-landing. Meanwhile Mrs Grey and Sheila had stayed on in the basement where they had been since the early days of the war. When the bombing had begun, Arthur had moved the Grey family, who were caretaking our garage flat in Adam and Eve Mews, into the basement of Number Three which he considered safer for them. A few days later the flat and garage were demolished. Now Mr Grey had died, Mrs Grey and Sheila went to Canada and the Giblings took their place. When David and Jennifer Jane were married they turned the two top floors into a very successful little abode. Then when they moved to Taidswood, Jerry and Anne Crole, newly married, took it over, and stayed with us then till Duncan, their first child was born. So they then had to move and I decided to give the top flat to a resident cook and Geoffrey Winterbotham moved into the nursery rooms. After

he died, Philip and Loveday took them over and stayed there till I moved and they went to Pelham Court.

We have all in our way loved the house, and now that I live in a flat only two doors away, I often feel that I have not moved; that the children are still upstairs; that Arthur is around, among all the treasures that we bought together; that Geoffrey will still arrive from the country in his Bentley; that I am ending where my married life really began to take shape. I would like to die here — but over that one has little control.

Eventually I bought the garden lease for a token price from Mr Dawe (whose father had built the surrounding red brick houses), in order to save it from the "property boys" who at that time were prowling around. I still own what I was assured would be a liability. But like any child it has given me far more pleasure than pain, and I am glad that I did what I did. I still hold the lease, so the garden is still mine. As it is unlikely that I will out live the lease, I have left what remains of it to the Pitt Estate, which owns the freehold. When I was seventy five I resigned from all the administration of the garden and am glad now to have done that.

DIVORCE (10)

Among the first people to turn to Sheffield Terrace as a refuge was Arthur's Mother, Leila, deeply upset as, after thirty four years, her husband was demanding a divorce. Arthur consoled her as best he could. "But it's no good," he said. "He has been wanting this for some time. You know that. We all do. If you don't give in he'll force you, somehow. Let me see a solicitor for you, and ask him what is the best thing to do."

Arthur was right. His Father was set on a divorce. So the best divorce solicitor available was engaged. A petition was filed and divorce went through and, thanks to Arthur, a very good settlement was obtained. At first mention of the suggested figure the 'defendant' jibbed. It was an outrageous sum: it was far too much. He could not afford it. It would ruin him. The Judge was firm. If the money was not forthcoming, Mr Gibbs' income must be declared in court and a sum would be fixed accordingly. Mr Gibbs retreated hastily; his very considerable income was entirely his own affair, and no-one was going to be allowed to know what that was. He settled with bad grace and blamed Arthur bitterly. But Arthur did not mind. His Mother was free from the tyranny and unkindness she had suffered from for so long. The children were all married. Winsome had married Arthur French from South Africa and was living happily in Johannesburg. It seemed to us, their children and in-laws, that surely this was the best solution. But not, I think, for Leila. She truly loved her difficult husband and would have taken him back if ever he had wanted to return. But he was never to do that and I think her heart was broken.

It is impossible to judge between married people who is to blame, who is in the wrong? As far as I know, Arthur's mother was a gentle, quiet, unassuming lady. She was not brilliant in any way and could be called rather "low geared". She was an excellent meticulous housekeeper, with all the stillroom lore that well-bred Americans considered essential for their women folk. She was careful to a degree of over anxiety of her children and their health. She was lovely to look at, with dark eyes and magnificent white hair, always immaculately dressed and with a skin that had justified all the care that she had taken of it. "Why, child," she used to say to me, "you must not sit in the sun! Think what it will do to your complexion!" She was a sweet and loving mother-in-law to me: generous and kind at all times and from her I learned a great deal. She was delicate and she ailed. She had to rest a great deal and stayed a lot of the time, unwell, in her room. She played no out—door games and I was amazed when once I saw her spring to her feet, when some particular tune was put on the gramophone, and dance with lightness and grace and evident delight.

Papa was agreeable to meet: an amusing, cocky little man abroad, but a tyrant at home to his dependants. He was so close with his money and so capricious with his disposal of it that he successfully terrorised his wife, his servants and, until they could break free, his children. He used it as a weapon to bully and dominate the less fortunate. Once a week the tradespeople's books had to be paid and a cheque for the various amounts signed by the master of the house. This was the usual practice in most middle class families, and it was often approached with a certain amount of nervousness by the wife, who was in charge of the expenditure. But

here it had become a nightmare: cross-examinations, criticisms, lectures were inevitable. Leila had no money of her own, and to make matters worse, her Mother, Grandma Ladd, long a widow, had hardly enough to support herself. So Leila, from her meagre allowance, would save up, in order to help her Mother; Papa would find out and the wretched allowance he gave her would be cut down. Rows and recriminations were frequent and miserable.

Papa was a healthy sports loving man. He was quite a good shot. He played tennis with alarming determination to win and, without ever making any really good shots, never made a bad one. His golf had the same qualities. He had a passion for motor cars and as he acted in a financial capacity for the Rolls-Royce company, always had the latest model in his garage. He drove down to the South of France every February, but he never took his wife. No doubt he needed a new one. Curiously, having obtained his divorce and married the lady that he had in mind, to the great satisfaction of them both, she, in turn, found that marriage to him was another matter. Within two years she had left him, preferring real poverty to the gilded cage in which she found herself trapped.

Meanwhile Leila, with her maid, Goodbody, and Grandma Ladd, moved in to a flat in Barkston Gardens. Later she bought a house called Spyway in Forest Row, but she was not happy there for long. She liked to move, and took another flat in London. In 1937, on the day she had planned to move into it, she died, and is buried in Hartfield churchyard.

BABIES

"New House: new baby." We had already proved that warning to be true: now we proved it again. In October 1926 we moved to Campden Hill. By April 1927 I knew another child was on the way. We were delighted. We wanted to have four children. Loveday would be over three years old when the new baby came, which was a long enough gap.

All babies make an eruption in a family and the odd numbers are the most disruptive. The first one, naturally, a1ters the young couple's whole way of life; but the second child can easily be absorbed into the already smooth running nursery world. But the third again is a large extension, another dimension in the family, whereas the fourth is hardly noticed among the established little group of three. And so it proved with us. Sleeping quarters had to be altered. A nursery bathroom was squeezed into what had been a house maid's cupboard. Nanny Pyecroft ("Nanny R.P."), was engaged that October to take over the new baby 'from the month' when it arrived, which produced in her devotion to Cherry, which still exists. The little creature, weighing only six and half pounds, arrived on January 10th in the middle of a very cold winter. It was a girl. All went well. Another girl was as welcome as a boy, since we had one of each. Dr Charles Groves looked after us, as Dr Drysdale had died sadly young of blood poisoning. I wanted to call her Amanda because the scent of clematis amandi had soaked into our bedroom at Dromenagh that Spring; but Arthur would not allow it. So I found "Cherry" in a theatre programme and thought it sufficiently original to distinguish her through her life, since she would certainly lose her surname.

But when yet another baby heralded its appearance in June of the same year, I was not so pleased, chiefly, I think, because it was not expected; I was not in control of the situation and I resented the reaction that the news brought to my mondaine friends. "Not again? Are you mad? What will you do?" They pitied me for my incompetence and my situation; and I have never cared for pity. Arthur was philosophical. If we were going to have four children, why not now? There had only been eleven months between Joe and me here there would be thirteen. But I was rebellious and sorry for myself. However I survived and recovered my composure quite soon, remembering what the beloved old Aunt Anne had told me - that the child she had least wanted had proved the most precious and the joy of her life.

Jenifer Barbara was born on February 24th 1929. Katie's first child, Rosalind, was born a week later. The name Jenifer, a corruption of Guinevere, was thought to be as original as Loveday and Cherry. Unfortunately, within a year, every pram in Kensington Gardens seemed to have a Jennifer in it — but none so sweet and good as my little dark, furry baby, whom the others claimed I spoiled and favoured. Perhaps I did, a little, to make up for my early unwelcome. But it more probably stemmed from the fact that Nanny so adored Cherry that I became anxious that Jenifer would feel left out. She was in truth the happiest little girl and loved by us all. If a favour had to be asked it was Jenifer that her sisters sent to plead for them. They thought I could not refuse her. I don't think it was true; but that was the legend.

So the family grew and prospered. David, after a day-school in Gordon Place, run by Miss Maxwell where Loveday joined him for a

short time, went to Ludgrove with the Corbett boys in 1930. The three girls all went, in turn, to Miss Spalding in Queen's Gate. They were to stay there until they were sixteen and then go to Paris and on to Rome, so I planned, but "Man proposes, God disposes....."

THE NEXT TEN YEARS

With the babies born, the happy nursing periods finished and the nursery well established under Nanny R.P.'s excellent routine, Arthur and I entered into the next ten years of comparative affluence with enthusiasm and delight. We were well served. Soon Mrs Neal and Holmes and her sister Mildred appeared and settled down with us. House maids and between maids were not so stable. At least twice in my diaries there is the laconic entry — "Between maid ran away today"; but they were quickly and easily replaced. In 1928 Arthur bought his first car, a Studebaker, from my Father. I had five superficial lessons and after that whirled up from Dromenagh to London, driving the large car full of my precious children without fear, let or hindrance. Saturday mornings we went to exhibitions, often of modern glass, modern furniture, modern pottery and to galleries that were showing modern pictures. The Christopher Wood still life, which hands in the passage now, was our first avantgarde adventure. We dared only to hang it in Arthur's dressing room, for fear of our friends' ridicule and questions. In May 1928 we bought two landscapes by J.D. Innes and hung them in the dining room, redecorated by Basil Ionides. Together we discussed how it could best be done. We had panels in the drawing room which successfully broke up the large walls. I suggested that we should have arches in the dining room and he conceived the idea of painting arches of what looked like sycamore wood, beyond which a sky—blue background could be seen. Ionides was very keen about looking glass, as can still, be seen in Claridges today, and he created a looking glass arch over the chromium and mirror gas fire, which arch still springs over the

fireplace in my bedroom today. The finished room was unusual and I think successful. Our friends and relations appeared to admire our originality and dash and we were well satisfied. But soon my Father came to inspect the newly decorated room. Looking at the Inneses, studying the Wadsworth pictures in silence. At last he spoke, turning to me who had waited patiently beside him. "I don't think that there is anything that is absolutely ghastly about any of this: I rather like it." He said. Sadly I realised what the verdict outside our hearing had been! But we accepted it and the friends and relations were amazed when "Homes & Gardens" came to photograph and write an article about the modern dining room in Sheffield Terrace.

As well as going to exhibitions, Saturday mornings were for happy shopping sprees. Arthur was a generous and open handed buyer and many of the lovely objects that we bought together then I treasure still today. Above all he wanted to encourage modern craftsmanship and modern art. Miss Dorothy Hutton had her shop the "Three Shields" in Holland Street then and Sybil Dunlop was already working in Church Street, and they were a source of many lovely discoveries.

As we became established, naturally the circle of our friends and acquaintances grew. Now we dined with and entertained Ronnie Cumming and his attractive Canadian wife Mary, neé Hendrie; the Keelings, who in 1928 had bought Hurst House in Sedlescombe; the Geoffrey Lawrences who became Oaksey; the Arthur Greigs; Stuart and Mary Montague, who were soon to inherit his father's title, Swaythling; Addie and Lionel Cohen who became a law-lord; my cousin Irene Denison-Pender and her husband Jack, who was made Lord Pender, entertained almost every night with at least two and sometimes

three, tables of bridge, and always champagne. We were frequently there with Katie and Oliver and Hope and Cecil Keith. We dined with and entertained the Mark Lubbocks, the Dudley Tooths, the Bob Bonsors and many others, and always we continued to see a great deal of the Rowallans and the Lisburnes. We played golf at Denham, the Mid—Surrey and Richmond and with the Alfred Clarks on their nine hole course at Iver Heath. With our richer friends we saw the Derby from their boxes and we frequently went to Ascot together to the Royal Enclosure. I saw all the great races over those years, but no—one, by any stretch of invention, could say that either of us belonged to the 'racing set'.

Besides amusing ourselves sporadically at golf, we played a lot of tennis, swam whenever the opportunity offered, skated at the ice rink in Grosvenor Road and at Queen's Road and later became members of Grosvenor House, where I took the children to bathe and to the gymnasium. We saw nearly every play that was worth seeing and a great many that were not. The stage was rich in 'giants' and we followed them all. We went to the ballet and opera.

Arthur took a great interest in my clothes and encouraged by him and Reggie Lisburne I went to many of the best dress shows — Molyneux, Hartnell, Vionnet, Schiaparelli. Sometimes he bought me dresses from Molyneux and from Hartnell and had made for me superb fur coats. The first was made from hand—picked dark Canadian mink. One Christmas morning I opened a large box containing a snow white, long ermine coat with a hood to pull over my head. Earlier on there was a blue fox—fur cape, when blue fox first appeared and silver fox was on every other back. Reggie gave me lovely clothes, her theory being that anything she did not like when she got home, should

immediately be given away. Perhaps that is the secret of good dressing? I certainly benefited from it, if I did not emulate it.

Everybody took a great deal of trouble with their appearance then. We never went out without a hat and gloves and tidy stockings and shoes in London. (Boots, except gumboots in the deep country, were never seen.) Our clothes matched: brown shoes with black stockings were out of the question. Our hat must go with our coat and dress: our bag must match our gloves. If our compassion and sense of equity has increased over the years our attention to our appearance has deteriorated beyond explanation. We had our shoes made for us and most of our clothes as well, and the shops we went to were in Mayfair or Knightsbridge. I went to Madame Meunier, whose name I had been given by my mother-in-law, who dressed beautifully. She had a tiny establishment in Avery Row, a connecting passage between Brook Street and Grosvenor Street. She made my clothes for many years, and later on the girls went to her. Cherry's and Jenifer's bride's dresses and bridesmaids' dresses were made by her. She was French and a great character, shouting at her unfortunate employee with her mouth full of pins — "Lil—i—AN! Lil—i—AN!". She was very outspoken and would infuriate my daughters by commenting on their figures in no uncertain or complimentary way. But she was a marvellous craftswoman and a real perfectionist. There is a photograph of her dressing Jenifer for her wedding on my cupboard door. Occasionally Arthur would give me a dress from Molyneux or Hartnell but I never went to the really important houses without his encouragement. For me to have gone out then as I do now, in trousers and no stockings in the summer, my head tied up in a scarf, with no

gloves and sandal type shoes, would have caused alarm and consternation among all who knew me.

The men, too, took as much trouble as we did over their appearance. Suits and shirts were all handmade and carefully fitted by experts. Ties were chosen with great care. Arthur, who had very thick hair, had two bowler hats; one for the day when he had his hair cut and for the following week, and another for the few days before he was due to go again. His shoes were made by Maxwell. I remember Mark Lubbock buying a pair of suede shoes at Barkers and we thought it highly amusing, and hardly the thing for a gentleman to do! Arthur taught Holmes to valet him when she came to us, about which she knew nothing at all. She was sent off to Maxwells to learn how to polish shoes 'with a bone' till they sparkled and shone; to his tailor to learn how to press his clothes. He showed her how to lay them out in his dressing room, arrange his socks inside-out so that he could pull them on easily, how much tooth paste to squeeze on to his tooth brush and to lay it across his tooth-glass, half-full of water. He always shaved before dinner as well as in the morning and of course we both always bathed and changed before dining.

We entertained a great deal, so that reading my diaries, I wonder when we ever saw each other alone, except in bed. We dined out as often as we dined in and we knew all the best and the most famous restaurants, though our entertaining was done at home. Arthur took a lot of trouble over his wine and was reputed to have a very good cellar.

But I was entirely frivolous. I gave up my hospital visiting in Poplar but I was an active member of the Union of Girls' Schools for Social Services, which St. Monica's had introduced me to when I was a school girl. Its activities were in Peckham and I became Chairman of the Nursery School that we started there. I joined the National Council of Social Services which later became the British Council, and I used to go to Russell Square once a week. I was on the governing body of St. Monica's and attended their meetings at Burgh Heath and in London. I ran their Old Girls' Association and had open tea parties every month to which any member was welcome, and every year gave a large dinner party for the dance that we organised in order to raise funds. Locally I was on the committee for the Kensington District Nursing Association for many years.

Looking back, although I busied myself, it seems to me that I put my toe in the water of several excellent causes without ever really plunging in and becoming committed. I wish now I had stood for the Borough elections. I don't suppose I should have been elected but it would have done me good even if I only failed in the arena.

In 1927 Joe married Captain Cohn Hutchison of the R.H.A., a dear man and a committed soldier and loved by us all. They were married from Dromenagh on a glorious day in May when the bluebells and azaleas and rhododendrons were all at their best, and the wood a sea of colour and sight of beauty. The bridal pair drove from the village Church in an open carriage drawn by six horses, to the delight of everyone except the poor bride who was quite terrified. David was a page and Katie a bridesmaid. She had just announced her engagement to Oliver Stedall — they were an exceptionally good

looking pair and were married the following April in St. Margaret's, Westminster. Winsome was also married in 1927 and David was a page again; but we were in Norway for Arthur to fish for salmon with the Lisburnes, who had taken two rods at Aaroen Sogn. We went from Hull, where already the shipyards were a sad, empty sight, and sailed to Bergen, where we stayed two nights before catching the tiny steamer which took us up the fiords to Sognal. We were there a fortnight. Katie was also a guest and so was Jimmie Horlick. We lived off salmon. Except for the large hampers that Reggie had had sent out from Fortnum and Mason, there was nothing else to eat. There were no vegetables. Cold, hot, boiled, baked, in kedgeree or rissoles, steamed or smoked, we ate salmon, till none of us thought we would ever want to eat it again. As it was light all night and there were three men to the two rods, since Jimmie had refused to go home when we arrived, the men took it in turns to fish all night, and a good time was had by all.

In 1928 Arthur took me to Paris for Easter. It was my first visit to the Continent. We flew. Neither of us had been up in an aeroplane before. It was a "Silver Wing Imperial Airways, passenger service de luxe" from Croydon. We stayed at the Ritz and he chose a hat for me from Reboux.

In February 1929 we engaged our first chauffeur, Young, temporarily; but he stayed on and on and we were never without one till the war began. Carey took Young's place; he was so good and reliable that Arthur handed him over to his Mother when she set up her own establishment, for he knew he could be relied upon. We, in his place, took on my parents' under-chauffeur, Hart, with whom I developed a hate—relationship which was, I am sure, heartily

reciprocated. It caused Arthur and me a great deal of amusement, for I always had a new "Awful Hart" story which we would both laugh over and enjoy.

In the autumn of that year Arthur and I went to America. We sailed from Southampton in the "Berengaria". There was of course a distinguished list of passengers, among them Sir Joseph and Lady Duveen. (He was the art dealer of all time and ruined forever the loving acquisition of beautiful pictures.) The ship was late in starting, which puzzled Arthur since the tides wait for no man, as we all know. The reason for the delay, he was told, was that Lady Duveen, on being shown her state cabin, had taken a dislike to the colour of the carpet, which had had to be changed!

We stayed at the Plaza in New York and from there visited the Johnsons in Philadelphia. Arthur was on a business trip, but we could hardly have chosen a worse year, for it was the time of the slump in shares on the Exchange. We were not really aware of the immensity of the disaster till we reached Canada, after a brief visit to Chicago. In Toronto all the city men looked white and haggard. "Luckily I'm all right," they all told Arthur, "but poor old so-and-so, he's in real trouble." They all were, poor things, and it was a bad time to visit them. We stayed with Mary Cumming's Mother, the famous Mrs Hendrie, in Hamilton, Ontario, saw the Niagara Falls, and sailed from lovely Quebec in the "Duchess of Athol".

In 1930 Dubbie, the youngest of the Osmond Williams siblings, but still ten years older than me, died in Vienna. We all loved him. He was extremely good looking and was always available as the needed

man to partner Joe or me. He was continually at Clock House from our earliest days and he looked on "Uncle Trevie and Aunt Toby", as he called our parents, as his own. They, in their turn, were devoted to him and he stayed and had meals with us endlessly. He took a long time to settle to any one job, but finally about 1923 found his metier in HMV as the artistes' liaison man, where he had an enormous success. He was responsible for buying the house in Abbey Road, which, until a few years ago was the company's most important recording studios. Although he looked the picture of health, he was never really well and probably was an epileptic, but that was discovered only after his death. To us girls he was more like an elder brother and we shared a family sense of the ridiculous and humorous. Together we laughed endlessly. But beside all that I am grateful to him for introducing Bea Lubbock, nee´Rowe, into my life, which gave me two lifelong and very dear friends. Also Eric Dunstan, whom we first met with him as long ago as 1922 and who, by his generous hospitality to me in the South of France, enhanced and enriched my years between 1947 until he died in 1970.

THE THIRTIES (11)

In Bond Street one Saturday morning that same year, 1930, Arthur introduced to me a green faced, shabby, large young man who had just joined Cardens as a "blue button". He looked hungry and lonely and I said he must come and dine. His name was Dick Heathcote-Amory. For some reason, almost from the first time that he came to dinner we found ourselves en rapport. He had a very good and quick brain, played, excellent, almost first class bridge and we found each other intensely amusing. No doubt he was flattered by the frequent invitations from the wife of the head of his firm. We were soon lunching together at L'Etoile in Charlotte Street, and if Arthur had to dine out my choice was almost always a theatre and evening with Dick. He was very well read and like Arthur and me, loved the play. He was soon doing well in the firm and eventually Arthur said he was the best broker he had ever known, having almost a genius for figures and quick assessments. He made me think quickly and sharply and talking to him was, I found, a delightful exercise.

It was not so much that I behaved stupidly: I just refused to think at all. I did not behave badly. There was no physical contact ever between us: not so much as hands touching. Physical unfaithfulness to me was out of the question now or ever. One of our favourite parlour games was with a book that asked a list of question the answers to which added by a co gave your character. One question was "Could you be seduced?" That question was no problem to me: I knew I could not be. But I was interested to see that quite a number of young women gave their answer "Yes". Even years later when

the question did seriously arise, the answer was the same. It was an instinct that was unshakeable.

But to return to Dick. He was very ambitious, greedy for money and often quoted "Don't marry for money, but marry where money is." Which he did — Gaenor Scott—Ellis, who was I think only seventeen but who wanted to marry before her elder sister and to be a "child bride".

Dick was lacking in courage and did not have enough to tell me that he was engaged before it was in the papers, which enraged me. He treated poor Gaenor very shabbily; (the Scott-Ellis family, who had never been keen about him, disliked him more and more.) I was so sorry for her that after her marriage I used to collect the poor child and give her lunch, as she had no maid, and was crushed into Dick's small bachelor flat. She started a baby and felt sick and ill and lonely. The war by then was looming ahead and Dick decided to spend a long holiday in America and to stay there if war broke out. Though this plan was not made clear, I knew what was in his mind. War broke out. He took a job in Lord Lothian's Embassy decoding, or some such trivial occupation. I wrote him furious letters. He wrote defensive ones back. He really believed that anyone as clever and able as he was would be wrong to jeopardise his life. The odds on England's survival he thought were minimal.

Lord Lothian died. Lord Halifax took his place as our Ambassador and all the embassy including Dick, were sent home.

Gaenor's father, Lord Howard de Walden, died. Dick contested the will. There were millions involved. But he lost his case, while family feeling ran very high indeed!

I saw Dick after his return from time to time, at the end of the war, and after Arthur died. He grew, as he had planned, richer and richer, re-instated in another stock exchange firm. Our friendship survived and he would have liked to have helped me when I was in a difficult period after Arthur's death; but that was not possible. Then he became suddenly ill. His doctor said that an immediate operation was necessary. 'He had twenty four hours in which to make a most difficult will between his three children from his complicated and involved financial affairs, and spent those last hours with his solicitor and accountant doing just that. He did not leave Gaenor so much as a bottle of wine. She has more than enough he would have said; and that was true. But.....there are many buts. I learned one lesson from the whole curious episode, and that is that there seldom is a logical reason for an attraction between two people. It happens. One is caught in it as one is caught by a virus. The onset is outside control. How one deals with it is another matter. How one deals with a virus is up to the victim.

I don't know what Arthur thought of it all. We never discussed it. He had a little mild walk out with Margaret Macharg about that time; she was a friendly, affectionate girl and did adore Arthur. He and I both knew that all was well, though perhaps deplored, in these rare cases, the other's taste.

THE CAROLINE

Meanwhile I was well occupied taking the children to swimming lessons, riding lessons, skating lessons, dancing and ballet lessons. Leo Dowd, brother of the illustrator in "Punch", drew them in 1929. Sosonov, a Russian émigré, did crayon drawings of them. Loveday sat to Wolseley, at his request, in the dress she wore for Molly Le Bas' wedding to Brocas Burrows in 1932. (Jeremy Thorpe was a page at the same wedding.) She went to Miss Spalding's school in Queen's Gate that Spring and that was the year Arthur bought his first Rolls-Royce - "25".

Early in the Spring of that same year, I found a letter from Mr Johnson in Philadelphia on my breakfast plate. This was the Mr Johnson who given us my Orpen portrait. He had built a new and very commodious yacht, "The Caroline". It had every comfort including a stabiliser. He would be most happy if Arthur and I would join him the following year and go for a cruise in the Caribbean Sea. I pushed the letter across to Arthur. "What about that?" Arthur read it in silence. "We can't, of course," he said. "A fortnight to get there, nine weeks on the yacht, another fortnight getting home. I couldn't get away, darling. You'll have to explain. "What a pity," I sighed. "It does sound fun. I'd like to go on a yacht. Shall I ask him to bring it over here? It could sail in the Mediterranean? You'd like that and we could manage it quite easily. We could go on the 'Blue Train'." "Brilliant!" laughed Arthur. "You ask him! You're capable of anything!" He kissed me goodbye and, still laughing, went off to work.

But I didn't laugh. I wrote to Mr Johnson, and told him our problem. But couldn't he, I said, bring his yacht over here I believed that the Mediterranean was ideal for cruising in the Summer, and then we would be able to join him.

I really didn't think any more about it. But one day another letter with American stamps arrived. Alas' Mr Johnson's difficulties were the same as ours. None of his friends could spare the time to go to Europe. The time factor made it impossible for them as it did for us. He was very disappointed. "Oh! Arthur", I said sadly, "Mr Johnson won't come! Because his friends can't spare the time. Isn't that sad? And he's so sorry about it!" Arthur went on eating his breakfast. "I told you," he said. "I knew he wouldn't." I sat deep in thought. "I think I will write again" I said, "and tell him we'll provide the friends, and fill the yacht for him. What do you say to that?"

This time Arthur didn't laugh. "Steady on, darling," he said "you really can't do that. Even you can't suggest that. No. No. We must forget it. Disappointing but there it is." He went off to the office and I sat thinking. "Why not?" He could say no. There was nothing to lose anyway. So again I wrote.

Another morning, another breakfast, another letter from America....Then a still, small voice....

"Arthur, he's coming over. With his yacht. Empty. For us to fill. Read it! He thinks it a good idea. He's coming over!" Arthur read the letter, really concerned. "Nine weeks! I can't get away for nine weeks! Besides, what about Scotland? I can't miss the shooting. I can't go to the Mediterranean in the summer."

"Yes you can," I said. "Of course you can and if you don't, if you won't, I will go. I'll go for the whole nine weeks. I'm going. We can make two cruises out of it. You'll come for the first five weeks and we'll have another party for the second. We can't say no. And I'm not going to! And you! You're coming!

I really didn't know what I was saying. My head had turned then and I am afraid remained turned for several months afterwards. It was like a mad dream come true, like winning a lottery, like coming into a vast inheritance. I don't remember how we parted that morning. I do remember getting out my o1d school atlas in the evening and Arthur and I lying on the floor together, studying the Mediterranean, of which Arthur knew a little and I nothing at all. For Mr Johnson had asked us not only to provide his guests, but choose where we would like to go. Letters flew between us.

"I am told we should see the Acropolis first by moon-light", I wrote. "Can we arrive in Athens when the moon is out?" Patiently the answer came back "You shall see Athens by the light of the full moon."

Of course we lost our heads, having had them turned, and asked everybody that we knew to join us and, inevitably, could not get them all in, for which I am still teased today.

Mr Johnson came over in December especially so that we might discuss details. I went to see him at Claridges.

"How many ladies' maids would be coming? How many valets?" Luckily Reggie Lisburne was delighted to bring her precious Whelan, but we could not cook up a valet. "What sort of people do you want?"

I asked him. "Your age? Our age? Blondes? Brunettes?" Whom shall we ask that you would like?"

"I don't mind, Barbara," he replied in that slow, soft American drawl, "so long as they don't get very drunk."

"Drunk?" I repeated, horrified. "But we don't know anyone who gets drunk!" I did not know then what Prohibition had meant to yacht—owners.

But the "Caroline" deserves a book to itself and indeed there is one that I wrote and which you can dig out and read. It is quite funny. But I kept no day to day diary of those magical nine weeks. Still, the flavour of it is all there in the green leather bound, typewritten book — "The Caroline" — which you can read if you wish.

At the end of 1933 Nanny Pycroft left, after five years. She was not the easiest of women and the relationship between us had not proved unmitigated joy. She had "moods" which I learned to dread. There was always friction between her and the kitchen. Though David was only six and Loveday three when she arrived, she always gave the impression that they were almost already too old for her nursery rule. Jenifer gave her an added importance and responsibility, so she came in for her unstinted care. But Cherry, her first baby from the month, she worshipped and adored. She was a perfectionist and drove herself ruthlessly. She would never let the babies sleep in the garden in the mornings, but with the huge double pram polished and gleaming, pillows filled and spotless, and clean white covers over everything, the tiny woman would struggle twice a day down and up the Church Street hill to Kensington Gardens. The children's clothes were immaculate and they were beautifully looked after; but

she preferred to do everything for them herself, so that everything should be perfectly done. One day I noticed Cherry holding out first one leg and then the other, while she lay back in a chair, for nanny, kneeling at her feet, to put her socks on for her. Cherry was now five years old. Surely she should be dressing herself by now, I thought. Loveday had dressed herself when Nanny had first come. Would Cherry ever learn with Nanny adoring her, waiting on hand and foot, — certainly foot! The die was cast. Nanny gave way to Miss Smith, a nursery governess, strict, unloving and unloved, but what the children really needed. She had a red nose and an affected way of putting one, rather red, hand, to her throat. She never sat down without daintily crossing her delicate ankles. Men sweat, ladies perspire, little girls are 'all of a glow', was one, of her maxims. I always thought she developed shingles from the shock of seeing Dick Amory wrapped only in a bath towel. She went out regularly every Wednesday afternoon which gave me happy times with the children. We all endured Miss Smith for three years.

In July 1936 Kay Huddon (later Mrs Anthony Brooke), came in her place. She was a sweet and gentle creature and had been rather badly treated by Hiley Bathurst. Ben, his elder brother, felt sorry for her and suggested she should come to us. She was far too negative and too good to the girls who gave her a wretched time and she left the following February, when the splendid Kathleen Oldfield came and stayed with us till she got married.

In 1934 we went to Paris again, this time for Whitsun, flying from Croydon on a 'Scyella' with the FitzGeralds, who had got married as a result of the "Caroline". We stayed at Le Celtic in rue

Baizac and ate our way deliciously through marvellous restaurants. I was still a non-drinker.

At Stonafiel on Loca Fyne staying with the Mackie—Campbells that summer, we met Eustace Guinness, who became a life-long friend. David went to Eton that autumn to Claude Beasley-Robinson's house which was to be, everyone said, the best house in the school. Johnny Keeling went with him, on our recommendation; so did Tony Whaley. One was a Roman Catholic and the other a Jew and Claude was appalled at what we had sent him. It should have been a good house. Claude was everything that went to make a good housemaster: dedicated, single, wealthy, a fine oar, religious and I had known him and his family since Byfleet days. But it didn't work. Perhaps his religiosity was the undoing of it all. Johnny wisely warned his parents and both Mike and Brian Keeling went to Butterwicks, which had everything that "Beasles" lacked. It was bad luck. Both Ludgrove and Eton seem to me to have been little help to David.

The year 1934 ended in difficulties. My Mother had a bad heart attack — but lived a strenuous life for another fourteen years. Bryan had a nervous breakdown, refused to see Rosamond and, after first seeking refuge with his mother, refused to see her too. He went from nursing home to nursing home, insulting everyone, with Dr Groves and me picking up the pieces as he went, till at last he was packed off to Cannes. Even then our troubles were not over. He telephoned me that he must have a nurse sent out at once. We sent two with enormous difficulty (no one would go alone!) as it was just before Christmas and passports and photographs, passages, etc, all had to be arranged. I turned Dick Amory on to struggle with it, as I had two large Christmas parties on my hands.

At some time along the line, I, who always enjoyed a public spectacle, decided that I must find a good place where I could go to see any royal procession, sure of an excellent view, and where I could take what children were available. I don't know when it was that I decided that the flat roof of Marlborough House Lodge was a good vantage point, as Marlborough House was empty. On the first occasion I must have wriggled myself into the favour of the lodge-keeper there. By 1934, when in November Princess Marina married the Duke of Kent, I read in my five year diary "Hart drove Katie and Loveday and me to the wedding which we watched from Marlborough House Lodge. Lovely." I should think so! It could not have been a better view or more comfortable. Thereafter I took the children and favoured friends regularly to my chosen place, which I backed up at Christmas time with gifts for the nice keeper. Our friendly host entertained his own friends, which was only natural, but he always had room for my party. Alas, it all ended when the Queen Mother took up her residence at Marlborough House. Arthur Penn, who had become her Private Secretary and was a very old friend of ours, then became wise to my appropriation of the lodge roof. He wrote me the wittiest letter addressed to the "Duchess of Marlborough Lodge" and suggesting that the 'duchess' might, after her long annexation of Royal property, no longer exercise her imaginary prerogative and take herself off! I wish I had kept the letter.

When we were engaged, Nelto, my cousin, sent me a letter. "Congratulate Arthur from me," she wrote "and tell him that he will never have a dull moment." So he had a warning; but he had, I do believe, more pleasure out of my inventive mind than most men would have tolerated at all.

There was the boring shooting weekend party with the Bowaters in their fine, new, exquisitely appointed house. The guests were rich, unknown to me and I did not care for them. The first dinner, there were about twelve of us, the conversation was sticky and slow. Someone spoke about handwriting. Did it reveal our characters? "Oh, yes," I announced. "I know it does. I've read a great deal about it and studied it quite a bit. There is any amount that can be found out about us from the way we form our letters and move our pens." The woman across the table gazed at me fascinated. "Can you do it? Can you tell, from my writing, what sort of person I am?" I smiled modestly. "I am not a professional. There are of course many who are. But — yes! I have a very shrewd idea of what a person really is from the way he writes." "Can you tell me? Can you describe my character if I give you something that I have written?" "Well I'll try," I said. "But you must write more than your name. And give me time."

By the time that we went up to bed I had no less than six half sheets of writing paper clasped nervously in my hand, from five women and one man who insisted that I must tell them their characters next evening.

"Well," said Arthur when he joined me, "and what are you going to do now? You can't tell anything about hand—writing."

"Oh Arthur," I said "I must be mad". You must tell me what you know about these people and I'll try and work up something. That Mrs S. next to you at dinner? What was she like? Who was she? Which was her husband?" "Except that she tried to play 'footy—footy' with me

through dinner and that she's a jolly pretty woman, I don't know anything at all."

However by coaxing and prodding, I did get some bits and pieces about my silly victims from him, and by applying common sense was able to give each one of them a summing up of their characters which could have been interpreted pretty widely. They were delighted and, of course, confided in me far more than I could tell them about themselves. So I was well amused. It enlivened the week-end and I enjoyed myself. Arthur, though nervous, and indeed apprehensive, didn't find the weekend dull at all.

I am conscious of the fact that in relating these stories and some of the episodes of this period, particularly the diversion of the "Caroline" and the squatting at Marlborough House Lodge, I may give the impression of a somewhat high handed young woman. Well yes, perhaps I was. No doubt I had always and perhaps have continued to be as the years ran out. It was the nature of the beast. I plead in mitigation, however, that what I got away with usually gave great pleasure to many, including myself, and I do believe to Arthur and I think and hope they were always accomplished without any distress to others, unless astonishment is a form of distress!

In 1935 Jack Russell lent us his nice house Delamas, in Ingatestone in Essex, for the summer holidays and we went there for two years running and thoroughly enjoyed it. The children rode, we all bathed in a nearby quarry, and went for excursions all around. There was a tennis court and a parrot. I packed the house with guests, and Holmes got engaged to the fishmonger. It was a happy time for all of us.

When the children had gone back to school, Arthur and I and Hart drove down to Spain in the new Rolls Royce, with the FitzGeralds in their own car. The account of this journey is written in letters to my parents in a red book called "Spain and France". The next year at the same season, we went to Italy — Rome, Amalfi, Naples and Florence and home by Cortina, Munich, Nuremberg, Coblenz and the Ardennes. This journey is described in a set of letters written to Katie, which are in a folder with the other travel 'books'. This was the autumn when Arthur gave the children a Blüthner baby grand piano, which Mark Lubbock helped me to choose at Harrods, and I, who did not fancy a piano blocking up the drawing room, retaliated by giving him a dog - 'Pompey', who was supposed to be a miniature poodle but who was always a giant. He was bible—black and looked as though he had been knitted. He came as an untrained puppy arid had to be taught by the children to walk upstairs. I became grateful for the piano; and Arthur devoted to Pompey.

Early in 1936 I had taken David and Loveday with Katie to Celerina, where we all first learned to ski; and went there again the following year, this time with Bea Lubbock. The Bathursts were at St Moritz arid they were endlessly helpful and kind to us. We travelled second class and stayed at a modest pension. I was always anxious that the children should never confuse travelling with luxury. I knew that the two were not synonymous and was determined that they should realise it. I need not have worried. They have all, since they left my nest, travelled in the grandest style!

On one occasion my high principles were put to a high test. When we had first arrived at the Hotel Murail, it was decided that we should all be on full pension. The food proved to be modest but

sufficient, and typically Swiss, which we all enjoyed. To begin with I used to take the children out to tea, when they would eat well and expensively off the rich cakes, and then had little appetite for the (inclusive) supper. That would not do. Only biscuits with their chocolate or coffee, at tea time, I commanded, and so full justice done to their supper in the evening.

One day the Bathursts met us on the slopes and, with their customary kindness and generosity, invited us all to tea at Hanselmanns, which had the best, the richest and the most expensive cakes in Switzerland. We accepted with delight. The shop was crowded. A queue jammed up the narrow staircase where we were all waiting to get up to our table upstairs. I knew quite a lot of people on the stairs: there were, too, quite a lot I should have liked to know better. It was at this moment that David, ahead of me, turned round and in his clear, carrying voice called out "Mummy, can we have cakes today, or are you paying?" I am still doubtful as to what would have been the best answer.

1936 THE ABDICATION (12)

King George V died in January of 1936 and Arthur and I watched his funeral from seats in Edgware Road. We had of course all talked a great deal about the Prince of Wales and Mrs Dudley Ward, Lady Furness and then Mrs Simpson. Stories were rife, but I for one, like many others, had such faith in his integrity, dedication and devotion to his people, that when the Bishop of Bradford preached his famous sermon, releasing all the pent-up, gagged newspapers the next day, I was shocked and appalled. My diary says that Arthur rang me up from the office to tell me, so I suppose it was the later editions only that had the news. From then on my diary has the single word "miserable" one day, and another day "desolate". We went down to Dromenagh that weekend for David's confirmation at Eton, and afterwards we "circled round Fort Belvedere". On the 11th we stayed at home to listen to the abdication speech together. We were all stunned and could not believe that he would desert us — the whole Empire — for a love affair. How many thousands, for far less reason, had sacrificed their love for their duty? It was unbelievable. So 1936 ended as badly as we thought a year could end. Few of us knew what lay ahead.

Here is a little sidelight on history, not quite within the frame of my story but worth telling, I think.

In the Spring of 1937, Her Majesty Queen Mary came to visit my parents in order to enjoy their woodland garden. This had become a regular practice since the gardens had been opened once a year to aid the National District Nursing Fund. Her Royal Highness Princess Victoria lived then at Coppins, Iver. She had visited Dromenagh,

struck up a warm and lasting friend with my parents and had spoken of them and their garden to her brother, His Majesty the King. After the Queen's first visit, she came each spring. A telephone message would be received from Windsor, and sometimes at very short notice, the Queen would arrive. The excitement and preparation meanwhile would be spectacular. Once my Mother was in Church for the Good Friday service when an agitated messenger arrived and had a whispered conversation with her. She left the church immediately and was driven promptly home.

This spring of 1937 was the first time since the abdication that my Mother had met the Queen. My Father was away so she had to do the honours alone. She had naturally wondered whether the Queen would mention the abdication and decided that she would not broach the subject unless given a lead. After the usual greeting and the walk through the wood, they sat together looking at the blaze of colour and enjoying the scents from the flowers and shrubs. The Queen spoke.

"You must know, Mrs Trevor Williams, that I have been through a very difficult time since I last saw you."

"Yes, Ma'am," my Mother replied, "You have been constantly in my thoughts: Trevie and I have both grieved for you."

There was a pause and then the Queen spoke again.

"When I realised that the abdication was inevitable, and that nothing would change the young King's mind, I went to see the Duke and Duchess of York at their home in Piccadilly. I told them that no more could be done to dissuade the King from his fixed determination to marry Mrs. Simpson, and that only they now could save the

monarchy by taking up the burden that he felt unable to carry. They replied that it was impossible. The Duke was not a robust man and he endured a disability with his speech. The Duchess on her marriage had been promised that they could always live a semi-private life. This responsibility would be intolerable. The Duchess spoke vehemently and they were both of one mind: they could not take it on. 'Very well then' I said, 'if that is your final decision, I must tell you what I shall do. I don't want to do it, but I consider it my duty to the monarchy. I shall have myself appointed Regent and until Elizabeth comes of age, she will have to live with me at Buckingham Palace and I will train her for her future as Queen. It is the only alternative. You must both think this over very carefully; I shall return this evening to hear your answer."

My Mother, amazed, sat silent till the Queen turned to her and began again.

"You will not be surprised when I tell you that when I returned in the evening, their minds were made up. The Duke would accept the Crown and the monarchy would continue under him. It was a great relief."

If my Mother had not told us this herself, I should not have believed it. If anybody else had told us I should have doubted it. But my Mother was not only a truthful lady, she was the least imaginative of people and quite incapable of inventing such a curious story. Certainly none of my family would have believed the tale if it had had its origin in me! As far as I know, it has never been told elsewhere and in all the memoirs that I have read, it has

never escaped into print, though there is a slight reference to it in "Windsor Story" by J. Bryan and Ch. Murphy.

CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

When I returned from Celerina in time for David and Loveday to go back to school in 1937, Arthur seemed unwell and the following day went down with bronchitis. It seemed to affect his breathing badly. Latterly he had shown a tendency to puff a bit, but now he appeared unable to breathe naturally. By the beginning of February, he was up and about and better; but it was thought advisable for him to consult a specialist, Cortlandt MacMahon, who examined him and recommended exercises etc. We went to Brighton for a few days and, when he returned, as he was still in difficulty, went to see Mr Bray for asthma tests. (Bryan had always suffered from asthma and Jenifer had inherited his family weakness). After that there were X-ray tests and another specialist, Gill Carey, was called in. He advised wintering abroad, which endorsed our own doctor's opinion. Our adored Dr Groves, ("Grovey" or "Mr Bee"), was ill at this time and his son, Jack Groves, was looking after us. So, on March 12th, Arthur, Joe and I (Joe was suffering from an inexplicable cough and decided to come with us), set off for the Mamounja hotel in Marrakesh — a name entirely new to us, and indeed, to most people then. We took a train to Marseilles and from there went by boat to Casablanca, where we spent a day. In the afternoon we took another train to Marrakesh.

Meanwhile the good Lubbocks had moved into our rooms at the Terrace to supervise the household for us. Kathleen Oldfield had only just taken over the children from "Ruddy" (Kay Huddon) and we were grateful to know that the Lubbocks were there to deal with any real crisis which might arise.

We stayed at Marrakesh for nearly a month in great comfort, surrounded by beauty and soaked in warm sunshine. There was no swimming pool there in those days and the hotel was comparatively small. It was owned by the proprietor of one of the best hotels in Aix—les—Bains, who moved his entire staff from there when the summer season was over.

The French cuisine was superb.

I went on every kind of expedition, plunging into the souks with a small boy as a guide, without whom I would have been totally lost, while the two invalids sat in the lovely gardens, where water ran and fountains played. (Some of the best photographs that I ever took belong to the spring of this year and they are worth turning up in the 1938 photograph books.)

We were there till April 5th, when Arthur and I went on to Montreux and Joe returned home from Marseilles. Meanwhile Leila, Arthur's Mother, had collected David from Eton and with him was driven out in our car by Carey, now her chauffeur. We all met at the Palace Hotel and when they walked into the restaurant, I was very near tears of joy. I think I had had an anxious time. Arthur was, apparently, better, but I was worried about him. I had had to give him injections each day. The syringe that I had been sent out with had proven faulty: I could not open it. After wrestling desperately with it I had to call up a doctor. I was greatly relieved to be told that it was not my stupidity but the syringe that was at fault. That was only a detail; but I was never carefree and felt very cut off.

CHATEAU D'OEX

From Montreux we drove around that beautiful countryside with the spring flowers emerging on the different levels of mountainside and valley, looking for somewhere where the girls could join us for the now fast approaching Easter holidays. Finally we chose the Hotel Rosat at Chateau d'Oex, to which "Oldy" and the three girls made their way by train. Leila returned to England, leaving us the car, and Margaret Macharg came out in order to travel back with David when his Eton 'half' began.

In the meantime the girls had visited Joe's family at Walton-on-Thames and Joanna, her elder girl, later married to Ken Prescot, had developed whooping cough while they were there. Loveday and Cherry were immune as they had both had it when they were small; but Jenifer had not, and developed it on the journey out to us.

"Coqueluche!" said one of their fellow travellers on the train, as the poor child coughed and coughed. And coqueluche it was. I had to explain to Madame Rosat, the proprietress, and had to assure her that Jenny would be the only case, since the other children had had it, and that we would keep her carefully isolated in her room and Madame need have no concern for her other visitors. All of which we did.... and indeed we had no choice, for the child became really ill. I tried to keep my anxiety from Arthur, for this was to be his carefree convalescence, but as her temperature rose and she developed horrible earache, I was racked with concern. The local doctor came and seemed quite inadequate. Cherry also then became ill with a sore throat and temperature and of course Madame Rosat was convinced that she was about to have an epidemic on her

hands. Finally I rang old Grovey in London and poured out my troubles to him. He gave me the name of a doctor in Montreux and told me that he was to give Jenifer prontesil. PRONTESIL, he spelled it out. It was a new drug and would clear up the now threatened mastoid. So I got in touch with the doctor from Montreux and he did what he was told to do — I think Dr Groves must have rung him up. Anyway we crept into calm water. Cherry recovered, and she slowly fought her way back to convalescence. Oldy took Loveday and Cherry to London and their school term, while Arthur and I stayed on, with a nurse for Jenifer, till the end of May, when we all three drove home together, dropping the nurse off at Lausanne.

The holiday had done Arthur good. He was delighted with the lovely valley of Chateau d'Oex and all the wild flowers that grew in such profusion, especially the wild narcissi and the orchids. We went for lovely walks beside the mountain streams and the air was so pure and clean one felt it had to do him good. But he was not really well; his breathing was still difficult at times, and he had slowed down in consequence. He was never really robust again. It was probably from now on that I became more responsible; took more on my shoulders that were already earning a reputation of being broad enough for other people's troubles. This holiday had been my apprenticeship for the years ahead.

In July I went down to Antibes to the now famous Hotel du Roc to join Katie and Oliver for a few days' carefree bathing and water skiing holiday; and David went off the next day with a group from Eton to join the Boy Scouts' World Jamboree in Holland.

On August 11th Loveday and I, with the Lubbocks, set off again for Chateau d'Oex. This time I was driving the Rolls. We had a successful and happy journey, the Lubbocks well—informed and interested in everything, but the twelve year old Loveday's nose was buried in a book about a horse called "Smokey", all across the Continent. After seeing the car on the boat at Newhaven, we dined that night with Mark's sister, Agnes Loveridge and her husband, at Shelley's Hotel in Lewes, returning to sleep on board and wake up in Dieppe. We spent two nights on the way at Les Pleiades, Barbizon, and after lunch at Avallon, and tea at Beaune, another at the Grand Hotel at Dole. The following day we arrived in the afternoon to be met by Oldy and Holmes with Cherry and Jenifer. The chalet we had booked in the spring was still occupied. The hotel where we had stayed before was almost full; Madame Rosat was hysterical and chaos reigned. Mark flapped his hands, Bea looked worried, the children turned their large eyes anxiously towards me. Where were they all to go? However, after arguments and ragings and persistence I forced most of my party into either the Hotel Rosat or the Grand, though Mark complained, with some reason, that he was sleeping in "la chambre de la grand'mere. The next day we sorted ourselves out. The Lubbocks, as arranged from England, went to the Hotel Rosat; our family occupied the nearby, enchanting little Swiss Chalet from which we went to the hotel for our main meals. Later the Bathursts and 'Kutya' Krishaber joined the party. Ben Bathurst, later Viscount Bledisloe, had married Joan Krishaber. 'Kutya' was a fascinating Jewish Hungarian, who, through Joan, had attached himself to our family. We all loved both Joan and Ben.

On the evening after our arrival at Chateau d'Oex, David was due to arrive from Holland by train. He had four or five changes to make, three frontiers to cross, and had to travel alone. Although he was just fifteen and he had not a word of any language but his own. If he did not arrive on the train due to come in at the small station at nine thirty that evening, I had no idea what I was going to do. The camp had broken up two days before. So it was with some anxiety that I stood on the little platform, waiting. At last, a tiny, one carriage train came puffing slowly up the valley. This couldn't be it! It drew up, a door opened and out of it stepped David in his boy scouts' clothes, sun—burned, dirty, but smiling and very pleased with himself! I too was very pleased; but I had to gives him two baths before I could find the colour of his skin.

On our journeys to Switzerland I had taught the children to sleep in the luggage racks, so that we grownups could stretch, out on the seats below. In those days the racks were made of netting, so that with rugs and coats they were comparatively comfortable. David had thought that this was a normal practice, and so had climbed up and spent the night there, although the carriage was empty. An Indian gentleman had joined the train later in the dark and never noticed his companion till dawn came, and he saw this strange figure peering down at him. The guard was equally astonished when he came to see the tickets, dealt with the dark man's papers and was about to leave, when he saw this strangely dressed character waving at him from above his head!

The very next day Arthur rang me from home. His mother had been taken ill at Kitzbuhel. Her homeopathic doctor had been sent out to her at her request. Her youngest daughter, Marjorie House,

was going out by train. Would I drive over to Austria and help them straighten things out? While I was rather reluctantly agreeing to this request, realising that I would have to cross Germany and that my German was non-existent, Mark, who had been listening to the conversation, burst in. "I'll go with you! Tell Arthur I'll go with you. It was a great relief to me and Arthur was glad for my sake. Mark was bi-lingual in German and, as and amusing companion, he was invaluable. So the next day we set off. We stayed at Innsbruck on our way. It poured with rain the whole time. When we arrived at Kitzbuhel, Leila indeed appeared to be seriously ill and the doctor, who had no German, at a loss. I met Marjorie as she arrived off the train, and we decided that [she] must get her Mother home at all costs. It had been arranged for her to go straight into my aunt's nursing home in John Street. With some difficulty, we got sleepers for her, and for Marjorie, on the night express and tickets for the journey. The doctor had his return ticket. Proud of ourselves, Marjorie and I saw the patient carried on to the train and settled her down comfortably in her sleeper. What we had not realised was that the doctor was not eligible for this particular train since it was composed only of sleepers. He had no couchette ticket. The guard said that he could not travel on this train; he must follow in the morning. We said he must go now. The lady was ill. She must have the doctor with her. Everyone shouted at everyone except Leila, who was safely tucked up, and the doctor who could understand nothing about anything. But the train had to leave. I got off, and pushed the doctor back as the guard tried to push him out; the train drew out, leaving the doctor to stand, I suppose, all night in the corridor.

Exhausted I fell into bed, to begin the long drive back to Chateau d'Oex the next morning. The rain continued. On the second day, in order to overtake a wagon full of sawn-down trees, I pulled out, off the tarmac on to what proved to be the soft shoulder of the road. It was too soft. It gave way, and we turned gently into the ditch. Unhurt, Mark and I got out, I remembering to turn the engine off. A nice German in his car arrived and he got out. He said he was our 'auto-kamerad' which was comforting, and in a flash he had the strong draught horses unharnessed from the wagon and attached to the car. In no time the car was pulled from the ditch and replaced on the road. We all shook hands and Mark in fluent German expressed our gratitude. Nervously I turned on the starter. With the imperturbability of the perfectly bred engine, the car started off straight away, and Mark and I drove off to stay at the Bauer-au-lac at Zurich. The hotel was full. The rain continued to pour down. I felt unequal to going on again so, with some presence of mind, I said room or no room, we would dine; and I wanted a call put through to London. This was unusual and created an impression. Transcontinental calls were still quite rare, and not to be indulged in lightly. By the time that my call came through and I had told Arthur all my news, the proprietor had decided that I was of some importance and I was offered a huge room with a grand piano in it, while a courier's room was found for Mark.

Two days later Arthur arrived with Margaret Macharg. His mother was in good hands and improving and he was assured that there was no cause for alarm. Three weeks' very happy holiday began. We went for lovely excursions. To Zermatt, Gruyere, to Berne and

Fribourg. We went for long walks and bathed in the savagely cold, out of doors, unheated piscine.

One unforgettable, never-to-be-repeated, experience came my way that summer holiday.

Ben Bathurst was a rock climber of some repute, and a great deal of experience. He wanted to climb up the Gastloser Mountains nearby. Gastloser means inhospitable! Joan, at the beginning of their marriage, had decided that rock-climbing was not for her: she had made that clear. Whom to take with him? I suppose that I was the best victim available, and he decided that I would do. He flattered me into agreeing to go with him. I am always ready to try anything and of course had no idea what I was letting myself in for. I had climbed mountains in Scotland. I was a good walker, which was all that those 'mountain climbs' entailed. I didn't think much about his invitation, except that I was sure it would be fun.

We started very early — that was the first surprise — about six o'clock, drove some way in Ben's car. Then we got out and began to walk uphill, over short, springy turf. It was beautiful. The air was crisp and clear, the sky blue, as the skies are only blue in Switzerland, the rising sun warm on our faces and all around incredibly splendid views. We went very slowly. I was surprised — the second surprise — at the pace that Ben set. "We've a long day ahead," he said. "One must never hurry." I felt that I could have walked up and up for ever that morning. If this was climbing with Ben I loved it!

I wore a light, tweed, green skirt with three front pleats; a white anorak that buckled round my waist and had plenty of pockets,

lisle thread stockings, held in place by suspenders attached to a diminutive girdle and light leather laced shoes with thin rubber soles. A shirt and silk bloomers completed my outfit. Ben wore shorts, and thick knitted white stockings, stout shoes and a short alpine coat over a thick shirt.

The hill grew a bit steeper. The path grew rockier.

"There they are!" exclaimed Ben, pointing upwards. "The Gastloser!" I looked up and then quickly away to him. He was joking. Up there? Against the sky line? Those craggy, bare peaks? Of course he was pulling my leg. "Oh," I said "really?"

We walked on, quite steeply now. I was glad of the slow, measured pace. The grass ended. We were walking on bare rock, and still upwards. Ben stopped. "Let's have a breather," he said, "and then we'll get roped up." He had been carrying ropes and was thoroughly encumbered with them and cameras and lunch packs; but I had paid little attention. Ben was always marvellously and wonderfully equipped with every gadget that could be bought. I had not seriously considered the ropes. Perhaps in an emergency we would need them. Not at all. Ben was now knotting one round himself and knotting me at the other end. There were about eighteen yards between us. "Comfy?" he asked, as he tied me up, and I wondered if Abraham had said that to Isaac. We were standing now at the foot of a bare rock which rose precipitously into the sky. I couldn't see the top of it; it seemed to shelve away and merge into' others, higher still.

"Now I'll go on up," Ben said, "and when I'm ready and have the rope firmly held, I'll give you a shout and you'll follow me. All right?"

"All right", I said, swallowing nervously. What else could I say? He climbed up like a cat, up the rock and disappeared. There was silence. What should I do? I couldn't get up there. It was like being asked to go up the side of a wall. It was at right angles to the ground. I could as well walk up the side of a Church. Who was mad? Ben? Or me? Or Ben and me? "Are you ready?", I heard his voice. "Start now. I've got you on the rope quite safely if you slip. I'm ready."

"I can't", I said weakly. "There's nothing to climb on to: There's nowhere to put my foot."

"Oh yes, there is. Try on the right. Stretch up a bit. Put your foot in the crack and give yourself a push and you'll find a handhold further up. It's all right."

I couldn't stand there arguing: I'd better try. There was a sort of crevice fairly high up which I managed to squeeze my foot into. By pushing hard I got myself up and straightened my leg and found there was a place above where I could put my hand, and hold on. My other foot waved wildly about seeking another crevice and miraculously found one. My second hand found a grip above that. I had started. "That's it", came the voice "That's fine. Now do it again". Before too long I had joined him and he was smiling encouragement and said that was splendid and I would soon get the hang of it, and now we'd go on. Which we did. On and on. Up and up. The rocks were now like monoliths. There was hardly room to sit

down, when we stopped at last for our sandwiches; and no rock was wide enough for us to sit together. Far, far below, like a toy village, I could see the houses of Chateau d'Oex looking like match boxes, with cows the size of houseflies. Would I ever see my dear ones again? If climbing up was so difficult it must be worse going down, because you could hardly look down, behind you, to see what you could do next. But, somehow, I had to get down.

Ben was looking at the map. "I don't think we've time to get right up and over," he said. "We'll go the shorter way and try an abseil. Do you think you can manage that?" "Oh, yes, surely," I said. I didn't know what an abseil was, but if it was a shorter way, I was all for it. "I am sure I can manage," I repeated uneasily, to reassure myself, perhaps.

On we went. An abseil is a way of getting down a smooth perpendicular rock that has no footholds. In this case we had to traverse a chimney. The side that we were on had an overhang which made it impossible to descend, so we had to get to the other side of the chimney by swinging across the crevasse. I do not know the mechanics of the exercise. Somehow, by using an extra rope as a harness, Ben went across and made all safe for me to follow. The rope held me as I swung out and grasped one on the other side. Then, pressing one's feet against the smooth rock face, while one's weight is taken up by the rope, one descends like a fly on a wall. I still do not really understand it; but Ben knew exactly what to do. He went first and secured the ropes. I only had to do what he told me. After that everything became easier. The last two miles we descended a steep grassy hill — so steep that the only way was to go down on

one's behind: to stand up was too dangerous. My silk knickers were in shreds when I reached home.

It was quite late when we reached the hotel. Arthur was very relieved to see me.

It was really a foolish undertaking. Ben had never been up there before. Had he sprained his foot, or had any accident, I could never have got down on my own: I had no idea how to set about it. No harm came of it. It was an experience that I am glad to have had, I had acute neuralgia for some days afterwards.

DOLPHINS (13)

The summer holidays for the children had become an annual matter for consultation, enquiry and decision. Delamas, Chateau D'Oex, and the renting of Crosswood were all enjoyable, but we felt the children needed more continuity, more stability. So when Arthur's mother died, and her money was divided among her four children, he suggested that we bought something in the country, where we could spend all the school holidays, and which would be a country base for the children.

We looked at a few places in the early part of the year of 1938 — among them "Muddle Farm" in Kent which we both liked. Luckily that fell through, for it proved to be on the direct bomb-run in the war.

One day Arthur came back from lunching at the City Club. "How would you like a house at the seaside?" he said. "I've heard of one that might suit us." "I'd adore that," I said "and it would be fun for the children". The next week—end we drove down on the old A24 and found our way to "Murie Lodge", Kingston Gorse. We stopped in front of the door. "Oh, no, Arthur," I said. "This is no good: it's too small. We'll never get our family in." "Well," said Arthur, "let's have a look, now we're here." A manservant let us in and showed us over the house. Room after room, bathroom after bathroom: it was incredible. And the sea just beyond the lawn. We were enchanted. "Let's get it," I said. "Let's get it and come here for the Whitsun weekend." Which we did.

Colonel Glover, the owner, offered us the house with everything in it, just as it stood except for silver and linen -

boats, mowers, beds, blankets and bedding, all in good order, for £6,000. The deal went through and we stepped in, never to regret it.

It was plainly, sensibly furnished, with furniture that we liked and a great deal that is still around today. The decorations were not to our taste, but they would do for the time being; they were the taste of a bachelor: grey cord carpets, cream coloured paint throughout, with khaki-coloured curtains, electric clocks, and willow-patterned china. He had a predilection for orange and brown and khaki which extended even to the flowers in the garden. But that could all be slowly changed, which I enjoyed doing. The carpets lasted for another thirty years. The beds and some of the blankets are still with us. The beds had no head boards, but plate glass fixed to the wall, behind each bed. There were gas fires and gas radiators in all the rooms, since Glover was a Director of the Gas Company. Gas pipes held up the tennis court fencing, and the fruit garden cage. We did not hit the tennis balls so hard in those days, and there was room for a court alongside the boat house. Dolphins, (we changed the name from Murie Lodge), has been a wonderful house to us and has provided a great deal of happiness for many people. As I write this it is my great hope that it will continue in the family even when I and the dear Barbers, who have looked after it for nearly thirty years, feel unable to continue its administration.

CLOUDS GATHER

On November 25th I read in my Five Year Diary — "Very low about Arthur's breathing. "Mr Bee", (the children's nickname for Dr Groves), came to tea and consoled me". So the year moved into 1938.

I wonder now, as I write this, what Doctor Groves said to console me. He assured me that it was not cancer. He talked of emphysema. He promised me that this was no terminal illness, though that was an expression never used then. He said we would learn to live with it. In some way he reassured me, but I cannot remember now how he did.

Up till now I have said nothing of the war that was moving towards us. I doubt if I thought much about it. Hitler kept on behaving abominably — shouting and going where he shouldn't go. He went into the Rhineland. Well it was part of Germany: it was his own back garden. But the people we had elected to govern us should know what was going on. Dictators were not all evil. Look at Mussolini, what he had done for Italy! The Pontine marshes reclaimed, their financial stability restored, the marvellous station at Milan built: they were not all, all that bad.

But in January of 1938 I went to a ladies' lunch party with Aimee Shakespeare. Bea Lubbock was one of the guests and both Mark's sisters, Agnes Loveridge and Mary Schoeffler were there. Mary was married to Paul Schoeffler, a well known Austrian operatic singer; they were living in Germany at this time. Mary said she was going back to Germany the next day. "Oh," said one of the women, "You are living n Germany now aren't you? I wonder if you'd be an angel? Stupidly I've left a hundred pounds in one of the banks out there

and because of some nonsense or other they won't send it back to me. Do you think, next time you come over, you could bring it back for me?" There had been a pause in the conversation and, for some reason, we were all listening. Mary put down her knife and fork and looked at the lady. "The penalty for that is death," she said. It was as though some cold hand had suddenly been laid on all our shoulders. There was a long deadly pause. Then the woman said "Oh, I didn't know. I'm so sorry. Of course don't bother ...."

That was the first time that I had realised a little of what was happening.

On March 12th Arthur and I listened to Hitler shouting and ranting at Leipzig over our wireless set and did not like what we heard. On March 15th my diary records that I talked for a long time to Joan Bathurst who had a lot of relations in Austria and was "in despair". At the end of March I began to attend A.R.P. lectures.

But I was in no way obsessed with worry, and took the four children with Oldy and Bea on a bicycle tour around Boston and Wisbech just before Easter. Arthur came in the car to Wisbech to see us off. We stayed four nights in pubs and small hotels, doing about twenty to thirty miles a day. Little Jenifer on her small bicycle was splendid and kept up well. I refused to decide where we would go each day until I had found out which way the wind was blowing. We had hoped to finish at King's Lynn, but finally took the train back from Bedford, sunburned and well pleased with ourselves.

Before that, in the Christmas holidays, Arthur and I had taken David and Loveday to the Cresta Kulm Hotel in Celerina, where the Douglas Greenacres and Prue Daniel were also staying. The Bathursts

were again at St. Moritz and we all had the greatest fun. This was Arthur's first visit to the winter sports and he thoroughly enjoyed it; but he took very little active part.

In June both Arthur and David were in the Bentinck Street Nursing home together. Arthur to have his tonsils out, David, sent in an ambulance from Eton, with a flared—up appendix. But both recovered quickly.

The Anschluss took place; Hitler marched into Austria. Again we were aghast. But Hitler had done it for the sake of the oppressed minority, so perhaps he was justified? Perhaps? Oh, dear God, let him be justified..... However, when Eustace Guinness asked me if I could help with a Jewish refugee from Austria, and I heard her story, it did not seem possible to justify him. I engaged her, Fra Chevez, to be with the children while Andy went on holiday. (Oldy had got married and Elizabeth Andersen from Sweden had taken her place). While she was with us her parents "disappeared", to die later in concentration camps. Eventually "Cenci" as we called her, persuaded an Englishman to marry her and went to the USA. The children hated her. She was noisy and self—assertive and bounced about. Poor girl. She probably needed to be both those things in order to survive.

Ironically, having just bought the seaside house and moved in, we had previously arranged to take Croaswood for the Lisburnes for a large part of the summer holidays. We did not feel we could let the Lisburnes down so we all went there, with countless guests, from August 12th to the 18th of September. We had the loveliest month, shooting and fishing, going for long walks up to the Roman camp and

playing tennis. But that was interrupted. My diary records that Arthur had to leave for the City — "all in a fuss over war scare." He returned after a few days, though the scare continued and the Bathursts sent their two small boys to Dolphins, while Chamberlain went to Godesberg. We finished the school holidays at Dolphins and returned to London on September 26th when my diary reads "Arthur to City. I home after lunch. News very serious and everyone nervous. Oliver (Stedall) called up for anti-aircraft territorials." The next day — "Sent children back to Dolphins on account of war scare. Worked at assembling gas masks at the Town Hall." Then - "All the boys sent back from Eton so David to Dolphins. Gas-masks in Town Hall at odd times. Lunched Claridges. Everyone in despair till 5 p.m. when news came through of Munich talks." Chamberlain returned "with the nettle danger plucked" in his hand. Next day "News really better" and "October 1st the boys returned to Eton." On Sunday we went to a thanksgiving service at Angmering Church. Many of our friends derided us. Maybe we were over optimistic and thought war had been averted. But what poor, sick, Chamberlain had gained was time: a whole precious year in which to prepare and arm ourselves a little. Arthur had chanced to see the generals leaving the War Office. He recognised Gort and Alexander among them. They were white-faced, drawn, looking like old men, he said. "If it's not peace," he said to me, "At least we've bought a bit of time to put our house in order, and those poor devils looked as though they needed it."

We spent that Christmas, 1938, at Dromenagh. David and I went to St. Moritz and Klosters to ski, on January 2nd and Andy took the

three girls at the same time to stay for ten days in Berlin with their school friends, the Wassners.

In February of 1939 someone suggested that I should go to Speakers' classes that the newly formed WVS was organising, in order that they could flood the country with recruiting speeches for the Women's services. As I had found that I could address a meeting fairly successfully, I thought I would have a go. I went to six classes, picked up a lot of information and help and advice and was promptly launched on a set of speeches to encourage people to enrol straight away in any of the many services available. At first a teacher was sent with me, to see and report on how I was doing, but very soon I was on my own. In March Germany invaded Czechoslovakia and in April Mussolini marched into Albania. By the time we had declared war, I had made twenty eight speeches round about London, to shop girls, Women's Institutes and clubs to audiences sometimes of two hundred. I spoke to the girls at Debenham and Freebody, C & A, Elizabeth Arden, Harvey Nichols and Woolands. I went as far as Worthing and Croydon. I continued with my Red Cross lectures and on July 3rd, sat in Church Street outside what was the Gas Company's offices and showrooms, enrolling ambulance drivers. My diary is full of my war activities. On July 15th I read "Lords. Harrow won! Grand fight". Cherry, aged ten, seized David Bruce's top hat as "a trophy", and only returned it with reluctance!

In August, when we were at Dolphins, we heard of the Russo German pact. On September 1st Germany invaded Poland and on 3rd we declared war.

The children were all with us. David went back to Eton. The girls' day school had already moved down to Cold Ash, near Newbury, where the headmistress of Downe House School, Miss Willis, had put a house at their disposal. From now on the girls of Queen's Gate Day School would have to be boarders in Cold Ash. One evening Jenifer, in her dressing gown, came to us in the drawing room. She had been sent by her sisters to ask if they could take Pompey, the poodle, to school with them when they went. I promised to write to "Spee" (their nickname for Miss Spalding, the headmistress), to ask her if she would accept him. (She nobly agreed and took him.) The other two, hearing the good news, came in, delighted. We all sat round the wood fire discussing our coming parting.

"Shall we sing to you?" Loveday suggested. Of course we said yes. And so Arthur and I sat together while our three precious darlings all in their dressing gowns, sang to us the songs they had learned with the Girl Guides. The last one went something like this.

High up on a mountain
Jean built a fine chalet.
And there he brought his little wife
Upon his wedding day.

But there came a fearful storm
With darkness, wind and snow
And devastation, ruin, loss,
Was all there was to show.....

Good Jean re—built his home

When Spring came round once more
And once again the chalet stood
Stronger than ere before....

Tears suddenly filled my eyes. Blindly I held out my hand to Arthur's. He pressed mine in understanding. The fearful storm was on us. Could we ever build our chalet up again?

THE WAR (14)

My first impression of the war, as I look so far back across so many years, is that a sort of General Post went on. Everybody began to move in to other people's houses. Those that were able to remain in their own, as we were for a time, found people needing a bed, needing to stay. They shut their own flats up — (had their servants left?) — or they came from the country to join some military or civil service, and nowhere to go. Bryan was our first lodger, soon joined by Prue Daniel, then a strange character called James Norton, whom Arthur knew in the City, and who, years afterwards, turned out to be Geoffrey Winterbotham's brother-in-law. Marjorie and Wilfred House both came to stay. He had got a job at the War Office and she was looking for a flat. Katie came and went. They slept in the night and day nursery, the spare room and David's room, coming and going at their own convenience. It was good fun and, as we were still fully staffed, I enjoyed it. Bryan rejoined the Welsh Guards. It was a sad decision for Arthur, leaving him the only partner at the office. Be knew that his health was too uncertain to pass a medical, and accepted the dreary, common round with a sad heart. He adored his old regiment and would have given anything to serve them in any capacity; but it had to be Bryan who got into khaki and polished buttons, of course eventually, red tabs and all the charade that goes with Staff jobs. Arthur never complained as he did his dreary stint at Carden's; but I know it nearly broke his heart not to be able to serve his regiment. As it turned out he had far the worst job. Bryan never went outside this country, while Arthur had all the blackout, the City fires, the

uncertain transport and the lonely responsibility of keeping the firm going with a skeleton staff.

David left Eton and, with Arthur's advice and help, got a job with the Rolls-Royce Company in Derby as an engineering apprentice, until he was old enough to enlist.

Petrol was rationed almost immediately. We used the small Austin car as much as possible, and I took to my bicycle.

Christmas plans worried me. We could have gone to Dromenagh but it was full of old aunts and would not have been much fun for the children. We spent a weekend with the Lawrences at Oaksey.

Flintham Cottage, at the end of their drive, had just been done up and was empty and they offered it to us if we could furnish it for the holidays. It had a small sitting room, kitchen and bathroom. Out of the sitting room was a small spiral staircase leading directly in to one bedroom which led into another. Both were big enough for two beds. The Lawrences offered to put up David for his few days leave. Holmes would only come when Arthur came and she could sleep in a nearby cottage. There was also a daily available called Poppy, who proved to be the flower of forgetfulness that I might have anticipated.

I chose the bare necessities from the Terrace: beds and rugs, tables and chairs and kitchen things, enough linen for four weeks, — and that was it. The cottage was minute: there was little enough room when it was empty. So on December 16th, I hired a van, sat myself at the back of it in an armchair, was driven to Oaksey and moved in. The Lawrences were most helpful, kind and hospitable and when the school holidays began I was ready to welcome the girls and,

later, Arthur for Christmas. The Lawrences introduced us to all their friends (they would accept no invitations for their children unless ours were invited), so that they had plenty of parties. They rode. Loveday actually hunted once and we all enjoyed ourselves.

With the New Year one of the coldest winters of the century set in. Arthur and I, alone in the cottage for our last night there, found the main pipe frozen and the only water available in our hot water bottles. The bitter weather persisted; at the end of January I am still writing in my diary "Snow! Snow!" One night there was a thaw followed quickly by a very sharp frost and we woke to find all the trees, everything, every twig, even every green leaf encased in tinkling, twinkling, shining ice. It was incredibly beautiful and everybody insisted on describing it to everyone they met, though we had all shared the experience. It was really remarkable: as though a pantomime transformation scene had been produced at every turn. But it was murder on the roads!

The holidays over, the furniture returned from Flintham Cottage to the Terrace, life went on as before. I went to see the Peckham Nursery School settled in at Glyndebourne, attended ARP and still did a bit of lecturing for the WVS myself. The "cold war", that is no activity on any of the fronts of Europe, had lulled us in to a false feeling of security. Arthur and I were be—devilled with German measles and crept down to Dolphins for the girls' Easter holidays. Cherry caught the disease. School reopened on May 8th and except for Jenifer who was quarantine, the girls went back, although by then Germany had invaded Norway and Denmark on April 9th. We believed in the Maginot Line, although even Arthur and I, motoring through the Ardennes two years before, had seen how easy it would be

to skirt it. But on May 10th Holland and Belgium were invaded, and all Whitsun holidays were cancelled.

My mind seems to have frozen, for the entries in my diary are so brief and laconic that you would think I was used to a world conflagration opening up at my feet. "May 22nd 1940. Anxious about news. Germans approaching coast. School meeting. Geoffrey Lawrence dined."

Arthur and I went up to Derby for David's birthday on May 26th. All that I record on May 25th is "Drove to Matlock. Tea at Villa Gellia with wild lilies of the valley. On Sunday I remember well that we went to Church and the sermon was about the danger that we were standing in, and our prayers were no longer for peace but for survival. Yet all that my diary records is "Lunch with Mrs Rowbotham. D & I played tennis. A caught 6 o'clock. D & I drank his health and went on his 'Brough' (motor cycle) together." I remember how we talked, the three of us, of a possible invasion. We did not know that, that same Sunday, our HQ had ordered our army to evacuate France. Arthur gave David a hundred pounds and told him that if we were cut off by the German armies, he must try to get to America from the west coast, and go to Mr Johnson, whose address I gave him. Then as soon as an army was formed over there, or in Canada to liberate us, he must join that. He was just eighteen. But all my diary records on Monday May 27th is "Caught the 9.30 from Derby. Sad to leave Davie...." The next day "Belgium surrenders. Attended meeting of the Kensington Nursing Association."

I quote again because it is so unbelievable that I could make such unemotional entries. "May 29th. Desperate position for B.E.F.

in Flanders. No news of anyone. 2nd bat. of Welsh Guards cut up at Boulogne. Packed three trunks for safekeeping at Dromenagh." "Thursday May 30th. Nigel Fisher safe and Sammy Stanier. Neil Perrins believed killed. Dromenagh with documents etc from Cardens. Geoffrey Lawrence and George Barstow dined with us." On Friday Arthur and I went to Dolphins and on Saturday, June 1st "Douglas Greenacre safe home. Prue Daniel and Bathursts arrived for dinner and weekend." "Monday 3rd. Home for lunch. Russell boys safe. Douglas Greenacre and Isabel and Freddy Sykes dined." Tues. 4th "11.30 Nursery School committee. Joan Bathurst lunched. Mark Lubbock to stay. Arthur dined Peter Wilding, I with Lawcences at L'Aperitif and cinema and then met Mark at Savoy Grill." Wednesd4y 5th. Met Mark and lunched Bath Club with George Howe and a friend of his. No news Billy Rowallan. Evacuation over..."

For some reason, now obliterated by time, Donald West, from Arthur's office, wanted to take his mother to Dolphins; so we installed them and returned on June 16th. "Left Dolphins 7 am, breakfast at home. Billy Rowallan safe. Dined Houses (in their flat)."

June 12th. "Bicycled to Peckham for Executive Committee. Lunch Aunt Alice at the Forum Club."

June 13th. "Lunched Geoffrey Lawrence at Savoy and on to stirrup pump practice at Convent of Assumption."

But for all these extraordinary entries I had been thinking hard. If there was to be an invasion I was determined to be with the children when it happened. Ernest Lisburne had promised me that we could borrow Crosswood if we decided that Wales was the best place

to get to. Dolphins was too hazardous. If the Germans invaded that coast might well be their choice. In fact, after the war it transpired that it had been one of their chosen landing grounds. David had been abandoned at Derby. Arthur could get to Wales (or so we hoped), if he knew we were there. I took Ernest up on his promise and he generously agreed to implement it. I offered my plan to my sisters and to Marjorie House. Joe decided not to move from her home at tbe Larches, near Dromenagh. Katie with Rosalind and Olivia accepted. Marjorie with her three decided to come with us. So the diary continues.

June 16th. "We prayed for France, but fear she is past praying for."

June 17th. "M. News of French surrender. Sent for the girls from school."

June 18th. "T. Took three girls and Pompey by train to Ffyone at Boncath to be with Mrs. Daniel (Prue's Mother) till I can get Crosswood straight."

June 19th. "Left Ffyone at 8am. Home 4.30. Greenacres dined. Feel desperate low."

June 20th. "Lunched with A. at Savoy. Eliz Cohen (now Samuels) married to Arthur Serocold. Katie for night and Oliver dined.

June 21st. "F. Katie, Marjorie I left in the Rolls—Royce at 6.4Sam. Breakfast with Joe at Iver Heath where we collected the Stedall children. Marjorie picked up her car and three children, Adrian, Simon and Julia, at Eynsham (her in-laws' home). Lunch at Ross. Arrived at Crosswood 6.30."

June 22nd. S. Crosswood. Katie's Phyllis and Bella, Joan and Gwenyth here (these must have been local maids). Loveday, Cherry and Jenifer arrived from Boncath for lunch.

June 23rd. "All to Church."

Except for the cold fear that gripped one's entrails whenever one stopped to think, the three months at Crosswood passed happily enough. The children all enjoyed themselves. We used the small servants' kitchen and their snug servants' hall for our dining room. Each grown—up appropriated a large double spare room for herself and the children were suitably accommodated. We used Reggie Lisburne's lovely little boudoir with her Chinese lacquered furniture and glass pictures, opening onto the garden, for our sitting—room. But except for the evenings, when we listened with dismay to the nine o'clock news, we did not sit much. We took it in turn to cook. When the meal was served one of the children would ask "Who cooked today?" When the answer came the children of the cook would cry with loyal enthusiasm "It is de—lic—ious!" While the others ate on silently. I arranged for the local clergyman, Mr Jenkins, to give the children lessons, and I bicycled up twice a week to the vicarage as I fancied I could teach them history! We went for long walks and lovely picnics by the sea. We fished in the Teify pools. We had tennis parties for the officers of the Welsh Regiment stationed nearby. From time to time our respective husbands would arrive for a weekend or a few days' leave, which caused even greater activity in the kitchen and great happiness all round. Once David arrived from Derby on his "velocette". We had sewing parties with the Crosswood tenants, rolling bandages and making slings.

Meanwhile the Battle of Britain was being fought out over Sussex, Kent, Surrey, Middlesex and Essex and though we did not realise it then, the future of our lives was being decided.

Over the wireless we were directed to hide our stores of food and ammunition in case the Germans descended; so we hid our stores behind Reggie's large cupboard full of flower vases. There must have been guns for Adrian shot a buzzard, so I suppose we hid those too.

Pompey chased the sheep till at last one of them died of exhaustion. The shepherd came to see me. 'I am not saying that the dog killed the lamb, he said in his sing—song voice, 'But Ma'am, the lamb is dead.' We were all horrified and dismayed and Pompey was in deep disgrace. I bought the dead lamb and Pompey did not misbehave again.

Early in September the raids on London began in earnest and Arthur moved out to Dromenagh which he made his headquarters for the rest of the war, driving to Uxbridge in his little car and going by tube to the City. No one could have been more welcome than he was at Dromenagh. Both my parents loved him and he was like a son to them both. He made them laugh with his stories of the day's adventures and they were always happiest when he was there. The three aunts were now firmly established there, two with their ladies' maids. They were Aunt Fanny Bell, Aunt Florrie de la Rue and Aunt Alice Williams. They were all my Father's sisters. Aunt Florrie died there in 1943. The other two returned to London when the war ended. The Bathursts and the Lawrences also used Dromenagh at their convenience. Meanwhile the intense danger of invasion seemed to be over. The bombing raids were now the greatest hazard. We decided

that the Crosswood exile was no longer necessary and at the end of September we all left there. The girls went back to school and I joined Arthur at Dromenagh. Now it was my turn to join the peripatetic circus. Mrs Neal joined the W.R.A.F., Holmes married her fishmonger from Delmas. The Greys continued to live in the Terrace basement and Mrs Grey did what she could for me when I was there.

I made my first visit as Governor of the Malvern Girls' College to Malvern on November 8th and attended my first Council Meeting on November 14th, dining and staying at the College.

Marjorie Lawrence had risen already to great heights in the A.T.S. and had to be away from home a good deal. Partly because of that and partly because the Christmas before, when we had been at their Flintham Cottage, had proved a success, they now very kindly asked us all to stay with them for the Christmas holidays. We all gratefully crowded in. The Jack Rutherfords had moved to Flintham Cottage. (Jack was serving in the R.A.S.C.) Joan and I helped as best we could with the Lawrence girls and John. I remember once or twice going on the milk round with her when they were short-handed at the farm. The holidays shared with them were again good fun; but I felt more strongly than ever that some country place for the children's school holidays should be found. The end of 1940 found me enquiring round the neighbourhood of Oaksey. — Were there any lodgings or empty houses to be had? There was not. I was not the only one seeking an alternative home from London. No one knew of anything. At last I found myself consulting Mr Rich who lived in a comfortable black and white brick house up at the end of the village. He was not very hopeful, but as I left said — "You might try Jim Woodhouse. He has recently taken over Park Farm. He might

have a room or two to spare." So along that snow—covered, long, desolate drive I trudged that same late afternoon. The Park Manor House was where Jock and Cissy Murray had lived when they first married. We had been to a tennis party and played tennis on their deep mossy lawn, when we had first stayed with the Lawrences many years before. Now Jock was dead and Cissy lived up near Mr Rich with her three boys Antony, Christopher and Richard. Their Manor House still stood, empty now, right on top of the farm house into which Jim and his wife Renee recently married had, moved. He was a hard working knowledgeable farmer with an appreciation of all modern equipment and methods and was to prove one of the most progressive and successful farmers in the county. Renee was an equally valuable character and was of French extraction, a descendant of Jules, the famous hotelier and restaurateur in Jermyn Street. I put my request this time to Jim. I wanted rooms for six of us: three bedrooms would do, four would be better. He looked me up and down speculatively. "There's a barn over there," he nodded over my shoulder, "used to be the old cheese store but there arn't any facilities for living in it," he said in his deep Wiltshire accent. "May I look at it?" I asked. "No harm in that", he said, "but I can't think it's what you want".

I followed him through a door in a stone wall, across a small stone flagged room with an enormous hearth, over which still hung a huge kettle on a hook and chain. He led me about four steps across the room to a small stone staircase leading on to a wooden platform with two windows. Off the platform was a shut door which he opened. "That's the barn," he said. It was immense: as big as a small Church, with a white, raftered ceiling, and a great beam halfway

across. Even on that dark afternoon there was plenty of light from the surrounding windows.

— I could divide the room in two, I thought. One double room and a big sitting room. — "Is there any water laid on?" I asked "any electricity?" "There's an old hand pump in the kitchen; I suppose you could get it piped," he answered. "And I'm getting electricity for the farm. It's been promised. They're bringing the grid across here." I went back to the landing outside the barn. — Room there for a small bathroom and W.C. but nothing else. — "Any other rooms?" I persisted. "Not what would be any good to you," was the discouraging answer. "There are store rooms where we keep coal and wood and old implements downstairs." "May I look?" I asked. He led the way down again in to the ancient kitchen out of which there was another door which he opened on to a passage from which the store rooms led. There were four of them, each with a window, but now with coal in one, junk in another and bales of straw in a third. They were difficult to assess in the gathering gloom. But there were four rooms. I had seen some builders leaving the Manor as I had come along. "Could I get some building done?" I asked? "I expect you could. They're working over there now. The government have requisitioned it for the Air Ministry: They don't seem in any particular hurry. I expect they'd give you a hand."

"May I come back tomorrow morning?" I asked. "May I have the first refusal till then? I think I could do something with it if you'd let me." "You're welcome if you think you can. I'd have to charge you thirty shillings a week, and you'd have to pay for what you want done. But think it over. Come tomorrow when you can see it better."

I thanked him and walked back to the Lawrences. It seemed to me, even then, a fortunate find. It was such a lovely building, and as I turned to have a last look I saw it had an outside stone staircase leading to a door in the big barn. That settled it! An outside staircase! We must get it! I don't know why that excited me so much. Perhaps it went back to the one at Deudraeth Castle which had so delighted us as children. But now my mind was made up. I could make it habitable. We could all get in. This was what I had been looking for. This is what I had found.

The next morning I went back with Katie and the Rutherfords to see my find. Katie had by then moved in to the Hudson's bothy at Pond Farm, near Tetbury, and so quite close to Oaksey. The Hudsons and the Stedalls were old friends through their City company, the Ironmongers; with Oliver away with his Territorials, it suited Katie better to have her own cottage than sharing Joe's house, the Larches at Iver Heath. I think that both Katie and Joan Rutherford thought me a little cracked to take on such a hurdle as the uninhabited barn and out-houses. I had a talk with the foreman builder who was working at the Manor. He agreed to do what he could for me. Jim Woodhouse guaranteed that the electricity would arrive and I planned to get in for the Easter ho1idays.

Building was not as impossible to get done as it became later when the bombing intensified; but it was already quite difficult and though my diary tells me that on February 17th 1941 "I persuaded the builders, who arrived in the afternoon, at last, to begin work", on March 2nd. "l am pleased with their endeavours", on the following 25th "I find very little done and I have to urge the workmen on." The Lawrences continued to bear with my flying visits. Meanwhile in

London I had been packing and sorting china and silver, furniture and pictures and rugs and curtains to take down there, which I did on February 14th. The place was far from ready, but I packed everything in the big room upstairs which needed nothing doing to it. Inevitably I took too much stuff down and the second van had to return half full of things that I could not accommodate. But somehow, by the end of March, things had straightened themselves out sufficiently for me to return with kind Bea Lubbock and a splendid character called Annie Southwater whom I had engaged for the holidays. We pushed and pulled and unpacked and arranged and finally slept in the little, now converted coal bunks, downstairs. The electricians and their grid had failed to appear so that hot water relied on the gargantuan kettle over the great fire which burned night and day, in the kitchen downstairs. Except for the anthracite stove in the sitting room upstairs — ("old riddle-me-ree" as it came to be called), that was our only heating.

A man came out from Cirencester to lay the rugs and hang the curtains. The blue chintz dining room curtains were hung across the big beam in the barn, with the Innes pictures in front of them. The green striped brocade curtains from the drawing room, (still today at Dolphins), hung on the bedroom side, so that the room was prettily divided. Cooking over the log fire presented difficulties, but I overcame them gradually and described my adventures briefly in "The Journal of International Wine and Food Society" Volume 5 Number 3. February 1979, in an article called "Cooking with Love" under the pseudonym, "Barbara Williams". The electric grid eventually appeared before the summer holidays, when we rejoiced in hot water in the taps, electric fires and kettle and cooker. Although Annie

Southwater had agreed to come the following holidays, I never heard from her or of her again, despite every attempt. I have often wondered if she were killed in an air raid. Florrie Scott replaced her, who served us faithfully to the end of the war, arriving every school holiday cleaning and washing up for us and eventually following us to Dolphins. When she retired to Tunbridge Wells, Loveday took her under her wing, and she and Philip cared for her and looked after her until many years later she died most happily in an Old Peoples' Home. Loveday took me to her funeral not so very long ago.

We christened the barn "The Granary" by which it is still known today. Miraculously, when the Easter holidays began on April 1st, all was ready for the girls, who were now 13 and 12. I had discovered and bought a pony trap, and through the good offices of Jack Gibbs, the parson at Tetbury, bad acquired two ponies — "Red King" and "Comet". The children were ecstatic and thrilled — with their tiny rooms, the lovely buildings, the proximity of the farm, the closeness of us all. Arthur arrived for week—ends and was marvellously pleased and encouraging, for it must have seemed terribly cold and primitive to him. But he never complained, only smiled that wonderful, beneficent, warm smile and applauded all that I had done.

Looking back now, across the forty years that divide me from those days, it does seem that the Granary provided many of us, beside our own family, an escape and haven from the turmoils of the awful war that we were engaged upon. Was it the beautiful country—side and the marvellous Cotswold buildings? The kindness and sympathy of all the village people who looked on me as some sort of

freak, pitifully ignorant, but anxious to learn from them? Was it the happiness of the three girls, immersed for the first time in real country, with animals to be cared for, seasons to be followed and the Woodhouses' amusement and tolerance of their ignorance which illuminated our days? All three were so touchingly proud of me as I struggled with my cooking problems, the ponies who were quite outside my control but whose trap I drove with pretended confidence to gymkhanas and meets, to shop in Cirencester, to meet trains at Kemble. Arthur was mounted on Red King and led by the girls to see the fritilary fields nearby. We bicycled all over the country. The Gervas Huxleys, the Lawrences and the Rutherfords entertained us and were entertained in turn. We read Shakespeare's plays out loud, acted charades and played paper games. And all the time that lovely Wiltshire countryside enclosed us, "enabling with perpetual light the dullness of our blinded sight.....".

It was through a chance meeting one day in Malmesbury that Loveday and Philip Hudson met. He was Hope and Barton Hudson's eldest son and had just joined the Grenadiers. Because his transport plans had failed he was eating a lonely lunch at "The Bell" where we had gone to break our shopping expedition. We knew the Hudson family slightly through the Stedalls. We invited Philip to join us and Loveday drove him back to Pond Farm, where his parents lived, while Arthur and I waited at the hotel. I can still see her happy, excited face, flushed with triumph, as she drove Red King in the pony trap back to pick us up.

However, despite the happy holidays, the sunshine and the laughter, the awful fact of the war was always with us and we turned to the news on the radio and seized on the papers with a fear that seldom left our hearts, so that my memories of those happy holidays at Oaksey are shot through with days of dark dread. As shot silk is made up of two distinct threads, so are my recollections of those days. The dark and the golden memories are inextricably woven together. For while we were at the Granary, early in 1941, London had one of the worst incendiary bombings that the City ever suffered. From Dromenagh they could see the reflection of the fires in the sky, sixteen miles away. Poor Arthur, arriving that morning of January 6th, found the office cordoned off and he had to return to Dromenagh full of dread and apprehension of what he would find next day.

In April our heroic attempts to save Greece from the German invasion failed miserably, and the Embassy staff and British residents were hurriedly evacuated. I was staying with the Lawrences urging on the builders at the Granary at the time. Their niece, Nancy Barstow (she was then Mrs. and is now Lady Cuccia) was among the evacuees and she wrote a most haunting letter home to describe her experience. She and her family were on an island and escaped with their lives, but her brother was killed as the Germans bombed the small ships. She wrote in such a state of shock that the burden of her letter seemed to be concerned most of all with the loss of a small brooch that she had dropped on the shore as she landed, and could not find again.

Much later on it was at the Granary that we got the news after 'D' dày that David was wounded and in hospital at Reading. I and girls were out in the fields helping with the haymaking. The news came over the telephone to Rene Woodhouse. She didn't let me know till I came back from the fields, which wasted quite a lot of time. I naturally I set off for Reading at once. I remember my anxiety and how hot that summer evening was. Actually David had sprained his ankle very badly in the Normandy fighting, which probably saved his life. It was at the Granary that I heard that John Spencer, who commanded David's squadron, had been killed. I left the sitting room where we were all playing some game and went into the garden and cried my heart out over the gate post. I think I cried then for the whole world. It was all that I could do. It was at the Granary that Arthur and I watched the endless flight of planes flying over to Arnhem on that ill-fated expedition. Always there was the terror and in with the joys and the fun, so the Granary memories are two-stranded: the black and the gold irretrievably mixed.

But back now to January of 1941 when we had the good news that Loveday had passed her School Certificate & Matriculation very creditably; in order to learn short—hand and typing she was entered for Malvern Girls' College, since I was now going fairly regularly there as a Governor. At the end of the summer term of 1942 I proudly listened to her reading the lesson in the Priory at the large Commemoration Service. Then, thanks to Ben Bathurst, it was decided that she should join the A.T.A. where he was working at White

Waltham. She went to stay with the Oliver Stanleys that autumn. The romance with Philip Hudson from then on began to take off, and I watched it nervously, feeling that they were both really too young to embark on anything as permanent as marriage.....

In May '41 the sinking of the Bismarck was good for our morale. Arthur followed every detail of the chase and was thrilled with the final surrender. The news came when we were up at the Dinnet where Arthur had taken some salmon fishing for David's nineteenth birthday. It was a lovely interlude for all three of us, with the wild birds hatching, and running along the sedge; the weather was perfect. Friendly people were staying at Profeit's Hotel, most of whom we knew. David had by now left Derby and was on his way to Caterhain, before going to Sandhurst in August, and so, eventually into the Armoured Brigade of the Welsh Guards.

At the end of the year came the apocalyptic news of Pearl Harbour; almost immediately afterwards one of the worst blows that the war had yet dealt us: the total loss of our two finest ships: "Prince of Wales" and "Repulse". I heard the news in the lift of the W.V.S. Headquarters in Caxton Street where I was working at that time, and I think my heart sank then as never before and seldom since. Not long afterwards the fall of Tobruk was another blow to our esteem.

When I was not at the Granary I was chiefly based at Dromenagh where Arthur was happily established. I travelled up each day with

him by tube from Uxbridge, to work with the W.V.S. writing letters and speeches, all of which I enjoyed.

One day in March, 1942 "Kutya" Krishaber asked me to lunch with him. Otto was his real name. I always enjoyed a meal with him. He was very good fun, full of jokes and stories and anxious for any news I could tell him of the children. Rather surprisingly, on this occasion he embarked on a long story about a great friend of his — a Miss Burke who was headmistress of the Kensington Girls' High School. He would so like us to meet. Some day it must be arranged. He knew we would be friends. I listened without much avid interest. "Some day...." When I returned to the Granary he wrote to me. He was off on a lovely journey, travelling around, and greatly looking forward to it. He sent us all his love and all kind messages.

In a fortnight I heard from Joan Bathurst, his only child, that he had disappeared; they believed him dead. They knew no more. He had left a joint account in her name of all that he possessed and his flat to dispose of. They were not to look for him. They would never see him again. We were all bewildered. Where had he gone? How could he have died, unseen, unheard of? His servant said he had packed in the usual way, left in a taxi in the usual way. That was all that was known.

Two years later, foresters clearing through some thick woodland which had been untouched for many years near Mortonhampstead, had found his skeleton, with a large bottle of

asprins beside it. From his clothes every single mark of identification had been removed, except for his hat. His hat still had the maker's mark and from that he had been identified.

But after that lunch with him on March 2nd something tugged at my conscience. I went to see Miss Burke at her Kensington High School. We took an instant liking to each other and became great friends. I am not sure if it was Kutya who had called her "Clio", or if it was I who nicknamed her; but she was "Clio", the muse of history, to us all from then on.

THE WAR (15)

One day she bemoaned the fact that there were no kindergartens left in London. Now that the bombing had quietened down, families were returning, especially those who had no relations in the country. Some of the day schools had returned but the babies were uncatered for. Poor young mothers, deprived of their pre-war cooks and nannies, trying to run a house or flat for their husbands working in London, were demented by their babies of three to five years, who had to have a main meal at mid-day and to be kept occupied somehow all their waking hours. Clio was continually begged to include these small children at the High School; but it was impossible. She had neither the room staff or authority for small children.

"I'll have a nursery School!" I said. "Monday to Fridays, from nine to four, with school holidays synchronising with those of my children. The poor Mums can plant their babies here. I'll give them lunch. If we start at 9.30 that will give the mothers time to get their breakfast and drop the husbands off for work. They can pick the babies up at four o'clock and put them to bed after their tea, before the husband gets home. I can use the ground floor at the Terrace."

"You?!" said Clio. "But you have no experience of schools! You can't possibly do it." "I can. Why not? I'll get a trained assistant. She'll cope with the babies: I'll administer." Clio looked stupefied. "How can you? How can you give them lunch, for instance?" "How do you?" I queried. "Well, we have it sent from the Borough Council", she admitted. "Well, so can I," I rejoined. And

that is how my Nursery School came about. I gave up my work at the W.V.S. and opened in October with ten, mostly foreign, children and an excellent Mrs Forrest in charge. Arthur called it 'Polyglot College!' The parents gladly paid eight pounds a term. Mrs Gray and Sheila were living in the basement and they did the cleaning for me.

In October 1943 I wrote to Eustace Guinness — "it is nearly a year since I opened the Nursery School. I do think it has justified itself. It must have helped lots of homes and it has done the babies good. It is a little disappointing to realise that the children will not remember it at all: that what they are almost unconsciously absorbing will be remembered no more than the meals that they eat. But, like their meals, a lot of it will become part of them, and stay with them for ever. I like the 'impersonalness' of them: their utter objectivity. They need you only to do things for them — never to be anything. To tie their feeders, unbutton their overalls, lace their shoes, dry their tears; not to be sympathetic, not to 'Understand'. As soon as they are old enough to differentiate with their affection between Mrs Forrest and me they leave: they are five years old and graduate to a real school. I like their little, cool, confident hands. I like to watch their faces, bud—like in their lack of stamped expression. They are a continual pleasure to the eye and entertainment to the mind. My Persian is still with me. I have a Yugoslav who bites and a little Polish girl called Micheline whom the children refer to as Mussolini. My Czhec is still with me and also my Spaniard, so I am still pretty polyglot .... "

It all worked very well until the doodlebug bombs started in 1945 and I had to close, luckily before a landmine fell to the west of the garden. The glass flew out of the windows and one of the fire

buckets that we kept filled with water on the top floor, slopped over as the poor house swayed to the explosion. That November Arthur was ill with bronchitis and had to go to the London Clinic. But he recovered enough to join us all at the Granary for Christmas, and we had a happy time there with David on leave. But from then on, I believe his health really began to deteriorate. He caught cold after cold and each time was left with a wearing cough, breathlessness, bad nights, and a great fatigue. The 1943 diary, despite the better war news, with Italy's surrender and our sweep through Africa is a sad one. It began bravely enough with seventeen of us, including Arthur, lunching at the Connaught Rooms and going to see Peter Pan. Besides Cherry and Jenifer we took the Hutchisons, the Houses and the Bathursts. (David Bathurst, my godson, thought the Connaught Rooms was my home and remarked to his mother on the number of friends that I had!) Arthur took Cherry and Jenifer and me to dine at Claridges and we slept at the Terrace.

In May Joe heard that Cohn Hutchison had been killed in a car accident in Africa. She rang me up early one morning. Arthur and I were at the Terrace. I telephoned our parents and went straight down to her, doing the very little that I could, and deeply shocked. It was a disaster for the little family.

Soon after it was confirmed that Reggie Lisburne was dying of cancer and I went to see her.

The nursery school was overcome with measles that Spring and needed a lot of attention. Then the bees gave trouble at the Granary, (a hive had become vicious), and I had to go down there.

In September Arthur developed pleurisy while staying in London. I had turned his dressing room into a kitchen so that I could cook meals for us there when he came. It proved very useful from then on. He became ill on the day that the new term opened, with twenty-two children and a new helper. Dr Groves arranged for him to go to the London Clinic and I hurried to and fro. As soon as he was fit to be driven, I took him down to Dromenagh where he was always wonderfully looked after and fed. But by October 9th, he was still coughing and there is a touching little entry in my diary, written for once by him - 1943 Dromenagh. A lovely day, but Arthur very sad at thought of my return to Polyglot tomorrow. Picked leaves with him .....

On the 28th Mrs Forrest took ill and I had to stand in for her at the school. Arthur came up to London to see Dr Smart but on November 12th was ill again and back in bed at the Terrace. He progressed and Dr Groves appeared quite happy about him. On the 16th he felt really better and asked me to get him a dozen oysters and some stout which he enjoyed. The next morning 'Grovey' came early and pronounced his lung clear and all well. But at 12.30 he called me and when I hurried in I found him terribly ill: cold and shivering and his temperature over 103. I piled on blankets and fetched hot water bottles and called Grovey back. He had double pneumonia. It was awful. Two nurses arrived and a thick London fog helpfully descended. This situation continued for ten days. The nurses fell ill and had to be replaced. The nursery school helper did likewise and I had to find someone to cope with the children, besides cooking for the nurses and making nourishing drinks and dishes for Arthur. In the middle of all this my darling Loveday told

me that she and Philip wanted to get married. On December 10th I had three teeth out and on the 12th my diary reads — "Horrible day, trying to get wedding day and visit to Cornwall fixed and Arthur to consent to try to get to the reception. Successful at last. V. tired. Philip and Loveday to tea. Arthur dressed for first time." About the same time I wrote to Eustace Guinness:—

".....I won't enlarge on the last week; it has not been a nice one. The worry has not been confined to the immediate frightening present, though that was enough to fill each of the twenty-four hours. The long ahead future looms like a black shadow whenever I can switch my mind off Arthur's hourly struggle. What does it hold for him when he is well again? I am certain that he should never work in the City during the winter: he must live in as mild a climate as this country can produce after this. Perhaps each summer he could come back for a while. What shall we do? Sell Dolphins, I suppose, since he will never commute from there again. Find somewhere in S. Devon or S. Cornwall and furnish it with the Dolphins stuff? Somewhere where it would be easy and convenient for him to be in bed (which it isn't at the Granary), where the children can have their ponies and perhaps reach the sea? Where he can potter in his garden and sit in the Sun? And I? And me? How can I disengage myself from the day nursery? How can I make myself a fit person to live each day out, all day, with an invalid, miles from all the people and things I do so desire? If only I were a different person — but it is so difficult to alter now. How difficult to remember with each fretting day what I do truly know: that to have one quarter of Arthur alive and just fairly well is worth all the rest of the world to me....."

Arthur meanwhile had struggled back to life and I decided we should have to go to Dromenagh for Christmas, where at least Arthur would be warm and well fed and we could be with poor Joe and perhaps make things a little easier for her and her children. So we did that. On the 28th I took the children to the granary and the Christmas holidays took off.

THE WAR - 1944

It was about this time, early in the forties, when he was quite perceptibly beginning to slow down, that Arthur began to enjoy his considerable talent for calligraphy and sketching. Alan Gwynne-Jones helped him by correspondence and once came over to the Granary to stay a couple of nights in order to explain the techniques of water-colouring, which was very friendly and kind of him. However, Cherry took his fancy and he spent most of his time doing pencil sketches of her and a few, unwillingly, of the rest of us (he was moving at this time away from landscapes to portraits,) so there was not much time left for poor Arthur's lessons. Miss Dorothy Hutton of the 'Three Shields' Gallery in Holland Street gave him instruction in calligraphy for which he had a real gift. The Red Cross enlisted his help for their re-constituted books and he inscribed hundreds of their spine papers which were then stuck onto the backs of the badly needed books. At Nansidwell he would sit happily in the winter sunshine sketching and painting flowers, landscapes, buildings; but he thought nothing of his talent and seldom called even my attention

to his hobby. In this, as in everything else about him, he was the most modest of men and looked for praise from no-one.

AIR RAIDS

February 26th 1944 I wrote to Eustace

Nansidwell, Mawnan, Falmouth.

..... The raids have begun again as we all told each other they surely would as we hurried back to our deserted London houses and flats; at one time these could not be given away but have now rocketed up to fantastic rents ..... So far the raids have all been at night which limits my worry to Mrs Forrest's and Mrs Le Mote's nerves and safety and to Mrs Gray's and to the actual house itself. But if they begin daylight raids I think I shall have to go back, which will mean many difficulties. I'll worry about that tomorrow .....

Poor Clio had her High School knocked around again when bombs fell between Upper Phillimore Gardens and the Terrace — one on Bedford College in Campden Hill Road. One out of her three houses is out of action but the others, though very cold, are workable. The War House was hit and the London Library is temporarily out of gear. Windows flew from Downing Street. Fires were the programme over the week—end near us. The Carmelite R.C. Church in Church Street was burnt out — "very frightening", Mrs Gray wrote me, "but all all right here". They seem to have been pretty widespread all over the week. My old aunt of ninety-three had to fly in her slippers and nightgown through the cold roads of Wimbledon supported by her daughter of seventy equally undressed. The daughter, I am told looks rather tired, but old 93 full of spark. The Gibbs family can't have the same stamina, for Arthur's uncle of only 83 (Uncle Willy who gave Loveday £1,000) died in the bus queue on Thursday on his way to

the City, after several nights in the shelter. The strain and the cold (the weather there has been bitter), defeated the poor old boy. Dromenagh was thrown into a frenzy over the homelessness of my Mother's sister. With 6 servants, 3 dailies, a chauffeur and a man to carry wood and coal, Mummy wrote me that she could not manage such an influx of people without extra help in the kitchen. (My God!) She added "we have had a nasty rade (sic) here & I am told that the Germans dropped a lot of flax". Since then, though, they really have had a 'rade' which demolished the village school completely, and left 3 unexploded bombs in the farm .....

Nineteen forty-four, forty five, forty six were three most difficult terrible years. But mixed between the tragedies, as it is so often in life, were times of great happiness. I shall deal with them first because there were pools of pleasure and joy which seem isolated now from the darkness of the next period of my life.

Loveday's most happy marriage to Philip Hudson brought us joy and delight, beset though that was with all the difficulties of organising a reception with strict food rationing, collecting a trousseau for the bride and new clothes for ourselves with clothes and materials harshly rationed by the scarcity of clothes coupons; Arthur still so ill that he could do little but give me moral support and write careful lists of everything that had to be listed. It is all written up extensively in my letters to Eustace which some day I hope to edit and make available.

The young people (and how young they were!) were married in the Guards' Chapel which was to be demolished by a flying bomb the following June 1944. The bride had a white velvet dress, which was

borrowed: the six bridesmaids wore red velvet. David gave his sister away. Arthur only managed to get to his seat beside me by using the vestry door, but was able to attend the reception which was held at the Terrace. The Nursery School chairs and desks had been all stacked upstairs, a carpet laid in the hall and dining room and lovely flowers arranged by Constance Spry at twenty pounds a vase. We tied bows of blue ribbon on to the empty picture hooks and the ground floor looked quite festive for the fifty or so chosen guests who were invited to come for a buffet lunch after the Church service. In the basement Mrs Grey presided over a meal for village friends who had come up from Oaksey, for "Watty" from Dolphins etc.

Two days afterwards I took Arthur, with the help of a wheel chair at Paddington, to Truro, and from there to Mrs Twiddy's Manor House in St. Mawes opposite Falmouth across the estuary from Falmouth. But it did not do and by February the twelfth we had moved to Nansidwell at Mawnan, which had everything we wanted: a large bedroom for Arthur which we used as a sitting room, a small one for me nearby, and our own bathroom. There was a lovely garden with its own beach, excellent food and infinite kindness from the Pilgrims who ran it. We could not have been better placed. And there, where we spent two winters, Arthur and I shared a lot of happiness. Loveday came to stay when Philip had to go off on a course. I went to Thatcham for Jenifer's confirmation in March and in April I opened up the Granary for the girls' holidays, while Arthur returned to Dromenagh. Jonathan Hudson was born at Pond Farm in January 1945 and Cherry, who had left school in a blaze of glory having done very well with her exams and been head—girl for a year, stayed with Arthur in Cornwall while I welcomed the precious boy. Poor Philip

was fighting abroad and did not see him till June, when we were back again at Dolphins. Loveday had gone to meet him and it was a very moving moment for me when I put my grandson in to his Father's arms. "You did not tell me that his hair was as red as this!" he said to Loveday.

In June '44 the Guards Armoured Division was stationed at Hove before going to Normandy. D. Day was on June 6th but they did not cross till July 9th from Southampton. All this of course was a closely kept secret and David was only able to let us know his whereabouts by writing to say he was going to "Where I took my driving test". So for six weeks we were able to make Dolphins available to his Squadron and they came over whenever they could, bathing, eating, talking, drinking, playing bowls. It was a magical interlude and one greatly to be prized and endlessly to be recalled. Again it is fully described, with a very full heart in my letters. We said goodbye to them — Arthur and Cherry and Jenifer and Pompey and I — opposite the Horse and Groom on the Arundel road. John Spencer, their Commander, had arranged for the tanks to stop where we could meet them. It was a difficult and searing experience and one that I'm never able to forget. Those six weeks were extraordinary and haunting. Out of the eight boys whom we had learned to know so well, two were killed and two wounded within the next two months.

THE WAR ENDING (16)

After that sharp mixture of happiness and anxiety, anxiety and stress supervened. The flying bombs made London unsafe once more. Philip and David were fighting in France and then Belgium. David was hurt: as I have said his ankle torn and sprained so that he was out of the fighting for a while, which probably saved his life. That was in August.

Early in 1945 it was clear that the war was ending, and peace in Europe was announced in a muddled form on May eighth and ninth. I began to pack up the Granary as Loveday and Philip were anxious to take it over. In July I said good—bye to my Nursery School. We went to Dolphins where Arthur to his great delight saw his grand—son roll over for the first time. Jonathan was the only grandchild whom Arthur saw. We celebrated "VJ day" with a party on the beach for everybody on Kingston Gorse.

Arthur was still breathless and delicate and I was glad to get him back to Nansidwell in October. Meanwhile Joe had had a big operation in the Samaritan Hospital and my Mother had an operation for cancer of the breast. I stayed with my Father till she was out of the wood.

ARTHUR'S DEATH

We had the car in Cornwall that Autumn and Arthur enjoyed the drives we were able to take with our restricted petrol. We only had the Austin: Arthur had sold the Rolls since it was not improving under dustsheets in various garages. But my diary says on December the 14th that he "was not well". Papa came for Christmas and drove Jenifer the last part of the way. Cherry was working at Greys on the Hog's Back, learning the care of small babies. Loveday and her baby were at the Granary.

The doctor came from time to time to see Arthur and prescribed pethedine, which seemed to help. Boxing Day was wet. There was a party in the evening; Arthur and I danced together. He was too tired to come to the cinema with Papa and Jenifer and me the next day; but on the twenty-eighth he came in the car with Papa and us to Land's End. But I noticed that he was unlike himself — not sure of the way, a little muzzy, muddled. He seemed so very tired. Next morning the doctor came for a routine visit. He said that Arthur was quite all right. But I didn't think so: he was worn out after a bad night. However he dressed, and came out onto the terrace which was full of sunshine. As usual he stood beside me and put his hand upon my shoulder as he had done so many, many times and was never to do again ..... After another sleepless night he was so exhausted that I persuaded him to stay in bed all day. I sat outside his bedroom window in the sunshine, sewing, so that I could hear him if he spoke. But then he grew strange, seemed wandering and smelled funny. I grew frightened and called the doctor, asking him to come again. He protested. He had seen him yesterday. I must not worry. He was

quite all right. I insisted. He came, unwillingly, in the afternoon. After he had seen him he took me into my bedroom held my hand and told me that Arthur had only a few hours to live. Now it was my turn to argue. It could not be true. We must have another opinion, a specialist must be called ... a specialist from Truro did come. But he said the same thing: "It is so lovely." Arthur kept on saying. And "Why do you cry? This is so lovely, darling....."

A nurse came with oxygen. She slept in my room and I slept on a camp bed in his room. I woke at five, and went over to him. He seemed very quiet and felt quite warm. I felt his feet to make sure he was warm enough. But they were cold. Suddenly I knew he was dead. I called nurse. She was furious. If she had been with him she would have given him oxygen.....why had I slept? But she was wrong: nothing would have saved him. The big aorta had ruptured. He had died as we would all wish to die, peacefully, happily, finding it all lovely. Why should I cry?

All this took place on New Year's Eve. There was a party arranged in the hotel that night. The kind clergyman from Mawsee Church came to see me and agreed that Arthur could stay there till the funeral could be arranged. Jenifer and I and Pompey walked the long half mile in the dark behind the coffin which was pushed on a hand cart by four men, one of whom was Papa's old chauffeur Clark. At the lych gate the Priest stood, holding up a lantern to guide us. He led us to the side Chapel where he said a few prayers, as we knelt round the coffin, where it remained until the funeral on the fourth. Jenny and I and Pompey walked back, alone together.

Loveday and Cherry arrived the next day. Bryan and Katie and Nolly came, and so did Bill Llewellyn who took the funeral service. With difficulty I dissuaded my old parents from making the long journey. David arrived from Germany on the third. "Squiff" Ellis represented the Welsh Guards. He and Bryan went back by the night train after the funeral. The rest stayed on for a day or two. The girls went back first, Loveday to the Granary, Cherry to the Babies' Home and Jenifer to school. David drove me, via the Granary, to Dromenagh.

We had a memorial service in St. Michael's, Cornhill, where Arthur had been a Churchwarden on January the eleventh. The church was crowded and Bill Llewellyn made a most moving address. Hope Hudson, Philip's mother, drove me back to the Granary in pouring rain where all four children, and Jonathan, had gathered, and there we reviewed our sadly broken little family.

1946-1948

Cecil Keith, an old and well liked friend of Arthur and subsequently of mine, was my solicitor. He did not understand families, being himself childless and was not very clever, but he meant extremely well. He told me I would have a thousand a year to live on, but not how to do it. It sounds impossible now; even then it meant very short commons. Bryan told me that I should sell Dolphins and I was advised to sell the Terrace.

But I was determined not to be rushed. Buff Williams-Ellis (Clough's niece) took on the top floor of all, which had its own kitchen. Later Joanna (now Prescot), moved in to the nursery floor

which later Eustace Guinness used for a year or more. I refused to sell Dolphins and said I would let it, furnished or unfurnished. Jenifer was leaving school. She had done her exams more than competently and decided to go as an apprentice to Heals in Tottenham Court Road for the princely sum of six pounds ten shillings a month. I realised with some distress that I would not be able to keep Pompey as we had done so happily for so long. He was growing old and snappy and could not be left alone. I walked him one morning to the vet in Rabbits' Row, where he was strangely unwilling to come with me, and said goodbye .....

Soon after that I was involved in an appalling row between Papa and Bryan. Bryan was now head of Sir R.W. Carden & Co. it was understood that David would join the firm as soon as he could be discharged from the Army. I am still not sure what the trouble was all about. Papa, generously, wanted to make David a member of the Stock Exchange. Bryan would not hear of it. I was used by the uncle and grandfather as a sort of buffer state. David was still abroad and unaware of the storm around him. There were dreadful scenes with the two furious gentlemen calling each other liars in front of me, while I sat appalled and powerless. David returned, and the upshot of the whole miserable business was that he joined Kitcat & Aitken, another stock brokers firm, into which Christopher Weatherby had gone.

No one really took me in hand or advised me. I kept selling small bits of Jewellery and silver at Christies in order to pay the bills which I had never had to pay before. My father gave me no help: only loving sympathy. I wrote, and tried to sell what I wrote.

I did have two stories accepted by House-Wife they are still to be seen in my Commonplace Book. (1948).

I took Jenifer to Sweden that August. Andy, the Swedish governess had arrived earlier in the year with suitcases of clothes for the girls, which was marvellous kindness. I shall never forget opening those boxes! And I bought practically everything that she was wearing before I allowed her to rejoin her ship. She arranged for an invitation to Jenifer to stay with the Kreugers in Saro near Goteborg. Although Jenifer and I were delighted with the prospect I did not fancy her going alone to people and a country of which we knew nothing. So the Lubbocks agreed to come with us and they and I went to Pension Ekaso at Bjorboholm near Sarc. That was the beginning of our long and lasting friendship with Ingela, now Mrs Kreuger Baklund, for which I am everlasting grateful to Andy. While we were in Sweden none of us could stop eating: the food was unrationed and marvellous. We all looked strangely thin compared with the Swedes. They had some problems despite their neutrality, and it was there that I met paper sheets for the first time.

In October I managed to let Dolphins for five years and had a sale there of the unwanted furniture.

The Bathursts took David and me to Capel in Wales for a few days. They were marvellously kind and we were very close friends.

In December my Father had a short respiratory illness and died on December 8th. He was eighty-four. I think he had never recovered from Arthur's death. He had looked on him as a son and relied on him greatly. So the year ended, as the last one had in grief and uncertainty.

I kept no diary in 1947 or '48. It did not seem worth while. Who would be interested now that Arthur was gone? My little ship veered this way and that. I, so inexperienced, had to be at the helm; the way seemed uncharted and the sea unknown. One happy landfall was dear Cherry's engagement to Bill Palmer, a cousin of Philip's, who introduced them to each other. She had many suitable suitors but I was grateful for her final choice. They were married at St. Margaret's, Westminister on July 14th 1949. Papa Gibbs gave the reception for her at the Savoy. Soon after they went to live at Warfield Priory at Bracknell, then a small village; Serena was born there in May 1951.

After two years without her adored "Trevie", my Mother died at the end of 1948. Her funeral took place on the third anniversary of Arthur's funeral. She had not cared for the two years alone and though Joe moved in to Dromenagh with her little family in order to be with her, it made for no happiness. She was glad to leave this world, though physically it seemed a long struggle for her to escape.

JOE

You may remember that in my diary of 1916 I have quoted a passage describing my joy at receiving an invitation to stay with Arthur's people in Scotland and that my sister Joe had entered into my excitement and delight. The entry ends, referring to Joe's amiability, "I do luff that woman!" That contemporary language sounds strange today for a girl of seventeen to use about her eighteen-year-old sister. But the sad truth was that I only loved her when I could push past her and get my own way. It was a thwarted relationship which was marred from our earliest days, despite the curious ritual (surely taught us by our mother) of saying to each other, last thing at night, "Good night darling sister; I do love you so. Forgive and forget." Joe must have been jealous of me and I was no doubt jealous of her eleventh months' seniority. Let it be remembered to her credit that she was wonderfully generous when I became engaged to Arthur, for it must always be a difficult situation when the younger sister gets married before the elder, and in those days worse than it is today. She was a very good aunt to my children. Once she was married things were easier for us both, thought she and Cohn never seemed to be able to afford the good times that Arthur and I enjoyed.

It was not till she was dying that we really came together. At the end of 1956 she developed leukaemia and died three months afterwards. When I first heard this from her children I did not know what to do. Joanna and Gillian were already married. Donald was up at Cambridge. I sent messages by them that I would go and see her when she felt up to it. She was living at Fingest then. It was not

till she went to the Acland Nursing Home in Oxford that I was told that she wanted to see me. By then she was very ill. She knew she was dying and showed great courage and acceptance of the inevitable. She was truly religious and had a deep abiding Faith. Claude Beasley Robinson, now a monk, had spent some time with her. I am sure he had helped her. They were great friends. She had sent for her solicitor and put all her affairs very cleverly in order to avoid the worst of the death duties. But by the time that I arrived she was past all that and I sat quietly in her room. "I wanted you to stay here, Bar," she said. "Sit here like a piece of furniture. I don't want to see the children any more. They have done enough. You sit here". So I did just that. I moved into a hotel in Oxford near the nursing home and sat in her room each day while she visibly weakened. One morning she was obviously not going to suffer much more. Leukaemia does not cause pain but an appalling sense of terrible illness as the white corpuscles take over from the red. The nurses fussed around for some time and then went out of the room. Suddenly I felt compelled to move to her bedside and hold her pretty hands. She smiled at me and nodded. "Joe," I said, "Listen....." I don't remember now quite what I said. It was an apology and an explanation. I talked of our childhood. Of our mother's mistakes in her dealing with us. Of our different natures and the difficulties we had always found in talking freely together. Did I ask for forgiveness? I don't think so. It was more a summing up of our lives and a great regret. She did not speak, only nodded and smiled again. She gave a quite happy little grunt of acquiescence and understanding; and died with her hands in mine.

KATIE (17)

Katie was my special love always. It comes through my diaries from the beginning. "The Babe", I called her. When we were little I remember — I about twelve and she nine — we never walked hand in hand, but she would clutch my little finger. Our relationship was very much the same as had been between my sister Loveday and me: I fought her battles, she turned to me in trouble. When she was ill with the inevitable infectious diseases of childhood, I was racked with anxiety. It was I who first noticed a curve in her spine, due we always thought to a fall in the gymnasium when she was still very young. The mistress failed to catch her as she vaulted off the horse. But no notice was taken of my concern. Early in 1921 my Father was told by Mr Arthur Gilbey of what was then called a "bone-setter" from Jersey named Rabey. He had a nursing home in Half Moon Street. Katie was taken to see him. She was sixteen. He swore that he could correct her curvature. I don't know what Rabey's credentials really were or what other recommendations he had; but my Father was convinced he had found a genius, and as my legs were unshapely he decided that he should have a look at me as well. (None of us had good legs, which was odd as both our parents had very pretty ankles.) Rabey's opinion was that my back was far worse than Katie's and that we should both have treatment. The treatment was bizarre in the extreme. For three weeks, previous to going to his nursing home, our spines had to be pou1ticed with hot linseed oil poultices. The smell and the mess were disgusting. It was our Mother's lady's maid, dear Buckledee, who now maided us too, beside doing some housework, whose job it was to put these poultices on

last thing at night. Then, when our spines were supposed to be sufficiently softened we went to London and were 'manipulated' by the short, dark, little man with a strange accent. It was extraordinarily painful and the wonder was that we survived undamaged. He did Katie's back no good. As for my ankles they remained as solid and shapeless as ever and only old age has thinned them down. I am sure my Father thought that he was being wise and acting for our best interests, but I still think that it was a hazardous and rash decision that he made on our behalf.

Katie and I did not need this shared hardship to deepen our affection for each other. We shared everything: all through our lives the golden cord held firm. We each thought the other inordinately funny. We admired each other's looks, each other's clothes. We shared our friends. We must have been maddening to those outside our chosen circle. Arthur loved her, (I suppose he had to), and she loved him. When she arrived at St Margaret's Westminster, to marry her adored Noll, it was I who gave her lovely dress its last twitch and her the last words of reassurance that all brides need.

In 1948 Katie developed tuberculosis of the lung and was advised to go to Switzerland. I went with her to Montana to see her into the sanatorium and visited her later on. She was terribly unhappy and it was a horrible experience for us both, and indeed for her little family. Oliver took the girls, Rosalind and Olivia, out there for the Easter holidays but it was not a great, success. Eventually she returned, no better, and after a big operation was performed at the U.C.H. when part of her lung was removed, under a local anaesthetic. I was there to greet her when she came out of the operating theatre. As always, she was heroic. Her courage was

immeasurable and everlasting. After I left her to rest, for the first and only time in my life I asked for a cigarette.

She came to me when Arthur died and stayed to help me over the last, sad packing up. In the end I was with her when she died. It was a marvellous relationship and never faltered. Only once do I remember bitter words between us and that was over some ridiculous trifle at the end of the long and exhausting division of our inheritance; and that did not last for two hours. Darling Katie! She was quick, she was practical, she was a shrewd judge of character and she was very, very pretty. She was a devoted, though critical, a fiercely protective mother to her two children, Rosalind and Olivia. She was a wonderful gardener, a great lover of her dogs and she kept a first class table, being no mean cook herself. She dressed beautifully and was always extremely smart. No one meeting her would guess that she had any spinal trouble, nor that she was in constant pain. Someone, most aptly, described her as being 'like quick—silver'. Many fell for her charm and wit — women as well as men. She was quite unintellectual and the written word meant little to her. In many ways we could not have had less in common: but still the golden cord held firm.

RELIGION

Perhaps this is the moment to write about my religion which we all know means a great deal to me and has been a help and a strength particularly to me in my latter days.

Our Mother brought us up to be Christians as she considered best. We said our prayers every night at Nannie's knee; more rarely at our Mother's. We were taken to Church as quite little girls on many Sundays, often when there was a house party and there were Aunts to share the pew. As we grew older we were expected to go to Church most Sundays with our Mother, and our Father sometimes came at Easter and at Christmas. But his attendance was too often followed by arguments over luncheon about the scriptures —'What had the Paschal Lamb to do with Easter—?" My Mother seemed to find the explanation difficult. Today one wonders why. When Joe and I were about eight or nine we were given nice New Testaments with limp covers and Indian paper, and later on bone and ribbon markers which I fancied tremendously. (One little bone cross has survived and hangs round the neck of my wooden 'Queen Elizabeth of Hungary' today). "Do you look forward <u>every</u> day to reading your Bible?" I asked my startled Mother. "<u>I</u> do!" Luckily for my Mother she did not have to reply for Joe, this time, was quick off the mark. "That's only because of our new markers," she said sharply. "That's what you look forward to: using them". I could only recognise the truth and for once kept silent.

I was confirmed when I was at school, but though I took it seriously it made little impact on me. I was resentful that only my cousin Joan Williams came to the ceremony to represent my family.

Miss Heath-Jones, the headmistress of St. Monica's, was a deeply religious woman and preached to us every Sunday evening, but I did not listen carefully. She was very concerned with freedom for the workers, freedom for women. There is a good description of her beliefs and ideals in Vera Britain's "Testament of Youth".

Arthur's family appeared to have no religion. I only remember going to Church with my Mother-in-law. Arthur himself would always come with me when occasion offered. As Churchwarden of St. Michael's Cornhill, he liked taking me there for matins. He had accepted this responsibility as Head of Sir R.W. Carden & Co which his predecessor had held; and the firm looked after the Church finances. Quizzed once by my Aunt Fanny Bell, known, aptly, as "the gimlet", about his personal religion, he replied that he liked going to Church and wanted me to go to Communion when I could. But in fact religion played a small part in our married life. I had already given up my morning and evening prayers and I cannot remember that we ever prayed together.

Then he died and I turned restlessly to consolation from the Church, but found little. Bill Liewellyn, who had most kindly come all the way from Badminton for the funeral, could only tell me that the Church had nothing to say as to where Arthur's spirit could be. Surely he could have done better than that? Later on I dabbled in a healing group run by a Miss Pixley; but I found she was really interested in communication with the dead, so I gave that up.

The people who were most responsible for steering me towards a better use of my upbringing were Clio Burke, Lorimer Rees and 'Harriet' - old Mrs (Cicely) Chance, whom I had met on my way to

South Africa in 1921. They were all "High" Church and I copied their genuflections and crossings because I suppose it appealed to the actor in me. Clio was a teacher of Scripture at various schools, and was almost a professional theologian besides a really devout believer and churchwoman. Both her example and knowledge were of great help to me. Lorimer Rees, who became the Vicar of Kensington in 1960, amused and entertained me from the moment I met him. He also gave me instruction and advice. He persuaded me to go to confession, which I have since abandoned, though I would still go for help if not for absolution. He encouraged me in parochial life and in 1963 I went with him and his dear wife Brigid on a (so-called), pilgrimage to the Holy Land. An account of this can be read, if not altogether believed, in my scrapbook entitled 'Kensington Pilgrimage'. The last of the three was old 'Harriet', the widow of a clergyman, whose steady attendance at her far from attractive local church in all weathers was heroic. Well over eighty, she rose one freezing morning to go to her Mass at seven. I exclaimed with real alarm when she told me. 'It took a lot of my stock of courage,' was all she said and I had the feeling that she knew it to be an expendable virtue, she had not much left.

So, slowly, a faith that had been automatic, conventional and social developed and grew and has now become an important and lively influence in my life, though after nearly eighty years' opportunity there is little enough to be proud of. But had I never been christened as a baby, which was my parents' responsibility and duty, would I ever have had the courage to have sought out and found 'The Way?' Would I ever have discovered and enjoyed the peace and the confidence that I am able to attain? I am afraid not.

Between 1962 and 1978, then, I was on the P.C.C. I represented the parish on the Diocesan Synod; I attended the Council of Churches and Christian Aid Meetings; I was on the Managers' Committee of the St Mary Abbot's Church School; I am still on the Committee of Bickenstiech House in Sheffield Terrace. I pushed an unwilling parish into a Christian Stewardship campaign, which was not a success, and I followed the footsteps of St Paul through Greece and Turkey with the Bishop of Kensington's party in 1972, which again is recorded in the same scrap book called "The Bishop's Party".

I always have spoken up for ecumenism, for the ordination of women, for the reduction of church buildings. I acknowledge with gratitude the Christian Church since it is only through that institution that we have the historic truth of Jesus Christ alive with us today. We can never be grateful enough to the devoted lives, to the martyrs, to the saints, who have passed the story on to us. But I wish that in the process the establishment of the Church had not saddled us with all the buildings, the possessions, the wealth with which our religion is so confused today. Christianity is not "going to Church". Christ never told His followers to attend the synagogue regularly, though we believe that He did so Himself. Religion is not to be found in committees. The Church, though, must be maintained, its priests paid, its traditions maintained, its ministry upheld, its services regularly kept. But as the Queen is above the government of the country, so we should be able to keep our Lord and Saviour out of Church bazaars, synod conferences and fundraising, so that we can turn to him freely in our lives, walking with Him as we go about our business. I need Holy Communion. That service is very dear to me. I feel deprived without it, but alas, I

am no mystic and find it very difficult to bring Christ into a busy daily life. I can only admire and envy those who do walk hand in hand with Him. I do believe it's possible. I shall never lightly disbelieve another's inexplicable experience.

I have only had one myself and that can hardly be called mystical — rather, extra—sensory precognition. It was in 1945, one summer day. I was at Dromenagh for the weekend and had gone with the rest of the family to the local flower show held in a nearby field. There was the big marquee with all the flowers and vegetables on show to be judged. There were tents and sideshows — the usual thing. There were not many people about, on the rough, scrubby grass. The war was in its last year. Joe and I found ourselves outside small tent labelled "Madame Zephire — Fortune Teller."

"Oh, do go in!" said Joe. "I went, and hardly anyone else has been inside. She's someone's lady's maid and has taken a lot of trouble to dress up and prepare everything. It would be kind."

"But I hate fortune-tellers," I protested," and I don't believe in them."

"Well that doesn't matter; she's only trying to help. Your half-crown will encourage her. Go on.." So, grumbling, I went in.

She began by looking at my palms, then turned up some cards. The usual meander began. I was happily married. I had children. I was not living in the district. My husband was not strong. She had all that, but there was so much rubbish mixed up with it that was in no way applicable, that I became bored. She said again that Arthur was not strong; the trouble was with his eyes. (He certainly wore glasses but his eyes gave him no trouble). The ten minutes were

nearly up. I had lost interest in her probing nonsense. Then, suddenly her voice changed. Her whole manner changed. She lent forward, earnestly. "Take care," she said. "You must take great care of you husband. He needs you care. He is ill...." I looked up startled. Almost whispering now, she added, "But its no good. It won't make any difference whatever you do. He will, be dead before the year is over....."

I went out into the hot, overcast day. Joe was waiting for me. "What is the matter" she said. "You look awful. What's wrong? You are quite white!" I told her. We stared at each other. Then she said "Forget it, darling. She had no business to say such a thing. It was awful of her. Put it right away from you. Put it out of your mind and never think of it again, and nor will I. It was a wicked thing to say.... Come on. Let's have some tea."

Well, I did: I did put it out of my mind. Arthur was breathless. He was not really ill. The doctors had said so. The woman must have been mad.

Next Christmas found us at Nansidwell, and lying in my bath there one evening I remembered again the fortune teller. "I must tell Arthur", I thought. "Here was the end of the year and it will, make him laugh." There were only a few days to go to prove the wretched woman wrong. Then I decided I would wait till the New Year had begun. "It will be our New Year's joke", I thought.

But Arthur died on the last day of that old year.

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy ....."

You may dismiss this story as just a lucky coincidence for the fortune-teller. Psychologists would call it an example of precognition. However we look at it, there is incontrovertible evidence that there are truths that can be conveyed in an extra sensory manner without any rational explanation. So to sum up this part of my story I am really sure, after all these years that except for the very gifted and unusual humanist, whom I have never met, life's full potential can only be lived against a background of spiritual faith.

1946-48

I have digressed from my story since I recorded my Mother's death in 1948 on the anniversary of Arthur's dying.

We were all left equal shares in our parent's estate. It was left in trust for us so that death duties were only paid once. We decided to sell the Dromenagh property. We thought of turning the house into flats but in the end gave it up. We were hampered by the Green Belt restrictions which made it impossible for us to build at all. Eventually the house and part of the garden were sold to the local authorities for a boarding house for deprived children at the asking price. It still exists for that purpose. The buyers did not want, though it was included in the price, the larger part of the lovely woodland garden which our parents had made famous. What to do with it? It was dead ground since no one could build on it. My sisters talked of selling it for timber. David had always loved the garden and he urged me to do something to save it. I could not think what to do. Suddenly one morning I woke with a clear decision. "Give the garden to David".

So I bought the sisters out for a small sum and made it over to him, advising him to press for permission to build. After a long time he won his case and in due course built "Taid's Wood", where he and Jennifer Jane lived till their marriage broke up in 1964. But this was yet in the future.

Although I was now much better off financially, Fate continued to hit me several sharp blows. Without my diaries for those two years, ('47 and '48) I am not able to remember their sequence very accurately.

After Arthur's death, and as soon as it could be arranged, David came back from Germany and resigned his commission. It was a very difficult time for him. Only twenty four, he most needed the wise council of his father as he emerged from the army into civilian life. But his father was not there. He had the misfortune to fall in love with a married woman which could have been just a happy and valuable experience: but it wasn't. It was a near tragedy. Since she was a close friend of mine I was deeply involved and we were all torn to pieces. It nearly destroyed David. He could not settle to anything. He left the Stock Exchange, which was a great disappointment to me and to Grandpa Gibbs, who was very good about it. Jack Keeling helped in every way that he could. He took David when he took his eldest son Johnny to America with him and then found David a job with a film company. He went to Stroud to work with Bernard Miles (now Lord Miles), in an excellent but abortive film "The Chance of a Lifetime". From there, again through Jack, David joined Garfield Weston's firm and worked at Poole producing and selling Ryvita biscuits. Jenifer and I became involved. She drew advertisements for them: I wrote jingles. I recognised one of them once in a tube in which I happened to be travelling. I might have become another Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

But biscuits and Poole Harbour in turn began to pall and one day David told me that he was leaving Westons. As usual I expostulated, moaned and groaned. Silver spoon after silver spoon, it seemed to me, he pulled out of his mouth and threw away. "But what will you do? You can't keep on changing jobs. But he always fell on his feet. Dudley Tooth took him on, without any qualifications, and gave him a job in his art gallery "Arthur Tooth

& Sons" in Bruton Street. There he settled down. He worked happily for seven years, proving to be an exceptionally gifted dealer.

Now he revived my interest in modern pictures and once again I began to go to exhibitions and galleries and occasionally to buy a painting. David helped me in every way: told me what to look out for and what he thought would interest me. With his exceptionally good eye and the advice he gave me I was able to buy a few very good pictures. I wanted to exchange two poor Sickerts that Arthur and I had bought many years before and through him and Tooths exchanged them for "La Guiseppinna" by the same artist, which now hangs in the drawing room. So the pictures that Arthur and I had bought together with such pleasure began to be added to again, and the walls at the Terrace began to fill up. But as Arthur had, so now I bought pictures because I liked them: because one particular painting appealed to me. We never bought with the idea that it was an investment. That was for the Stock Exchange: for stocks and shares. But the market value of them has increased out of all proportion to their intrinsic value — what indeed hasn't — and I do dislike to be told what they are worth in figures of cash today. It is not what Arthur and I had in mind when we began to form what is sometimes today rather pompously referred to as "my collection". The first time someone used this expression of the pictures in the house, I gaped and could not, for a moment, think what was meant. Arthur and I had fun over them. And when David began to take an interest it was the same again. There have been some amusing moments, too. "What lovely pictures you have!" cried some enthusiastic lady as she came up the stairs for the first time. "Did you paint them all yourself?" .....And once a gentleman admired the Orpen portrait of me and

asked me who the artist was. When I told him he asked "Did you ever meet him?"....

To return for a moment to David's varied career. Eventually in 1952, in the middle of Loveday's miserably difficult breakdown, after her third baby, Philip told me that David was getting engaged to Jennifer Howard — whom I hardly knew — and never was to know really well. They were married in St. George's Church, Hanover Square on October 9th and elected to live in the two top floors of the terrace until they moved to Taids Wood. I was delighted when David expressed this wish, but I think it probably was a mistake.

JENIFER AND MIKE (18)

Jenifer's engagement came before these troubles at the end of l950. She and Michael had been seeing a great deal of each other, she spending many weekends at Hurst and he continually coming to meals with us. Of course Dot and Jack and I were longing for them to get married although they were both so young, and Mike had not yet finished his Chartered Accountant's examinations. "They are made for each other!" Dot once exploded as we stood together at Hurst at an upstairs window, watching them play tennis. "They'll never get married," I replied sadly; "We all want it too much".

One evening I watched them sitting together in the garden of the Terrace on one of the garden benches. His arm was round her shoulders and he was talking earnestly and seriously to her while she gazed into his face with a rapt, entranced expression. "Surely, now," I said to myself, "he is talking of their future together? This must be it!".

When at last he had gone and we were saying goodnight to each other I said hopefully "You looked so happy in the garden, darling. Mike seemed to have a great deal to say to you!" "Oh yes!" replied my daughter, stammering with excitement. "He was telling me all about his great friend Henry Heley-Hutchison. He has a dreadful s-s-toppage and he c-c-can't move the hard c-c- ore!"

Disconsolately I went to bed.

Towards the end of the year she came as usual one morning to help me make my bed. Her eyes were bright and her cheeks flushed. "Mum, I feel wonderful! I don't care about Mike anymore! I have asked him to a party next week. He hasn't answered and I just don't

care I don't mind if he comes or not! I just don't care. It's wonderful! I feel released".

I kissed her. "Jen", I said, "that is splendid news. You'll feel so much happier now. You'll begin to notice other young men again. There are plenty around. You'll soon feel aware of other people again".

"I do! I do! already! It's lovely! Like opening a window. I feel free!"

"I can't have lunch with you today," I said later "I'm lunching with Eustace Guinness at his club. What will you do?" "Oh, I'm lunching with Mike somewhere," replied Jenifer. "With Mike?" I queried. "But you said you did not want to see him any more?"

"Well I must tell him that I don't, mustn't I?"

"I don't think so: he'll soon find out. Just tell him that you don't want to lunch.."

"Oh, I couldn't do that." And off she went.

Eustace and I were having our coffee after lunch at his club when I saw my wild, excited-looking daughter pushing her way past everyone towards me, then "Mum!" she called, before she reached me, "Mum, I'm going to marry Michael! He's asked me to marry him! We're going to get married! We're both so happy!"

So that was that. They had a lovely wedding in April 1951 in St James' Spanish Place and afterwards at what was then Gunters in Park Lane at the corner of Stanhope Gate. Jenifer had become a Roman Catholic with all the paraphernalia that went with it then. She had to be re-christened and go to endless instruction, none of which

seems to obtain today. I knew it was right. "You cannot have two religions in one bed," but I minded more than I acknowledged. The weather until then had been cold and wintry, but now on the 20th we were rewarded by a beautiful Spring day and there was a great deal of happiness around.

THE GRANDCHILDREN

After the weddings came the babies. Jonathan, as I have told, was born during the war in 1945. Martin, another Hudson, came next in 1947. Then the Palmers began with Serena in 1950, followed by Christopher Hudson the next year. Now arrived the first of the little army of Keelings — Robert in 1952. I had at last to make a mnemonic in order to remember their order.

Jonathan Makes Serena Cry:

Rough And Tough Hit George's Eye.

Cathryn Snatches Jonny's Dinner,

Frantic Aunties Threaten Sinner.

Paxi

(The Sinner is for Septimus: Jim Keeling's second name.) Sometimes shopping for the children, I would be asked by the sales—woman the age of the child. I would murmur the rhyme and would receive some anxious looks! But what happiness they brought. Those early years of widowhood were salved in both senses of the word by those babies. I was needed I was there for the arrival of all the firstborn and for many of the others. I was needed to baby-sit, to pram-push, to collect, to drive around. They came to stay. I sat by them when they ailed, read to them when they were in hospital, took them to theatres, to cinemas, to tournaments, museums and shops, to the swimming baths and gymnasium. I collected them from day—school and visited them at their various boarding schools, and stood in for the young parents when they could not get away. "Oh Mum, can you? Will you? Are you busy?" I was most able to help Loveday in Pelham

Place and later Jenifer in Albert Place as they were mercifully close. No one could have had more pleasure from all the demands than I did, though I daresay I came in usefully. I believe there is no relationship so sweet, no love so pure and really selfless as that of a grandparent for the child. There is nothing to be gained by it: nothing to look for from it. It is unalloyed love.

I was most fortunate that my three daughters allowed me to share their happy times and I was privileged that they shared too the inevitable griefs and disappointments and anxieties which came along.

Philip and Mike were my trustees and gave me marvellous kind and sound advice. Mike in particular must have spent months in the last thirty years over my finances and problems and still does.

Although I longed to be with them and see more of them it was different and a little difficult with the Gibbs girls. Jennifer Jane, even before the divorce, turned naturally to her mother for any help that she needed. And this must always be so and should be accepted. But latterly my relationship with Emma and Fanny has been the same as with the other three grand-girls.

The pleasure and the laughter from the grand-chi1dren continue to this day. They come to stay when they need a bed in London. They drop in on the chance of a meal or a drink. We talk (or do I flatter myself?) as equals. I love them all. Some more than others at different times. "The Favourite." "My Poem." "My Pet." The edged nicknames come and go ..... I hope they always will so long as I live.

The great-grand-children are different. They are too remote, the years between us are too many. I can no longer catch them when they run away: they run too fast. Nor can I lift them safely or easily. Still, it is a sweet pleasure to have a little bundle to hold in my arms again — the third generation.

They, too increase in numbers. As I write I can already boast eight and another predicted. Loveday has provided me with a new mnemonic for the "greats";

"Henry Eats Hugh's Meat;

Ian Hollers. Kate's Replete."

(Henry, Emily, Hugh, Mark, Ian, Hugo - all Hudsons - Kate Crockatt and Ruth Keeling.)

The happiest times were of course when I was with the children at Dolphins. Expeditions with them were fun — to Wales, to Ireland, to Switzerland, Holland and Brittany, in a barge in France (see the Outward Bound Holiday 1973). But staying at Dolphins in the early days, with perhaps two families crammed in together, paddling, bathing, learning to swim, playing endless games of padder, cricket and the complicated Keeling games, was the best fun of all. Walking on the downs, picnicing on the shore, sitting in the garden, listening to the "noises off".

In some of my Commonplace Books I have tried to recapture the golden moments. I wrote this in 1957 in a phenomenally hot June.

"Hot, burning sunshine. Windows wide open, no curtains blowing, no doors slamming, the familiar rattle of window frames silent. The lawn yellow and hard and very dry, scattered with the

inevitable children's odd sandals, buckets, spades and parts of toys. The striped awning down, making a grateful pool of shade by the French window, prams lapped in the only other available small patches of it in the garden. The sea far out and the acres of sand wet and glistening in the strong light, the rocky stones covered with bright green seaweed. Out by the Black Rocks, very far away, small figures look as though they were walking on the air, a foot at least above the shimmering ground and water. On our beach the tops of the uprights of several breakwaters are decorated with the boys' brightly coloured bathing drawers, so that they look like gaunt figures with caps on their heads. Robert sits on a small chair, digging unenthusiastically at a sandcastle alongside him, his sunhat pulled down over his screwed up eyes. Trevor, like a professional sprinter, runs as fast as his small determined legs will carry him towards the water, brandishing his tiny shrimping net full already, in his imagination, with "millions and millions of shrimps". Dear George splashes in the shallow pools with cries of "No! No!" The sea has warm, soupy quality, tepid; in patches, as the tide creeps over the heated sand, it is really hot. A little steam rises from it and the fishes leap out for air. Jenifer and Michael endlessly paddle their bright green rubber canoe, she dark as a Spanish Girl, his head protected by a shining straw hat from Naples. All our bodies, half naked, shine with protective oil. My huge hat from Madeira gives shade, not only to me, but to any child that sits beside me. Nanny approves of it for the new baby "Simon, called Henry" whose face she covers with a piece of muslin so that he looks like a holy relic being carried across the lawn.

A green woodpecker, vivid and large — "Was it a budgerigar"? Biddy asked — frequently came to visit the garden with his wife, and his harsh impatient cry brings Jenifer and me hurrying to see him, to admire him and to exclaim at his beauty, his size, his ungainly 'hop, hop.'

Ice cold drinks in dark green tumblers, full of Pimms, of verbena mint, cucumber and lemon. Children's laughter, children's cries of impassioned rage, or woebegone grief, at incomprehensible adult justice or at comprehensible contemporary injustice. Nanny's quiet words of authority bringing order to disorder. Mike's penetrating voice organizing or adjudicating in some game of bat and ball. The sea hissing over the hot pebbles as the tide stretches up to the land, calling us to its cool, delicious depths. Dear Dolphins. Dear children. What happiness you have made and given and, I hope, received together in this most beautiful month of June. One of the greatest joys that children provide us with is their capacity to make us laugh. They may be already fluent but the true meaning of the words that appear to flow so easily from their rose—petalled lips is not very sure, and often leads to delicious mistakes. The enchanting phrases are too often forgotten unless they are continually repeated and then they are embroidered, improved and so lose their original brilliance. I have recorded here a few which no doubt are known to you all but which I should like to tell for another generation if this story comes their way.

Loveday truly did express sympathy that poor Bill Posters will be prosecuted, though I know the joke is nationwide now. I do not claim that she was the originator, but at a very tender age she asked me what he had done to deserve such endless prosecution. When

she first began to read she was puzzled that "pecking geese" Should be advertised for sale.

The Keeling boys thought that a cold could only be got rid of by giving it away to someone.

David once owned a stuffed weasel. It had been given him by the keeper at Dromenagh. I had fought against having it stuffed, one of my arguments being that it would get moth-eaten. Commonsense failed to prevail and for a year or two where David went the weasel had to go. We arrived at a hotel on our way to Scotland one summer evening. David was first out of the car, the weasel in his arms. He at once accosted the hall porter who was helping us out with our luggage. David rushed up to him. "Are there any moths here?" he asked anxiously. "Oh, yes", replied the hall porter, eager to please, "There are a lot of moths here: Large, splendid moths when it grows dark." David paled. "Mummy, we can't stop here. The moths will get my weazle, won't they?"

One hot summer Sunday morning at Dolphins the Keeling and Palmer family were staying with me. Cherry and Bill were sun bathing. Jenny and Mike were rounding up their family for Mass. "Why is it," Alexandra asked Serena "that the Keelings all go to Church on Sunday and we don't?" "Because", said Serena, never at a loss for an answer, "they are Roman Catholics and they have to go to Church. We don't because we are....." There was a long pause. The words were too unfamiliar — 'Anglican?' 'Church of England?' 'Protestant?' They were all beyond her. "You see, Alexandra, we are Human Beings".

One bitter winter the Round Pond was frozen and I had been asked to push Jonathan in his pram. I decided to push him across the

Round Pond. He would perhaps remember the extraordinary occasion. It was very cold but I was exhilarated by the strangeness of our walk. "Isn't this fun, Jonathan?" I cried. "Walking on the Round Pond!" He looked glumly at me. "Fun for Bar-bar", he said.

Tom Keeling, when he was small used always to preface bad news with the awful question — "Shall I tell you something?" This opening we all learned to dread as he confronted us with a doom-laden face. On one occasion Mike was looking after the boys who were all, he thought, happily employed in the nursery downstairs. Tom arrived to disturb him at his desk. He stood quietly beside his father for a few moments before the dreaded question came. "Dad, shall I tell you something?" "What is it Tom?" poor Mike asked nervously. "The boys downstairs are all pee-ing into the waste paper basket....."

Now the 'greats' add their delights. Henry and Emily (Hudson), were told to be particularly good because a very old lady was coming in the car with them. "You mustn't bounce about. You mustn't fight and quarrel. You must keep quiet and be gentle with the old lady, for she is very old." This preyed on Emily's mind. At last she said, when they were all in the car, "Why are you so old?" The old lady was at a loss. Why was she? But Henry was quick with the answer. "It's because you were born so long ago, isn't it?" he queried the startled octogenarian.

MALVERN GIRLS' COLLEGE (19)

When I was first invited to join the Governing Body of the Malvern Girls' College in 1940 as I have told earlier on, Arthur was already ill and I did not give much time to it. After his death I began to attend the meetings regularly at Malvern and in London six, and later when I was elected to the House Committee, nine times a year. I went by train or car. Once I missed the train at Paddington, fetched the car from the garage in the Royal Garden Hotel and arrived only ten minutes late for my appointment! I was elected to the House Committee and worked hard at getting the place re-decorated and modernised. (Bedside lamps for all the teaching staff and shower—baths for the girls were some minor achievements.) But I was responsible for two things which I think I may be proud of. First, when I was Chairman of the House Committee, I had the basement, which was all a vast waste of storage place, turned into a modern kitchen and self—service dining room. It took me seven years of persuasion and bullying. The teaching staff considered it infra-dig to eat 'below stairs' and created great opposition, endless arguments, and difficulties. The second was of greater importance. As Chairman of the Governing Body it fell to my unfortunate lot to appoint a new headmistress. I realised that the future of the school depended on the right choice and was determined to do my very best to find the right woman. I made the governing Body come down one weekend to Dolphins to go through the applications. Eventually we were faced with a short list of three, none of whom I thought good enough and the opinion of the others was divided equally among the two of them. But there was a dark horse in Limeru in Africa with

whom I had been communicating and on whom my hopes were fixed. I proposed to go out to Africa to see her since it appeared impossible for her to get away. But at the last moment she was able to come over for Christmas leave. She went down to see the College and spent the night there. The next day which was dark and snowy, the Governing Body interviewed her in Oxford. Then there was no hesitation. We were unanimous. She won them all over and in no time at all I was able to offer her the position. She, through sixteen years, has proved one of the most successful headmistresses in the country. I drove her back that evening from Oxford to London. I was so light headed with relief and fatigue that I lost my way to Victoria Station!

I resigned from the Chairmanship that next year and finally from the Governing Body in 1974.... I am grateful to Bill Palmer that he consented to join the governors before I left and that Jennifer Burnaby-Atkins (neé Lawrence) has replaced me.

I made many good friends while I was there among staff and governors, including Professor Brian Brooke and Naomi his wife, the Hardys (parents of Robert Hardy the actor), Godfrey Phillips from Lazards and it was there that I first met Geoffrey Winterbotham.

GEOFFREY WINTERBOTHAM

It was at a meeting for the Council some time in 1940 where other members had already gathered in the Head Mistress's study that I immediately noticed a newcomer, tall, good looking, elegantly dressed, and white haired. I was introduced to Sir Geoffrey Winterbotham. He was so different from the rest of the men that came to the meetings that almost my first words to him were "What are you doing in this galere?" He had been persuaded to join us by Miss Faithfull, as I had, so we had that in common, but little else. All his working life had been spent in Rangoon and India, and he was now retired with a house in Liss, near Petersfield, and a flat in Bryanston Court. He had a wife called Bilda and no children. All this I learned gradually.

Occasionally he asked me to join him for dinner when we were both staying at the County Hotel, which exists no longer. He took a fancy to Loveday and we both dined with him her last term at the College.

On one occasion he and I travelled back together in the train from Malvern. I was to get out at the station at Moreton-in-Marsh to join David who was staying with the Michael Stewarts. From the moment that we left Malvern he fired questions at me. How long had I been a widow? How many children had I? Names, ages? Were my parents still alive? Where did they live? What occupation had my husband? My Father? My son? I was so dizzy and bewildered by all this kind interest that I began to get out at the wrong station, and then nearly missed Morton-in-Marsh where David was waiting. Why did I answer all this questionnaire? What business was it of his? But

somehow the kind curiosity and sympathy undermined what might have been my resentment and I was glad of his caring interest.

So our friendship progressed. Be brought his wife to dine with me at the Terrace one night. I had already sensed that the marriage had broken down along the years, but did not realise for some time how irreparably. She must have been a very pretty girl when she was sent out to India by her parents to stay with friends and, hopefully, to find a husband. She still had a pathetic, blind looking helpless way with her which must have been irresistible to masculine protectiveness and capability. Her brother, years later, told me that she was the most selfish, ruthless, hard headed creature that he had ever known and that she had exploited Geoffrey's innate kindness all her life. It was surprising from a brother. But who knows what is the truth between married people?

At forty eight I believed myself to be really old. Had it been fashionable I suppose I would have worn a lace cap and a long dress as our grand mothers had done, though I do not know how I would have managed either with the very active life that I led. But the idea of falling in love again or anyone falling in love with me was unthinkable. So when it became apparent, even to me, what was happening I was bewildered and at a loss. One thing was always clear, and Geoffrey and I were never in any two minds about it: he was married to Hilda for better or worse, till death did them part... That was the way things were. She depended on him for everything — for her food, her medicines, her clothes, her servants, her opinions, her travel, her going out and her comings in. To have

tried to build happiness for myself out of her unhappiness was out of the question.

So there we were. We took what we could where we thought it would do least harm. When I went to stay with Eric Dunstan at Monang-Sartoux near Mougins I would often join Geoffrey afterwards in Rome or Rapallo or Milan. The first time that we travelled together was on my way home from South Africa where I had gone to stay with Eileen Graaff at Kenilworth in the Cape in 1949. Geoffrey had been in Africa on business. He joined Eileen and me at Hermanus and he and I came back together in the Edinburgh Castle. As time passed on I went with him and Hilda on holidays abroad.

Hilda seldom showed her dislike for me, which must have been intense. His own character made everything possible. He was a rare and exceptional man and taught me a great deal. All servants adored him. He was of the greatest help to me when Loveday was ill. 'All would be well. Be patient. This will all pass away.' He took on everybody's burdens and never seemed tired or oppressed. He steered me along my not always easy path for over twenty years. He helped me with my finances and allocated the shares that I made over to you children. He moved in to the nursery flat when his lease in Bryanston Court came to an end and David and Jennifer Jane moved to Taids Wood. He became Christopher Hudson's godfather and I have tried to sort out the furniture from his rooms at the Terrace that he left to me, to give to Christopher.

I was with Geoffrey when he died at his home near Petersfield. His doctor sent for me: Hilda was unable or unwilling to be with him, and remained in her own room. So it was I who was with him at the end. His last coherent thought was to make sure that I was not to be left to drive home alone, at night, over foggy and ice bound roads....

1966—1968

So Geoffrey died — my companion, instructor and mediator for nearly twenty years. Illegitimate grief is strange. When the loved husband or near relation dies there is all the consolation — and it is consolation — that the world can give. Letters abound. Kind things are written and many kindnesses shown. One is upholstered as much as it is possible by the support and sympathy of those around. But my unhappiness now was different. That must be ignored by the world though the world may be aware of it. Here my daughters were marvellous. (David was in America). They stood round me like a protecting shield, saying very little but recognising my grief. Loveday and Philip, who knew him best, swept me off to Dolphins for a few healing days. I think I had two letters, as far as I remember. One in particular I recollect, from Desmond MacCarthy who was my Doctor and who also attended Geoffrey. He wrote me a peculiarly helpful letter. But it was a grief that had to be faced alone. It happened that that year I was involved in giving lunch parties for the clergymen of the Kensington Diocese. After an offer of he1p from me, the Bishop of Kensington had made this request and once a month I provided stand up lunches, which were followed by a lecture, for as many as twenty to thirty clergymen. Those lunches had to go on. Jonathan's twenty first birthday party held that year at the Terrace was on January 19th. It had to take place. I expect it was good for me to carry on as best I could; but the nights found me very weary. Then my darling Katie died the following April on Easter Sunday, and dark waters again engulfed me. But that was different. There was all the comfort of accepted grief to console and uphold me. There were

poor Oliver and his girls to care about. Another of those clergy's lunch parties fell on the day after she died, but no one knew except my good staff — Grace and Elizabeth — and we carried on. Heart—felt cries come out of the diaries across the years ..... "January 28th. I will get used to it but the blankness is all around...." And on April 17th as I stamped round Tresco in the Scilly Isles with Clio on a long arranged holiday together "I can think only of darling Katie and how to live without her now."

But I had plenty to occupy myself with. Paul Keeling had been safely born in 1965 and the grand-children made their demands. I went down to Hampshire to stay at Lymington, and with Donald at his new property Heath House, in order to take Emma out from Cranborne Chase in Dorset. I entertained seventy three people for the children's garden party, with the hired switch back, little roundabouts, clowns and a barrel organ with a monkey. I stayed with Cherry and Bill at Phillips Hill and with Loveday and Philip at Newbridge Mill. They moved into the rooms at the Terrace where Geoffrey had been. I went frequently to the Malvern Girls' College. That summer I had the memorable meeting in Malta with Geraldine, my new daughter-in-law, and took Emma and Fanny out there to meet her and David. The Palmers had arranged that holiday and the intrusion from America was an unexpected bonus for me. It is written up in the scrap book called "Star of Malta". It was all a great success and I made there a really splendid friend and marvellous relationship with David's new wife. That the marriage lasted twelve years was a miracle since they had such diverse backgrounds and interests, and it is sad for me that it is finished, but I am sure it is best for

them. And my "Merchant Princess" and I find more in common and more shared love as the years go on.

I went from Malta to Eric Dunstan at Antibes and then home to the balm of Dolphins where the Hudsons and Keelings joined me.

So the sad year ended with the last of the clergy lunches (of seventeen), a large Christmas party for the children, and the feast itself, spent that year at Hurst and at the Oast.

My Five Year Diary for 1964-1968 finishes with a postscript in the "Memoranda" — "The saddest of books". The shadow of Geoffrey's death over me from the beginning. David and Jennifer Jane parted in the spring of 1964 .... Socialist Government appears to destroy the country. The Hudsons in trouble over Morgan Bros: merger arranged the end of '68. Jonathan engaged to Lucy Wrightson. "I am glad to shut this book."

David went to live in America in 1964; he is an artist in New York and has become an American citizen.

AFTER 1968 (20)

Understandably I was glad to shut that Five Year Diary. It had been a difficu1t time. But I started a new book again and began to record each day new interests and different occupations. I believe that it is important for people who live alone to have someone who looks to them for help. I had never formulated that idea, but looking back on my life I can see that it was a great help to me to have someone that, to quite a large extent, depended on me. After Arthur died and the children were married Aunt Alice was really in my care. She was the devoted aunt and god-mother of my childhood and lived a splendid life of public service. She was extremely gifted and a born organiser and administrator. There is a great deal that I have written about her in my Commonplace books which you might care to turn up. She started the ladies' Lyceum Club in Paris and after the first world war made the Forum Club in London a very successful and influential centre for women. She lived there for many years and returned to it after her exile at Dromenagh. But the club fell on hard times and could no longer have resident members. From then on I was able to help her. She moved first to the Onslow Court Hotel and then to the Over Housing Association at 43 Cadogan Place, where she eventually died, quite blind, at the age of ninety-four. Towards the end I used to visit her most days. I loved her dearly and, as she would say, "C'est reciproque". I am no lover of women's clubs but for her I became very involved with the Forum and became its Chairman for several years. But when she died I resigned my membership as soon as I decently could.

For years afterwards I had a horrible recurring dream. I had not been to see Aunt Alice for months. She was quite alone: I had not been near her. I would hurry to get to her.... before I arrived I would wake, distraught, appalled, only to find it a dream and relieved beyond words that she was in fact dead.

Aunt Alice died in 1957. Soon after that Geoffrey Winterbotham slipped up on some wet leaves, broke his shoulder and pelvis and never really recovered his health and strength. After he died I found that his e1der sister Jessica Winterbotham, had been strangely marooned by circumstances and needed a great deal of assistance during the long eleven years that she survived him. She lived in a bed-sitting room in Worthing, so that it was quite easy for me to help her when I was at Dolphins. Had I not known about her she would have been put in an Old People's State Home and would have ended her days in a geriatric ward, although she had inherited an enormous income from Geoffrey's Estate. Then old Harriet's only relation was a sadly uncaring daughter and a lot of my time was happily spent with the old lady who lived to be over ninety. Aunt Alice's old maid, Miss Skelton, fell in my path. She had a wonderful and most caring niece, but she lived in Birmingham, which was a long way to come to clean and to shop in North Kensington. Dora Kay, who had been my cook for a while and lived on the top floor of the Terrace with her old sister, had left me and put the old sister in a home near Richmond. I used to visit her fairly regularly. It was she who, when I told her that I was going to be seventy, put her withered hand on her bony bosom and sighed "Oh! to be seventy again!" Then there was the once Manageress 43, Cadogan Place, Miss Job. She had been an excellent Manageress for many years, but the years took

their toll, she became increasingly irresponsible and had to have treatment. The hospital where she had become a patient rang me to say that she had escaped. I found her in her nightgown and bedroom slippers in Flood Street, coaxed her into the car and drove her quickly back to safety. She finally, mercifully, died in the Banstead lunatic asylum. There were others with whom I became involved and were time consuming.

The grand children continued to delight me. I saw a great deal of Tom Keeling during those years as he did not go to the winter sports as young as the others, and we had happy times together having "theatrical seasons".

I wrote the little monograph on my father, which you should all have copies of, and finished it about this time. I finished, too, the shell rug which is in my bedroom. I worked hard in the garden and gave many hours up to it, weeding and pruning, planting and planning, besides collecting the subscriptions from all the houses and flats and chairing the committees. Now I have resigned from all its administration, and am glad that I have.

I have always enjoyed travelling and jumped at any chance to see new places. I know my own country fairly well and have seen, I think, all its beautiful cathedrals though I still look forward to visiting the new Roman Catholic one in Liverpool. My long love affair with Venice began when I first saw it from the 'Caroline', and has continued to this day. I feel denied if I do not go there from time to time, and have just now completed my sixteenth visit. I stayed in Menorca more than once with Rosalind and Ralph in their lovely Villa "Casa Pupa". I went to Venice, Rome Madrid and Paris

with the Tooths. I nearly died from Whittaker's' Angina developed in Madrid and broke my arm in Rome, after which we decided that I was more of a liability than an asset as a travelling companion to them. Jenifer and Mike persuaded me to go to India with them early in 1968, which with Mike as a brilliant cicerone was a marvellous experience. But except for Venice I have never been in one place abroad to know it well. But except for my South African visits that opportunity never came my way.

Harold Nicholson once wrote that old friends sometimes drop us; we ourselves drop old friends and death also drops them out of our lives. What is important is that we should make new ones.

I have made many friends over the years. The Claphams, whom I met through the garden, spring to my mind with thankfulness. Sam Beazley has always been in my life and Penelope King, since her Mother died in 1965, has kept in very close touch with me. She and Sam are both first cousins once removed. Molly Burrows and her family become closer as the years go by. Jerry Northrop Moore found me out when he was researching the Gramophone Company. He has taught me a great deal as I have shared the birth pangs with him of his definitive life of Elgar. Even more recently I have met Harry Yoxall and enjoyed his company; he has encouraged and helped me to write these pages and given me his wide professional help. Many come into my story where you will have found their names. The Lubbocks and I have never been out of touch.

I admired the Claphams flat, only two doors away from No. 3, and when they decided to live in the country I tried to persuade several people whom I knew to move from their houses. "It is so much

more sensible for old people to live in a flat", I would say. Ruth and Shuldham Redfern, old friends from Birtley days, had come to live in a little house on the other side of Sheffield Terrace. They came in for my unwanted advice which they bore patiently with no intention of moving. One morning I woke up with the conviction that I was the old person who should get out of a large house and move to a flat. I hurried across to Jocelyn to put the proposition to her. She and Pat were delighted and all was swiftly arranged. To their eternal credit it should be remembered that they had the opportunity to 'gazump' me, which tempting offer they turned down.

So in March 1971, after 43 years at Number 3 , soon after my seventieth birthday, the move was made. And I have never regretted it.....

THE MOVE TO THE FLAT

The move from Number Three to Number Seven Sheffield Terrace was as easy as a move could be. I had had considerable alterations made to the flat in order to carve out living quarters for the Eatons and their son Geoffrey, who was still living at home. I had to make a new kitchen for myself out of a spare bedroom near to the front door and opposite Pat's dressing room which now became a dining room. The book cases in the hall I had made to measure.

I was not as upset at leaving our old home as people expected me to be: Grace, on the other hand, never stopped crying, which annoyed me because I knew she thought that I should be in tears too. My children gave me a lovely dinner party for my seventieth birthday at the house, which was also a farewell party. Even there no tears were shed. But when it was all over and I was established in the now beautiful flat I was quite ill with dysentry. I had planned to go to visit David and Geraldine in New York and Connectiutt, travelling out in one of the last "Queens" and returning home on a first class air flight, and I only just managed to carry out the happy programme. Dear Loveday came with me to Southampton to help me unpack and to see me off and I was grateful for her help. Looking back now I think that my dis-ordered inside was a measure of my emotion over the move. How often do we think we have controlled our feelings, only to find that the mechanics of our bodies have betrayed us.

Returned from America, proud of my new flat, I resumed the tranquil course of my life. Having lost Mrs Bleasdale, who had cooked for me from the self-contained top storey of the old house,

and failed to find a daily cook, I took to the kitchen with a great deal of happiness. I found the little knowledge that I had picked up in the war was quickly recollected; I enjoyed trying out new recipes and was encouraged flatteringly by that well known gourmet and expert on wine from across the garden, Harry Yoxall.

ENVOI

Now as I approach my eightieth birthday I must finish this story that I have told for Loveday and all the others whom it may concern.

I have enjoyed writing it and have learnt a great deal about myself as I have looked through the pages, backwards and forwards. It has been a curiously cleansing process. There is little to be proud of, except my children. I have very few regrets. What there are are more for what I have left undone than for what I have done. I am sure I should not like myself if I met myself; I count myself most fortunate that some others have felt otherwise.

The world does seem to me to be hurrying to some fearful holocaust. My generation, for those who were born in that small social stratum where poverty did not exist, and in the serene and golden dawn of the twentieth century which had only just begun, has seen more changes, more inventions, more evidence of man's brilliant resourcefulness and damnable cleverness than any generation has had to adapt to in any time before. Time went so slowly, such a short while ago, that careful time—tables were drawn up in order to break the tedium of the slow hours' passing. Now it hurries by at such a pace that none of us can find enough of it each day. More and more people crowd onto the world that we once thought so vast, so endless. "What next?" we old ones cry. But that was the cry that our fathers and their fathers cried, and perhaps it is only the inevitable cry of old age.

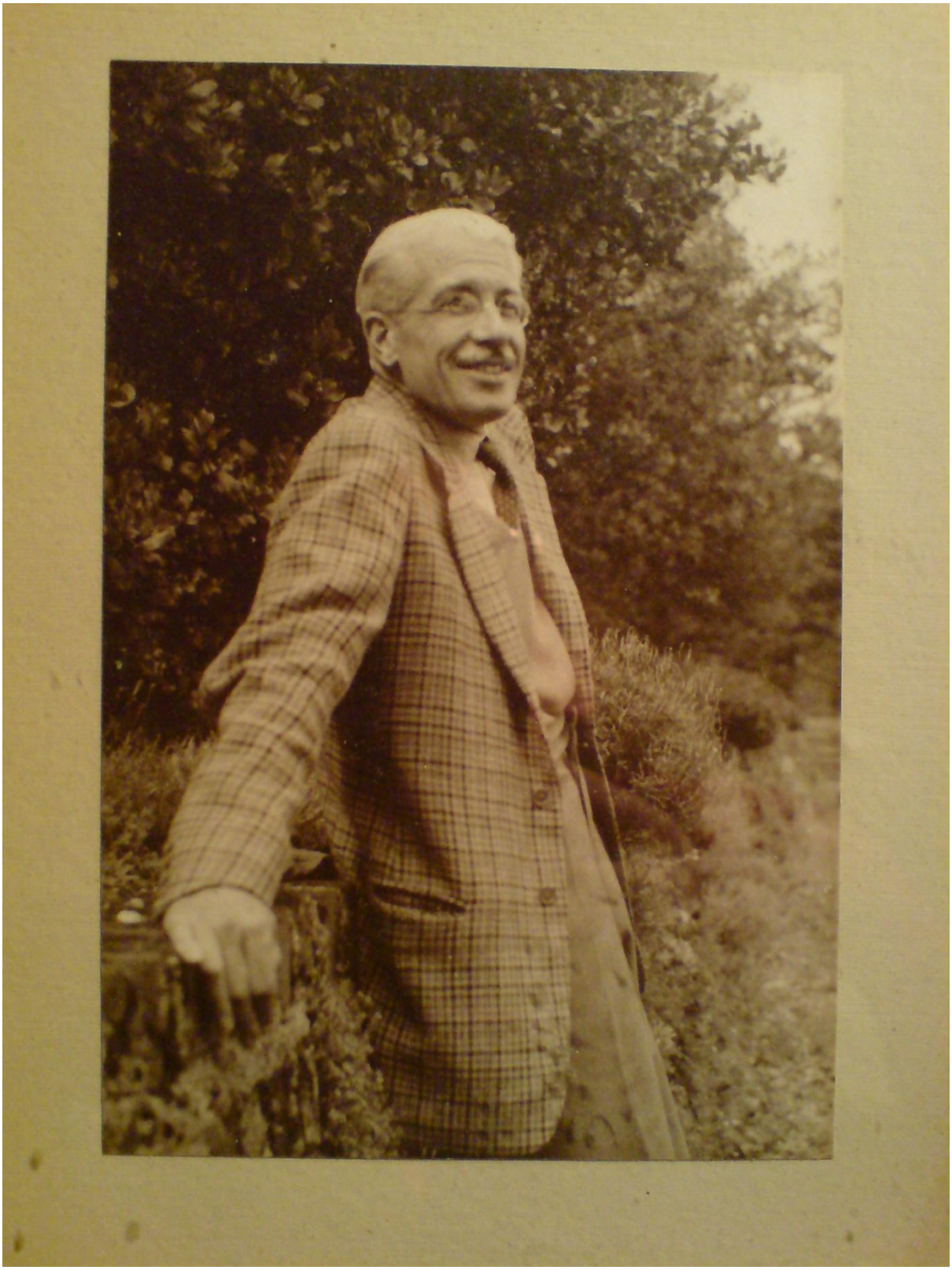
Whatever lies ahead, I am sure that there is some vast unchanging plan. Civilizations have gone and may go, and our little

lives only contribute to, or impede, the great design. Man will adapt himself to whatever befalls him and death is only a necessary process within the unfolding scroll in which we have been privileged to play our parts.

Goodbye, little book. I have enjoyed writing it, I pray it gives only pleasure, no hurts.

PICTURES

Arthur Gibbs



Arthur Gibbs

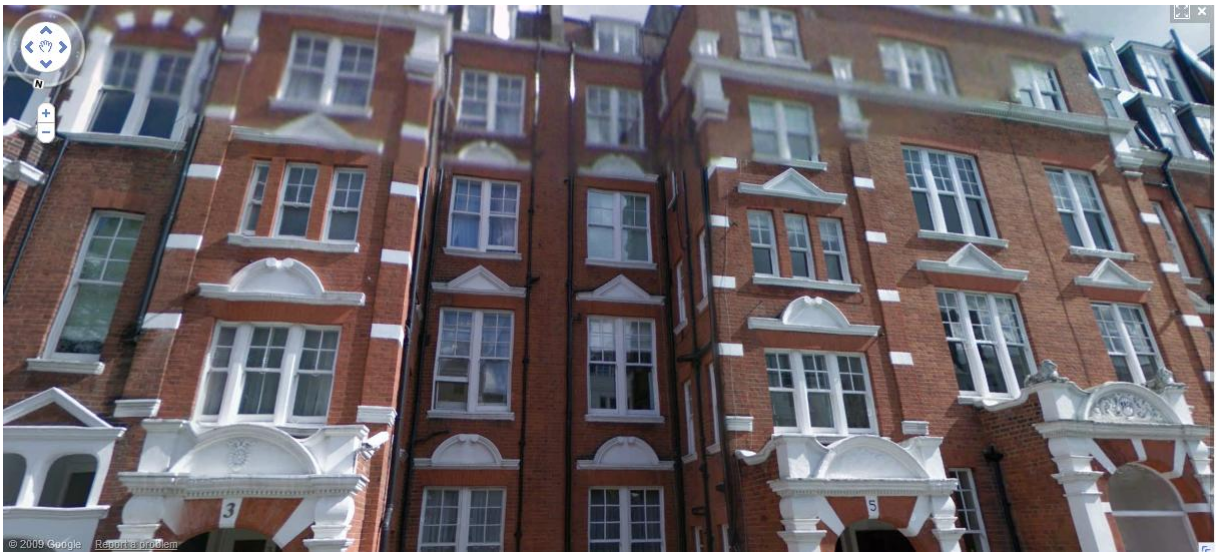
Barbara Gibbs

David (son) and Barbara Gibbs

Barbara Gibbs, self portrait

Deudraeth castle, Wales. also called Castel Deudraeth.

Picture found on http://www.portmeirion-history.co.uk/index.htm



3 and 7 Sheffield Terrace, from Google maps

Dolphins – Google satellite image. [Here]

Dolphins – Google satellite image. Here

There was no swimming pool in Barbar's time – she would have scorned it.

Index, relatives, quotes

Where people (usually women) have changed their names, their second name appears in the same entry as their first. Gwyn Grimond does well: Gwyn Grimond, Gwyn Corbett, Lady Rowallan.

Eldridge Johnson
Elizabeth Andersen (Andy)
Eric Dunstan
Ernest Lisburne
Eton School
Eustace Guinness
Fanny Bell (BG's Aunt)
Fenimore Johnson
FitzGeralds
Florrie de la Rue (BG's Aunt)
Florrie Scott
Food Society Journal
Frank Braithwaite
Fred Stoop
Freddy Sykes
Friesian
Frinton
Gaenor Scott-Ellis, Gaenor Heathcote-Amory
Gastloser Mountains
General Strike
Geoffrey Eaton
Geoffrey Lawrences, Lord Oaksey
George Barstow
George Phillipe
Geraldine Schwarz
Gervas Huxley
Godfrey Phillips
Gordon Beazley
Grace Eaton
Great Western Railway
Guards Armoured Divsion
Gwyn Grimond, Gwyn Corbett, Lady Rowallan
Harcourt Gold
Harry Yoxall
Henley Regatta
Henry Heley-Hutchison
Hilda Winterbotham
Hiley Bathurst
HMV
Hope Hudson
Imperial Airways
Ingela Kreuger, Ingela Baklund
Irene Denison-Pender, Lady Pender
Isabel Sykes
Jack Denison-Pender, Lord Pender
Jack Gibbs
Jack Keeling, Sir John Keeling
Jack Russell
Jack Rutherford
Jack Groves
James Norton
Jenifer Barbara Gibbs, Jenifer Keeling
Jennifer Howard, Jennifer Jane Gibbs
Jennifer Lawrence, Jennifer Burnaby-Atkins
Jeremy Thorpe
Jerry Crole
Jerry Northrop Moore
Jessica Winterbotham
Jim Woodhouse
Jimmie Horlick
Jinnie Fullerton
Joan Krishaber, Joan Bathurst
Joan Rutherford
Joan Williams
Joanna Prescot
Jocelyn Clapham
Jock Murray
Joe Williams, Joe Hutchison
John Spencer
Jonathan Hudson
Johnny Keeling
Joyce Wethered
Katie (Catherine) Williams, Katie Stedall
Katie Rutherford
Kensington District Nursing Association
King George V
Kutya Krishaber (Otto Krishaber)
Lady Duveen
Lady Keeling
Lady Pender
Lady Rowallan
Lady Victoria Braithwaite
Lady Wakehurst
Leila Ladd, Leila Gibbs
Leo Dowd
Lilian Faithful
Lionel Cohen, Lord Cohen
Lionel Gallwey-Robertson
Llandudno
Lorimer Rees
Lord Campden
Lord Howard de Walden
Lord Kitchener
Lord Lothian
Lord Oaksey
Lord Pender
Lord Rowallan
Lord Swaythling
Loveday Gibbs, Loveday Hudson
Loveday Williams
Ludgrove School
Mabel Grimmer
Madame Meunier
Maggie Hay
Malvern Girls College
Margaret Macharg
Marlborough House Lodge
Martin Hudson
Marie Ney
Mark Lubbock
Marjorie Lawrence

Marjorie Gibbs
Marjorie House
Mary Hendrie, Mary Cumming, Lady Swaythling
Mary Montague
Mary Schoeffler
Michael Keeling
Miss Bervon
Miss Blandford
Miss Heath Jones
Miss Pixley
Miss Pott's boarding school
Mlle Manileve
Molly Le Bas, Molly Burrows
Mollycombe
Monica Beazley-Robinson, Monica Pen Lloyd
Mrs Simpson
Mrs Bleasdale
Murthley Castle
Mynffordd
Nancy Barstow, Lady Cuccia
Nanny Elizabeth Andersen
Nanny Fra Chevez
Nanny Pycroft
Nanny Mrs Smith
Nanny Kay Huddon, Mrs Anthony Brooke
Nanny Kathleen Oldfield
Naomi Brooke
National Council of Social Services
Nell Fullerton
Neil Perrins
Nelto Beazley
Nelto Willliams
Neville Smyth
Nigel Bengough
Nigel Fisher
Noel Coward
Oaksey
Oliver Stanley
Oliver Stedall, Noll Stedall
Olwen Smyth
Osmond Williams
Oswald Birley
Pat Clapham
Paul Schoeffler
Pauline Chase
Penelope King
Peter Pan
Peter Wilding
Philip Hudson
Pinesfield's
Pleydel Bouverie
Princess Victoria
Prue Daniel
Pynesfield Manor
Queen Anne
Queen Mary
Queen Mother
Queen Victoria
Rene Woodhouse
Reggie Lisburne
Rich, Mr
Richardson Gardner
Rolls-Royce
Ronnie Cumming
Rosamond Butler, Rosebud Gallwey-Robertson, Rosamond Gibbs
Royal Enclosure at Ascot
Sam Beazley
Sammy Stanier
Scyella
Sheffield Terrace
Shirley Williams
Silver Wing Imperial Airways
Sir Baptist Hicks
Sir John Keeling
Sir Joseph Duveen
Sir Geoffrey Winterbotham
Sir R. W. Carden & Co
Sir Sidney Beauchamp
Sir William Orpen
Sosonov
St. Andrew's
St. Monica's
Stuart Montague, Lord Swaythling
Sybil Dunlop
Terling Marthus
Thomas Keeling
Tommy Humbert
Tony Whaley
Trevor Willliams (BG's father)
Vera Britain
Victoria Wingate
Walter Bonn
Welsh Guards
Wilfred House
Wimbledon
Winsome Gibbs, Winsome French
Wolseley

Barbars maiden name: Willliams

Relatives

Parents names Trevor Willliams, Alice Fullerton, known as Toby

Barbars's sisters: Loveday (died young), Joe, Katie (husband Oliver, children Rosalind and Olivia)

Trevor Williams' sisters: Fanny Bell, Florrie de la Rue and Alice Williams
Barbars cousins: Joan Williams, Nelto Willliams

Rosalind (p232) is Rosalind Stewart-Wilson (nee Stedall), she is Katie's daughter.

Arthur Gibbs' parents Leila and Arthur Gibbs
p 59 Mr and Mrs Gibbs had four children Arthur, Bryan (who Barbar sometimes referred to as Brian, but I have used Brian throughout), Winifred and Marjorie.
Arthur's uncle Willy.

Barbar and Arthur's children: David, Loveday, Cherry, Jenifer

Grandchildren
Emma Gibbs
Fanny Gibbs

Jonathan Hudson
Martin Hudson
Christopher Hudson
Cathryn Hudson (Katie Hudson)
Alexander Hudson

Serena Palmer
Alexandra Palmer
Howard Palmer
John Palmer

Robert Keeling
Trevor Keeling
George Keeling
Simon Keeling
David Keeling
Tom Keeling
James Keeling
Paul Keeling

Great grandchildren
Henry Hudson
Emily Hudson
Hugh Hudson
Mark Hudson
Ian Hudson
Hugo Hudson
Kate Crockatt
Ruth Keeling
and there are many more who were born after the story was penned.

Quotes

p84 "I listened on Arthur's little home-made crystal set to the official opening of Wembley all the morning. It was most wonderful. I heard everything — the massed bands playing ... an aeroplane droning above the stadium ..."

p88 " The Court dress followed rigid rules laid down by the Lord Chamberlain's office; 'long evening dresses with Court trains suspended from the shoulders, white veils with ostrich feathers will be worn on the head.....gloves must be worn. Veils to be no longer

than forty five inches. Three small white feathers — the Prince of Wales Plume — must be worn slightly on the left side of the head.'"

p190 "But she was wrong: nothing would have saved him. The big aorta had ruptured. He had died as we would all wish to die, peacefully, happily, finding it all lovely. Why should I cry?"

p209 "So to sum up this part of my story I am really sure, after all these years that except for the very gifted and unusual humanist, whom I have never met, life's full potential can only be lived against a background of spiritual faith."

p217 "Nanny approves of it for the new baby 'Simon, called Henry' whose face she covers with a piece of muslin so that he looks like a holy relic being carried across the lawn."

p237 "My generation, for those who were born in that small social stratum where poverty did not exist, and in the serene and golden dawn of the twentieth century which had only just begun, has seen more changes, more inventions, more evidence of man's brilliant resourcefulness and damnable cleverness than any generation has had to adapt to in any time before. Time went so slowly ..."

Postscript

Barbara Gibbs, always known as Barbar to her grandchildren, died on 6th June 1981 aged 80, three years after finishing these diaries. We all loved her and often feared her. Paul Keeling (grandson) was talking to a school friend when he was about ten years old. The friend told him about "an old witch" who lived in his garden and terrorised all the children. Paul asked his friend where he lived. It was one of the streets around the shared garden in Sheffield Terrace. Barbar was the witch.

Katie Hudson (granddaughter) originally typed the manuscript from Barbar's handwriting, much encouraged by her older brother Martin.

Brenda Baker, long serving secretary to Simon and Jim Keeling (more grandchildren), scanned the document, first as 'images', then as 'text'. The image version can be found here:
http://8brothers.typepad.com/8_keeling_brothers/2008/03/barbars-diaries.html

Robert Keeling (another GC) took Brenda's text version and corrected it, as is always necessary. I continued the corrections. No doubt there are still transcription errors. The image version (which had p 45 missing) can always be used to check. The numbers after some of Barbar's chapter names correspond to the image version chapter numbers.

Dear reader, if you have got his far and noticed any errors, please tell me and I will correct them!

George Keeling, Berlin, March 2010