

SO MANY GOOD FRIENDS

by

BILL STALLYBRASS

**Dedicated to the memory of Margo,
my dear wife of 52 years,
to our sons, Andrew and Peter,
to their wives,
Eliane Françoise Maillefer and
Ann Rosalind Jones,
and to Jim Lynn,
without whose inspired thought
and constant encouragement
this book would never have been written**

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Introduction

Margo Bigland, my wife for 52 years, and I grew up in Heswall in the Wirral, looking across the estuary of the River Dee to the Welsh hills. As children, we were each a problem to our families, then separately and at different times, we set out on a journey of discovery in which our many mistakes and failures have been used to teach us valuable lessons.

We both owe a great deal to her mother, Nellie Bigland, who did not live to see me as her son-in-law. She returned home from an Oxford Group house party in 1934 to build a new relationship with her "difficult daughter". After her death two years later, Margo and her 10-year-old brother Tony experienced similar changes in their lives.

It was the quality of life that I saw in Tony and in Margo that led me in 1939 to face my need to change. Since then, I have tried, to the best of my ability, to live a life based on Christ's absolute moral standards, His command "to love my neighbour as myself", and daily listening to God for direction.

Looking back over the past 60 years, I realise how many relatives and friends have enriched not only my life but often our lives as a family, and have helped me step by step towards becoming the man I am meant to be.

This book comes from my heart with a big "thank you" to all concerned.

Greville Austin Stallybrass

Father was a partner in the Liverpool cotton-broking firm, founded by his grandfather, S. M. Bulley & Sons. He had a fine baritone voice, and often I would lie in bed, trying to stay awake to enjoy a musical evening. As his first step towards setting up house, he had bought an excellent Bechstein upright, arguing irrefutably that one could always use a piano as a sideboard, but never a sideboard as a piano.

Together with music and mountains, Father had a passion for railways. One of my earliest recollections is of sitting on his knee and looking at pictures in *The Railway Magazine*. He would draw me a picture of a locomotive each weekend. He taught me to distinguish different types. I poured scorn on a well-meaning family friend who sent me a postcard of "the engine which took me home": "It's an 0-6-0; that's a freight engine".

In the spring of 1917, we moved across the Wirral peninsula from New Brighton to Heswall on the Dee estuary, across which, 3 miles away, rise the Welsh hills. That summer, on 13th August, the day before his youngest son Andrew's first birthday, he died of bronchial pneumonia, aged 39.

I had just begun to enjoy a special relationship with him as the eldest son. My last recollection of him is of a long walk together, involving crossing barbed wire fences. We were very late for Sunday dinner. Mother scolded him, and I felt as if we had been naughty boys together.

Irene Stallybrass (née Weatherhead)

Mother was the fifth of seven children, three daughters and four sons, of Canon and Mrs Robert Weatherhead. He was Vicar of St Paul's, Seacombe, for many years and a Governor of Wallasey High School for Girls. A graduate of Liverpool University, Mother had been Assistant Headmistress and was later also a Governor of the school, which has been renamed the Weatherhead School.

Mother had won a prize at school for "pianoforte playing" in 1898, a handsome volume of Beethoven's *Sonatas*, published by Steingraber of Leipzig in 1895, which is now one of my most treasured possessions. Almost every evening during our time in New Brighton, she would play the piano and we would sing nursery rhymes or settings of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Child's*

Garden of Verses or dance to incidental music from *Peter Pan* or to Schumann's *Kinderszenen*.

Behind our Heswall home is an area of hilly common land of gorse and heather known as "The Dales". In it is a disused red sandstone quarry, which can be climbed by several easy routes. When we boasted to Mother of our climbs, she insisted on coming with us despite our protests of "It's much too difficult for you, Mother". She soon satisfied herself that the danger was minimal.

She was a brilliant teacher and gave us each in turn our first lessons in reading and writing; she also introduced us to acting. Separated from our large drawing room by curtains, was a small "smoke room" with its own entrance from the hall. The latter made an ideal stage, the former an auditorium for 20 to 30 people. With the help of our neighbours, the Brown family, she produced scenes from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*.

From our parents we inherited a love of mountains. Mother was an intrepid hill walker. She used to wear a Burberry jacket and knee-breeches, covered by a skirt of the same material, which could be worn for "decency" and quickly shed when a village was left behind. She and her younger sister, our Aunt Molly, often visited the Lake District. As good parson's daughters, they would time their Sunday walks to enable them to drop in for Matins at some village church. On one occasion they arrived at a church in good time, as they thought, only to discover that the service had already started. The whole congregation looked round as they clomped into the back row in their nailed boots. There was a long psalm in which it was usual to change the tune in the middle. They gave a strong lead to start the new tune, but the organist continued with the old one. Once again the whole congregation stared round at them.

It was Mother who introduced Father to the hills. On a four-week holiday in the Yorkshire Dales, the Lake District and the Lowlands of Scotland, one of their many walking tours, they covered over 460 miles, averaging 17 miles a day and crossing 17 summits of over 2,000 feet.

For Mother, Father's death was the third tragedy in three years; her eldest brother had been killed at Ypres in 1915, another brother on the Somme in 1916. In a way, Father, too, was a war casualty. He had been found unfit for

military service on account of a weak chest, and had been consistently overworking because of shortage of staff.

Four years later Mother married his youngest brother, our Uncle Clare; we called him "Pater". When she told me of her intention, I said, "You can't do that, Mother; it says so in the Prayer Book". Denied a Church wedding, they were legally married in a registry office.

They had two more sons, to whom I sometimes referred as my three-quarter brothers. The elder one, Stephen, was born with Down's Syndrome. Oliver, the youngest of the family, later wrote of Mother, "The death, within a dreadful wartime year or so, of her husband and two brothers, one of them her favourite, seems to have killed something within her for ever. She neither repined nor snarled at life, she coped bravely with further grievous blows; but in photographs the wide-eyed pioneering fearlessness is increasingly replaced by an expression of anxiety and occasionally bewilderment".

She was a very courageous woman with a firm belief in the stiff upper lip. She waited until we were tucked up in bed for the night before breaking the news of Father's death to us and weeping with us. By the next morning everything was under control again. We seldom talked of Father; we sensed that the subject was too painful for her.

On family seaside holidays at Morfa-Nefyn on the Lleyn peninsula, Mother introduced Robin and me to our first small hills: Bodfean, Madryn and Yr Eifel ("The Rivals").

When Robin was 11 and I was 13, she daringly took us during an Easter holiday on a four-day walking tour in the Lake District. With everything needed for five nights in our rucksacks, we travelled by train and bus to Grasmere. The weather was fine, but there was still snow over 2,000 feet. On our first day we climbed Helvellyn (3,118 ft) and made a hazardous descent, without rope or ice-axes, of the heavily iced Striding Edge to Patterdale.

She was delighted when I followed in her footsteps as a graduate of Liverpool University. She insisted on lending me her robes for the ceremony, borrowing robes for herself from a friend, as she was on the platform as a member of the University Council.

She had something of the quality of Monica, the mother of St Augustine of Hippo. However much my chosen way of life hurt her, she never tried to

control me. She did, however, very sensitively prevent me from taking what would have been the most disastrous step of my life.

After graduating and trying in vain for a teaching job, I was awarded a post-graduate exchange studentship at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau. This was my fifth year as a student and, before leaving, I accepted, with a certain sense of desperation, the offer from a cousin of a job on my return in the family cotton firm in Liverpool. As the year wore on, I became increasingly uneasy over what I knew had been a wrong decision but, at 23, I felt it was high time to cease to be a burden to Mother.

Sensing that all was not well with me, she arranged to join me in Freiburg for a fortnight of the summer term. It was only on the very last day that she found a way of drawing out what was worrying me. She at once suggested that I should return to Liverpool University to take a Diploma in Education and that she would tell our cousin what we had decided.

My change came between us at first, since I foolishly tried to force my new ideas onto her. She was hurt that I chose to spend half of my first leave from the Army at Tirley Garth, the Oxford Group's centre in Cheshire, but after reading Peter Howard's *Innocent Men*, she kept a promise never again to come between me and what I thought right.

The morning after I had phoned to tell her of my engagement to Margo, she called on her before breakfast, flung her arms round her neck, burst into tears and said, "I never thought he would marry someone so respectable".

When teaching English in a German *Gymnasium* in the '70s, I often used the following story for reproduction exercises: on an occasion when Mother was to visit her brother Arthur at Wincanton, her sister Molly, who was already staying there, arranged to meet her at Evercreech Junction. Travelling from Heswall, Mother had joined at Crewe the Pines Express, which used the Somerset & Dorset track on its way from Manchester to Bournemouth; she had been assured that it stopped at Evercreech on that particular day of the week, though not every day.

After Bath, she discovered that her heavy trunk, which had been consigned to the guard's van, had been removed. The guard, however, reassured her that the train would stop. As they approached the Junction at speed, Mother put her head out of the window and saw Molly sitting on the platform. She happened to be in the front coach. Without thinking, she yelled

"Stop!" at the top of her voice. The fireman heard her and told the driver to stop. By the time they arrived on the scene, Mother had already climbed down onto the track with her light case and was starting to walk the few hundred yards back to the station, running the gauntlet of staring passengers. The guard did not dare to show his face. Molly was amazed to see her sister walking along the track towards her.

After Pater died, she lived with Oliver and his Norwegian wife Gunnvor, at first near Portsmouth and finally in a house on Westwood Hill, Crystal Palace.

Mother became a very sensitive mother-in-law and grandmother and helped us financially on many occasions. Margo and I were at her side when she died, aged 82.

The following, in Mother's handwriting, sent me by Gunnvor, shows her love for her grandchildren:

"Andrew [our son] (aged 5): 'When I look at the sunset I feel as though I'm dreaming. I don't know what I'm dreaming, but it's so beautiful it hits me in my heart'.

Anne [Oliver and Gunnvor's daughter] (4): 'I don't know where Granny can have gone to. She can't be dead because she's too young'.

Michael [Oliver and Gunnvor's son] (2) (on drawing the curtain in the morning): 'Oh, there's the sky; I've found it'.

Hugh [Robin and Agnes's son] (6): 'I'm generating noise'. (On request for less noise): 'Now I'm only generating two thirds of capacity'."

Robert Weatherhead ("Robin") Stallybrass

My brother Robin was born on my second birthday. We shared parties and used to think that a birthday was a family rather than an individual event.

We were always very close to each other, but at one time we quarrelled so frequently that authority decreed that we should be spanked each time we were caught fighting.

We had both inherited from Father a passion for railways. On a holiday in West Kirby I would take Robin to a footbridge in Ashton Park and teasingly encourage him to guess the colour of the next locomotive we would see. I would take a wicked delight if he chose red, blue or "lellow", knowing that the choice was limited to black for the London and North Western or green for the Great Western. At West Kirby station we would watch the GWR locomotives being swung round by hand on a turntable. The footplates on LNWR locomotives were covered in at the back and they would make the journey from Birkenhead to West Kirby in reverse.

Robin was four and I was six when we moved to Heswall. We spent a glorious summer, scarcely clouded by Father's death. We were befriended by the sons of our gardener and of our milkman, who introduced us town bumpkins to a new world of birds, caterpillars and butterflies. Robin and I explored the surrounding countryside. When I first discovered on my own the end of our long and very muddy lane, I immediately took Robin with me to see it.

We spent hours, often with another boy, practising cricket on our lawn, even in winter. Our aunt, Anita Gill, who lived a mile away from the Edgbaston Cricket Ground would invite us for a week when Warwickshire were playing two home matches, and we would never miss a ball.

Later, we built up a fine collection of gramophone records. Robin was a member of the Beethoven and Hugo Wolf Societies, I of the Sibelius and Delius Societies.

Two of the happiest days of my life were when Robin and I together tackled some of the hardest rock climbs on Scafell and on Pillar. The next year, however, I pushed him on our second day into leading a climb too hard for him. He fell, damaged a knee and spent the rest of the holiday lying with his leg up.

This did not deter him from climbing and he later had the distinction of taking part in the first ascent of Menlove Edwards' "Sexton's Climb" on Dinas Cromlech. Menlove wrote: "No 3, before setting out from Helyg for the climb in question, discovered that it was cold, and put an extra coat in his sack. It started hailing during the first pitch, and No 3, finding that his several waistcoats, coats, and cut down mackintoshes afforded insufficient protection, took the coat out from the sack and by a skilled acrobatic manoeuvre added this garment deftly to the pile upon his shoulders. It was a black tail-coat, and

would probably have fitted him very well if it had not been made on far too small a scale, and unhappily the sleeves, for their part, did not extend far beyond the elbows. It got on much better when the pressure of circumstances discovered extensive outlets down the seams. The route was called Sexton's Route" (1).

Robin won classical scholarships to Shrewsbury and to Clare College, Cambridge, and taught Classics at Denstone before the war and at Downside after the war, continuing after his official retirement to teach part time until he was 78.

At Denstone he founded a Music Club, introducing boys to classical music by way of jazz. I saw him take the part of "Nanki-Poo" in a fine performance of *The Mikado*. He played football for a local amateur club.

He served during the war in the RNVR. In Colombo he met his bride-to-be, The Hon. Agnes Clifford, daughter of the 11th Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. She was then serving in the Naval Voluntary Aid Detachment (Red Cross). They were married a few weeks before D-Day in the Clifford family Ugbrooke Chapel, which is claimed to be the oldest Catholic Parish Church in the south-west of England in regular use since 1673. As best man, I had to get special permission to enter what was then a restricted security zone in which preparations for the invasion of Normandy were taking place.

Robin and Agnes lived in "The Old Laundry", a cottage which had once been the Oakhill laundry on Mendip. There they emulated on a minor scale the TV series *The Good Life*, aiming to be as nearly self-supporting as possible, growing vegetables and fruit and keeping chickens, goats and rabbits.

Margo and I first visited them a few months after our marriage. After a hellish night journey in the corridor of a crowded train from Durham to Bath and a dawn ascent of Mendip on the old Somerset and Dorset line, we were met by Robin at Midsomer Norton and Welton.

Their daughter, Hope, was then two. Agnes was pregnant with their second child, Margo with our first. Robin and I were both keen to christen a son after our brother Andrew, who had died tragically in 1940. To avoid having two Andrews in the family, we agreed that, if both turned out to be boys, the first to arrive would be Andrew. We won, and Robin and Agnes christened their son Hugh Greville after his two grandfathers.

Hugh died tragically of cancer in 1992 at the age of 44. Margo and I drove Robin to Brighton to the funeral, at which I had been asked to speak. Hugh had taken a degree in Marine Biology at Bangor University and had been responsible under a Water Board for everything connected with the environment of the Rivers Rother, Ouse, Adur and Arun, before moving to Southern Science. His wife, Carey, is a teacher. Their daughter, Kate, is at present teaching psychology in a comprehensive school; their son, Alex, has taken a degree in photography at Nottingham University.

In February 1995 Margo was admitted to King's College Hospital with a blocked artery to the heart. An angioplasty failed; the balloons all burst. A team was then brought from Middlesbrough to undertake the first rotablation at King's; in this, balloons are replaced by a diamond-studded drill.

When I phoned Robin to tell him that the operation had succeeded, he told me that Agnes had died suddenly of a massive heart attack that morning. Four days later, Margo had recovered sufficiently to drive with me to Somerset and to come next day to the funeral, at which Robin had asked me to speak.

Early in 1996, Robin was admitted to hospital in Bath with an infection in his right leg which led to amputation. He remained amazingly cheerful, coping effectively with a wheelchair and a prosthesis. He was well supported by pretty nurses of the National Health Service and by the community.

In September 1996, Robin and Hope celebrated 50 years in "The Old Laundry". They held open house for numerous neighbours and friends from 10.30 am till 9 pm. The weather was fine and Hope served lunch and tea in the garden and supper in the house.

On that occasion we were happy to meet Robin's younger daughter Emma and her family. A brilliant teacher of mathematics, she had married John Bowles, a transport manager for Cadbury, Schweppes and Coca Cola. Tired of the frequent moves which the "rat race" involved, they bought the village post office and stores in Wolfscastle in South Wales and, with their three children, have learned Welsh.

In 1991, Wolfscastle School published *Recipes of the Famous*, collected by the pupils. Of the Bowles children, George was given a recipe for Spaghetti alla Carbonara by the BBC Blue Peter team, Caroline one for Mexican Chicken by Prime Minister John Major, and Patrick one for

Guernsey Apple Pudding by the school dentist. A year or two later, the school published *A Variety of Verse*, which included five poems in English and Welsh by Caroline, aged 10, and two in English by Patrick, aged 7. John Bowles has twice taken part in the London Marathon.

In recent years we often celebrated our joint birthday together. The date usually coincided with the annual joint choral concert of Downside and Lewiston Schools. Robin, who sang tenor, welcomed us as appreciative listeners. After he had given up singing, he would come to us for the annual concert of Christ's Chapel Choral Society, in which I used to sing.

In March 1999 Margo and I celebrated my 88th birthday in Washington with Peter and Annie, who were spending a sabbatical year there as Fellows of the Folger Shakespeare Library. We telephoned Robin, who was celebrating his 86th in "The Old Laundry" with his two daughters and two of his five grandchildren.

Two days later, Hope phoned us to say that he had died of a heart attack. We were unable to return for the funeral. That same day, Margo started an illness that was diagnosed as pneumonia. It was the beginning of the end. She died a month later in King's College Hospital.

Early on May Day, a gloriously sunny day, Hope, who runs an antique business in Hastings, arrived in time to accompany us to the private cremation in the morning. Wearing a bright red dress, Margo's favourite colour, she was by my side through most of the day. Since then she has accomplished the difficult task of selling "The Old Laundry". We keep in touch with each other regularly by phone and have become almost like father and daughter.

In March 2000 she invited Peter and Annie, who were in England at the time, her sister Emma Bowles, her widowed sister-in-law Carey and myself to celebrate her 55th birthday at lunch at Gravetye Manor in Sussex.

(1) Geoff Milburn: *Helyg*, (The Climbers' Club, 1985), p.104.

Andrew Weatherhead Stallybrass

Andrew was the most gifted of us three full brothers. I was an unkind older brother, was unwilling in the early days to include him, three and a half years younger than Robin, in our doings, and teased him mercilessly.

At The Leas School, Hoylake, he reached the top form at too early an age, so was taken away for a year and sent to the Ecole Privat in Geneva.

Andrew won a scholarship to Winchester, where he won two gold medals and a scholarship to New College, Oxford. During his time at Winchester, I cycled there one weekend to take him out.

From the time he was 14, Robin and I included him fully both in rock climbing and in the occasional pint of beer in a pub.

At the end of my year in Freiburg, Andrew, then 18, joined me for several weeks of cycling, staying usually at youth hostels. We started out through the Black Forest to the source of the Danube at Donaueschingen and followed the river as far as Beuron, where we called at the historic monastery. We were shown round by a monk whose lectures on Gregorian chant I had attended at the Seminar in Freiburg. Realising that Andrew understood little German, the monk tried Latin. Pointing at me, he said, "Ille discipulus meus".

We cycled round the north-east side of Lake Constance, up the upper reaches of the Rhine and through the tiny principality of Liechtenstein into Switzerland. At the Swiss frontier I discovered that I had left behind some maps that we had been consulting at the German frontier. Leaving Andrew to wait for me, I rode the 15 miles or so back to collect them and was able to boast, "I've cycled three times the length of a country in a day". At Chur we left the Rhine to climb the hills to the south to stay with friends in Parpan. After a few days, we cycled over the Julier Pass to Pontresina, hoping to do some Alpine climbing, guided by a Freiburg friend who failed to appear. We then returned to Parpan over the Albula Pass.

After a few more days, we continued our cycle tour through the Arlberg, where we hired a guide for a day to do some rock climbs; then on to Innsbruck, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Oberammergau, Munich, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Coburg, Ilmenau, Weimar, Erfurt, Eisenach, Goslar, Brunswick, Lüneburg and Hamburg, whence we took ship to Grimsby.

My most vivid recollections are: of Albrecht Dürer's house in Nuremberg; an ascent from Ilmenau of the Kickelhahn, where a newer mountain hut had replaced the one on the wall of which Goethe had written his famous *Wanderers Nachtlied*; of Weimar and its associations with Goethe, Schiller and Liszt; and of the Wartburg at Eisenach, where Luther in hiding had started his translation of the Bible, and scene of Act II of Wagner's

Tannhäuser. Andrew had a descant recorder, I a treble; we had a book of duets and frequently made music while we rested by the roadside.

During my last year in Liverpool, I bought a Bechstein upright. After I had had it moved to join Father's Bechstein in Heswall, Andrew and I used to play two piano pieces.

In the summer of 1939 I set off with about 30 of my pupils from Durham for a fortnight's camping at Warkworth on the Northumberland coast. Andrew, who had just graduated from New College, Oxford, offered to back me. I had tried to undermine his faith and, unaware of his sexual problem, had inadvertently put temptation in his way, but now that I myself was finding a faith, we were able to help each other to resist our very different temptations.

My heart was not really in the camp. As the most junior member of the staff I had been pressurised into taking it. I gave little real thought to practical details or to the needs of the boys. On the first Sunday, Andrew and I went to matins at the local parish church. I felt depressed and hoped in vain for an uplift. That afternoon parents arrived to inspect the camp and made a number of justified complaints. Backed by Andrew, I then put my best into all the little details which I had neglected. The next Sunday we again went to church, this time with grateful hearts for what we had achieved, and returned refreshed.

We then joined the rest of the family for what had become an annual mountain holiday, that year in Capel Curig. In the last days before war broke out, Andrew and I did our last climb together, Tryfan by the North Ridge.

After much heart-searching, Andrew volunteered for the Royal Artillery. A musician and a poet, unpractical, cultured, artistic and extremely sensitive, he was totally unsuited to life in the ranks.

Knowing something of his difficulties, I agreed to spend Easter, when he was due for leave, with him in Heswall, but then accepted an invitation from my friend Colin Kirkus to join him on an Easter meet of the Climbers' Club in Wales.

On Good Friday 1940, as we were setting off for our first climb, a telegram arrived. Andrew was in Chester Hospital, having electrocuted himself on a power line. I joined my parents in a Chester hotel and we were with him when he died on Easter Sunday, after asking our forgiveness.

We will never know the exact causes of his death, but I will always blame myself for not realising the importance of being available to talk about his problems with him. I had put an attractive plan with a climbing friend before the needs of my brother. I had been using the mountains as a drug to escape from reality. Though it had been in the mountains that I had been led to take my first steps on the pathway to freedom, I now felt I should give up climbing, at least for a time. I carried a heavy burden of guilt for the next 43 years.

The Wirth Family

Hans Wirth, German-speaking Swiss Consul in Liverpool, and his wife Tilde, Italian-speaking, lived near us in New Brighton with their two sons, John and Max, who was Mother's godson. They moved to Geneva, where the boys grew up speaking four languages fluently. Hans and Tilde acted as parents to Andrew, when he spent a year at the Ecole Privat in Geneva.

Whenever my numerous continental cycling tours took me to Geneva, I would arrive on their doorstep unexpected as if they were my parents. On one occasion Hans took me to the Easter service in the Russian Orthodox Church.

It was with the Wirths that Andrew and I stayed in Parpan in the summer of 1934. Tilde Wirth's sister, Frau Hatz, lived with her husband and two daughters in Chur. The two families shared a holiday villa, where they welcomed us warmly. John took us up a small local mountain, the Parpaner Weisshorn.

One of the Hatz daughters later stayed with us in Heswall and I took her to a Liverpool Philharmonic concert.

At Easter 1936, I cycled down the Rhône valley from source to mouth. On my way from London to Paris I travelled with three young Swiss, who were returning from a meeting in Birmingham of the Oxford Group, of which I then knew nothing. One of them turned out to be Philippe Mottu, with whose family in Geneva my brother Robin had stayed in 1933. Philippe told me of certain points of interest in the Rhône valley which I should visit, gave me a pamphlet entitled *The New Enlistment* and encouraged me to look him up in Geneva. I read it with interest. It gave me a glimpse of what my life could become if I took certain steps. I was fascinated by it and longed to argue about it with him.

As usual, I stayed with the Wirths. When I told them of my meeting with Philippe, they dissuaded me from visiting him, telling me things about the Oxford Group that I accepted and repeated, but subsequently found to be untrue.

At Easter 1937, when I cycled down the Rhine valley from source to mouth, I borrowed a pair of skis from the Hatz family in Chur to enable me to reach a point where the great river was but a pool in the snow.

In the summer of 1938, Max Wirth joined our family climbing holiday in Capel Curig. In a book on Helyg, *The Climbers' Club Hut*, there is a picture of Max and me on Crib Goch Buttress (1).

The following year, John, who had qualified as a doctor, visited us in Heswall. During the war I met him and his wife Geneviève in London. Shortly afterwards, he was drowned in a sailing accident on Lac Léman, leaving Geneviève with four children.

At the first Moral Re-Armament conference at Caux-sur-Montreux in 1946, I phoned the Wirths and invited them to join me. They refused, but pressed me to visit them. I was unwilling to spare the time out from the conference and, to my shame, I blamed them for coming between me and Philippe nine years previously.

A few years later, on one of many visits to Caux, I faced the fact that we had all been guilty of unfounded malicious gossip and my old love for the Wirths was rekindled in my heart. Philippe drove me down to Geneva. John's widow Geneviève gave me lunch and took me to see her parents-in-law. I apologised for my behaviour towards them, especially in view of all the love and care they had given me as a young man. They both died shortly afterwards.

We have kept in touch with Max, who married an English wife and settled in England. He visited us once in West Dulwich. We have seen Geneviève on several of our visits to Andrew and Eliane in Geneva.

(1) Geoff Milburn: *Helyg*, (The Climbers' Club, 1985), p.102.

Bernard, Nellie, Kitty and Kathleen Hird

Father had bought "Moorside", the house next door, for his mother, "Gan", who soon came to spend her last years with us in Dinglefield. The house was then let to his close friend and former colleague in S. M. Bulley & Sons, Bernard Hird. His first wife, Nellie, known to us as "Hirdie", acted as "Nanny" to us for a time, while Bernard was in the Army.

On 11 November 1918 I walked as usual the mile to school, where we were given the good news that the war was over and told to take a day's holiday. "Hirdie" and Mr Kendall, an elderly neighbour, who always wore a top hat to work, took Robin and me into Liverpool. At Henry Young's bookshop we were allowed each to select a book to mark the occasion. From the "Shown to the Children" series Robin chose *Ships and Seafaring*, I chose *Railways*. Over lunch in the State Restaurant in Dale Street, we tasted champagne for the first time. We ended the meal standing on the table and giving "Three cheers for the King" and "Three groans for the Kaiser".

Though childless, the Hirds gave excellent children's parties, at one of which I saw Margo Bigland for the first time. We were playing "Snapdragon", a game popular at that time of pulling raisins from burning brandy. I was much too cowardly to compete and greatly admired seven-year-old Margo's courage.

The Hirds were devoted to Andrew and presented Mother with fine albums of photographs of him and of all three brothers romping naked on the lawn; these are now in our possession.

In 1919 they came with us for a family holiday at Port Erin in the Isle of Man. Bernard took us deep sea fishing from a rowing-boat.

Their bull terrier, Lascar, was a great favourite with us all. On Sunday mornings Pater would go for a walk, often taking us with him. Lascar would be waiting in our porch, ready for his weekly walk.

"Hirdie" died very suddenly of a stroke. For Bernard it was a double tragedy. She had forgotten to alter her will, under which her relatives claimed most of the furniture, which had been hers.

She had been succeeded as "Nanny" by Kitty Salisbury, an old Wallasey friend of Mother's. We loved her dearly. She told us fascinating stories and encouraged us to start stamp collecting.

Kitty left us to become the second Mrs Hird. Shortly afterwards Bernard lost his job in Liverpool during the "slump", but got another as an expert in cotton in South America. This meant leaving Kitty, who was running a secretarial school in Liverpool. She then developed cancer and came to be nursed in Dinglefield, where she died. Bernard was not even able to obtain leave for her funeral.

Bernard gave very generous presents. At Christmas he would arrange family parties to the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. When I left to stay with Uncle Arthur and Aunt Helen in Uganda, he gave me a splendid pair of binoculars.

He had been a keen mountain walker and occasional rock-climber in his earlier days. He joined us on mountain holidays in Wales and the Lake District. On a holiday in Rosthwaite, he was very unfit and stopped to drink from every stream. A drink from a stagnant pool led later to a bad bout of typhoid fever.

Bernard arranged for a nephew of his to meet me with two of his friends at Helyg and we enjoyed a fine day on the Amphitheatre Buttress of Craig yr Ysfa. When I was stationed in Huddersfield during the war, the nephew and his wife invited me to a Sunday dinner in their home in Halifax.

After Kitty's and Pater's deaths, he courted Mother relentlessly. On one occasion when he had invited her to lunch, she asked me to join them, knowing that I would be only too glad to see a friend whom I had not seen for a long time, but with the ulterior motive of distancing herself from him. He was furious.

His third wife, Kathleen Pixton from Birkenhead, was young enough to be his daughter. We knew her family. I used to meet her brother Gerald, a member of the Climbers' Club, at Helyg. Kathleen outlived Bernard and married another widower.

Dr Clare Oswald Stallybrass

"Pater", as we decided to call our "Uncle Clare" after he had married Mother, was a wise and reliable counsellor, never trying to take the place of father to his nephews/ step-sons.

In 1926 there was a total eclipse of the sun, best seen from parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire. Salopians whose parents lived in or were prepared to travel to that area, were allowed away for 24 hours. Robin and I spent a night in Pater's house in Huskisson Street, Liverpool. He took us very early the next morning in an overcrowded train to Formby. The sky was overcast and we did not enjoy the great spectacle we might have had, but at least we enjoyed a break from school. It was rumoured that three sixth-formers had used the opportunity to travel south rather than north and visit a night club in London.

After Mother had introduced us to the Lake District, Pater introduced Robin and me to Snowdonia, staying at Ty-Gwyn in the Nant Ffrancon.

Pater joined us when we started rock-climbing and two years later was already leading climbs graded "severe".

To celebrate his 56th birthday, I drove him one Sunday to Pen-y-Pass and we took turns in leading up a climb on Lliwedd, racing down a steep grass slope together afterwards.

As a family, we had ample reason to be anti-Conservative. Pater had been Deputy Medical Officer of Health for the City of Liverpool for many years. He had been co-author of the standard textbook on the subject with his boss. When the latter retired, it was generally assumed that Pater would succeed him, but the Conservative leader of the City Council brought pressure against him on the grounds that he had been a Socialist in his youth, and an outsider was appointed. I drank away my anger and created a scandal by wandering through the University buildings in an extremely intoxicated state.

My adolescent rebellion against authority focused at one point against Pater. I deeply resented his efforts to persuade me to work in the garden and was extremely rude to him when he ventured to remonstrate with me about my drunkenness. At a time when I was considering how to change from a pacifist into a peacemaker, I went home from Durham for a weekend, apologised sincerely to him and worked with him in the garden.

In 1951 Pater, in his mid-70s, was ill for some time in Clatterbridge Hospital, a few miles from Heswall. We were in constant touch with Mother, who dissuaded us from travelling to visit him. However, Margo and I felt we should spend a weekend with Mother and visit Pater in hospital on the way. We found him sitting up in bed looking very chirpy and somewhat indignant

that we had driven so far. "Sit down, man, and relax," he said to me. "You look like a vulture hovering over the corpse."

Very early the next morning we were woken by a policeman at the front door to say that he had died; the hospital had tried in vain to reach us by phone. Mother had slept through the disturbance. We decided not to wake her, but to take her a cup of tea as soon as we heard her moving.

The family gathered in Heswall for the funeral. In a curious way, it was one of the happiest times we have spent together. We had by then all come to love and respect Pater completely. He had had a full and useful life and we could rejoice that he had died before being seriously incapacitated. Led by Robin, there was much healthy laughter; I hoped Pater was enjoying it with us. After a funeral service in Heswall Parish Church, where he shares a family grave with Father, their mother and Andrew, there was a moving memorial service in Liverpool Cathedral, arranged by the Department of Public Health.

Anita (née Weatherhead) and John Gill

Aunt Anita was Mother's older sister, who lived with her mother next door to us in New Brighton.

Perhaps it was to relieve Mother of my presence at the time of Robin's birth that she took me to visit distant cousins in Ireland. My only memory is of crying bitterly in my strange bunk on the night crossing from Liverpool to Dublin until she presented me with the comfort of my very own pillow, which she had had the foresight to bring.

After the death of Father and of her mother, Anita came to live with us in Heswall and took the place of our Nanny. It was in Heswall that John Gill, a Birmingham timber merchant, married her. I remember Robin and me introducing him to "The Dales".

Anita then lived in Harborne with John and his father. On holidays with them I remember old Mr Gill giving us his stamp collection and being taught Piquet by Uncle John, who used to read Homer in the original Greek. In the garden we ate delicious Victoria plums for the first time and played games of hide and seek with the cat. Anita took us to the Botanical Gardens, where there was a small zoo, and to Cadbury's chocolate factory in Bournville. Cricket at Edgbaston, of which I have already written, came later.

John was a keen golfer; Anita took it up in order to play with him and became remarkably good at the game.

In my cycling days, I frequently spent a night in Harborne on my various journeys. We did so, too, in the first years of our marriage; Andrew would be put to sleep in a drawer.

Uncle John died during the war. Aunt Molly, the youngest Weatherhead sister, joined her in Harborne for a time; they then moved together to Malvern. On one occasion, when Margo and I were invited to a wedding in Whitbourne, near Worcester, we left Andrew and Peter with them for the afternoon. On our return we found that one of them had fallen into a pond; it had been more than the two old ladies had bargained for.

Anita died while we were in Ghana. She had appointed Robin and me as her executors; Robin found it a tough job clearing up on his own.

The (Leadley-) Brown Family

Our closest friends in Heswall were the (Leadley-) Brown family. Lovers of *The Wind in the Willows*, they had named their home, the last of a row of houses in Riverbank Road, "Mole End". They moved later to a curious turreted bungalow next door to us called "Swentor".

Francis was one of a distinguished Heswall family; Edith (née Hubback) preferred to drop the "Leadley-". She was a great-niece of Jane Austen and had inherited something of her literary gifts. She completed Jane's unfinished novel *The Watsons* and wrote a sequel to another of her novels.

The Browns had two children, Helen, a few years older than myself, and Peter, the same age as Robin. Helen, who, with long golden hair hanging down her back, closely resembled John Tenniel's illustrations of Alice, inspired Mother to produce *Alice* scenes in our drawing room: "The Mad Tea Party" with me as the Mad Hatter, Robin as the March Hare and Peter as the Dormouse; Robin and Peter as Tweedledum and Tweedledee; I as Humpty-Dumpty; and Andrew as the Caterpillar.

On other occasions Mrs Brown produced with us a number of scenes from *Uncle Remus* in our drawing room and a number of miscellaneous scenes in a big basement room in the Biglands' house in which Margo took part.

Mrs Brown's tea parties invariably included a literary game, devised to stretch our imaginations. In one such game the players sat in a circle, each with a sheet of paper and a pencil. Each wrote down a noun, folded the paper and passed it to the neighbour, who then wrote down a question and passed it on. Players then unfolded their papers and had to answer the question in verse, bringing in the noun. I was once confronted with the question, "Do you ever go to church?"; the noun was "Heswall Missionary Association", which I considered grossly unfair. However, I swallowed my indignation and answered:

I go to church on Sunday night
And sing the hymns with all my might,
Before returning to my cold collation.
And then my pennies flow right free
If the collection is to be
For Heswall Missionary Association.

The Browns had a cottage behind Maes Caradoc farm on the old road down the west side of the Nant Ffrancon half way between Llyn Ogwen and Bethesda. In the summer of 1924 Pater took Robin and me to stay in Ty Gwyn, a farm on the main A5. A footpath led across the valley with a footbridge over the river to Maes Caradoc. There was a deep pool in which we boys used to bathe naked before breakfast and before supper, diving from the iron rail over the bridge.

Helen and Peter had grown up running all over the mountains barefoot. We envied them in our hob-nailed boots, but when I tried to emulate them, I finished up with a poisoned foot.

For several years the Browns joined us at Kiln Howe in Rosthwaite. There we discovered close to the road, but hidden from it, a pool in the Stonethwaite Beck for our regular naked bathes. I remember my feeling of expectant pride as Francis Brown and Pater strode out along the road to Seathwaite, Peter Brown and I following in their footsteps, on our way to climb Scafell Pike, the highest peak in England.

In 1929 Peter Brown introduced us to rock-climbing in Wasdale. He had been taught by his cousin, Ted Hicks, one of a distinguished group of Cambridge University climbers who pioneered new routes in Snowdonia. Peter, Pater, Robin and I had only 60 feet of rope between us and moved extremely slowly in caterpillar fashion.

We spent a number of holidays in Wasdale. There, too, we had an even better bathing pool under Ritson's Force in the Mosedale Beck.

At home in school holidays Peter Brown used to join us almost every day, practising cricket on the lawn in fine weather and playing billiards or Mah Jongg in wet.

He became a tea planter in India, joined the Army when war broke out and was killed fighting on the Burma front.

Instructor-Captain Robert ("Scun") Weatherhead

Uncle Scun (short for "Secundus") was the second of Mother's four brothers. In retirement he settled in Heswall. A bachelor, he would flirt openly with any pretty woman who came his way. A man of many interests, he had published a book on astronomy, a quiz book called *Dozens of Whos and Whats* and a slender volume of amusing light verse called *Heroines of History*.

His most brilliant work was *The Merchant of Venice* by Gilbert and Sullivan. Shakespeare's plot was provided with a number of well-known Sullivan tunes and Gilbert's words subtly altered. In a suitable Gilbertian finale, the Duke of Venice appears as a *deus ex machina* and decides:

That's enough of idle chatter;
 Let's get down to things that matter.
 What care I for law or reason?
 Do as I say or it's treason.
 Shylock, you seem rather touchy;
 Take the partner of my Duchy.
 Antonio, I think you ought to
 Have his ducats and his daughter.
 Bassanio, you get Nerissa:
 (As he hesitates, his eyes on Portia)
 Take her in your arms and kiss her.
 Portia, you are simply rippin';
 I will marry you, my pippin.

He had given it privately in the Royal Navy, but the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company would not agree to a public showing. During two Christmas

holidays, he directed family performances. We invited friends to a choice of two evenings in the Heswall Parish Hall.

On the first occasion, Margo Bigland played Nerissa and her father the Duke. It was the third time that she and I were paired off on the stage and on this occasion her father gave her away to me as Bassanio. They were not invited to take part again; the difficulty they found in learning their lines was too much for the director's nerves.

Pater gave a fine performance as Shylock, Robin played Antonio and Andrew the Lawyer.

Uncle Scun and I attended the same Liverpool Philharmonic concerts, he in the stalls, I as a student in the gallery. We shared an enthusiasm for Wagner. We were also occasionally involved in bridge evenings.

Arthur and Helen (née Wilcox) Weatherhead

Uncle Arthur, Mother's third brother, served in the South African Constabulary, a mounted peace-keeping force created after the Boer War by Baden Powell. After it was disbanded he transferred to the Colonial Service and moved to Uganda. He is remembered as the first District Commissioner of the West Nile District and founder of the town of Arua. A history of the region describes his efforts to control the illegal shooting of elephants (1).

The first wedding Robin and I attended was that of Uncle Arthur and Aunt Helen. She was the middle one of three daughters of Ernest Shepley Wilcox, Chief Engineer of the Wirral Railway. Their home in Warren Drive, overlooking a stretch of the line just outside New Brighton station, was a favourite place of mine for train spotting.

Between school and university I spent six months in Uganda with them. I travelled out from Birkenhead to Mombasa as the only passenger on the Harrison Line freighter S.S. Observer, stopping only at Port Sudan. I broke the train journey from Mombasa to Jinja, staying a night with cousins in Nairobi.

Uncle Arthur was then Provincial Commissioner of the Eastern Province with headquarters at Jinja. I helped him in the office, stayed with friends in Kampala, attended a Governor's Ball in Entebbe, visited with Aunt Helen the District Commissioner in Hoima, whence Ruwenzori can be seen across Lake

Albert, watched with a friend hippos on Lake Victoria from his motor boat, and went on a safari in the District of Teso. Under pressure from an eager District Commissioner, who insisted on lending me his guns, I shot a small oribi, a large water buck and a guinea fowl. I was left with a guilty conscience and have seldom shot a living creature since. A local rule on the golf course was that balls might be lifted from the footprints of hippos without penalty of a stroke.

My only relationship with an African was with Paolo, a young boy allotted to me as my servant, who came with me wherever I went and was bitterly disappointed that he could not come back to England with me.

We colonialists had divided the country racially into three tiers: the British, who held all the key posts; the Indians, who provided most of the senior office clerks, who ran the better shops and against whom we condescended to play cricket; and the Africans, with whom we had no social contact at all.

The prevailing attitude was typified by my Aunt Helen, my favourite aunt, a gentle, kindly and loveable character. I remember her anger when, while waiting for a ferry, I got out of the car and was politely held in conversation by a young African. "What impertinence! What right had he to talk to you?" Thirty years later, I rejoiced at being privileged to work with Ghanaians as equals.

I have always been hesitant to talk about the colonialist past, but when I met a senior Ugandan official who was a refugee from Idi Amin's regime, I told him of my visit to his country. He responded warmly by telling me that Uncle Arthur had been a good friend of his grandfather and that they had together founded the town of Arua. Finding difficulty in pronouncing "Weatherhead", they christened him "Jerekedi", which apparently means "the man who walked among us and knew us".

I returned from Mombasa to Southampton on the German Woermann liner S.S. Watussi, calling at Port Said, Genoa, Marseilles, Malaga and Lisbon.

After retiring, Arthur and Helen set up home in a farmhouse, Washingpool, near Wells. During the war I spent a happy weekend with them when stationed in Oxford. Uncle John and Aunt Anita were there, taking a break from Nazi bombing of Birmingham.

When Margo and I with our two very small sons visited them, Andrew came to our room in a state of shock and announced, "The man in this house has killed all his dogs and hung them up". He was referring to some leopard skins.

Uncle Arthur died peacefully one night while on a visit to Mother, Oliver and Gunnvor at Westwood Hill. I was asked to drive up for breakfast and to take Aunt Helen back to Washingpool. It was Aunt Helen herself who opened the door. We wept on each other's shoulders before joining the rest of the family. There was an air of total reality and understanding between us. The sun shone and we had a happy and relaxed drive to Somerset, stopping for lunch at Goring-on-Thames with a widow whose husband I had known as Chief Secretary in Uganda. I remembered him singing English folk songs and we were able to reminisce together.

(1) D. A. Low: *History of East Africa*, (Oxford, 1965), Vol.II, p.109.

Margaret (née Weatherhead) and Geoffrey Green

Ernest Wilcox and his two unmarried daughters, Meg and Cicely, moved from New Brighton to Wincanton in Somerset, providing a home for the three Weatherhead children while their parents were in Uganda.

All three of Arthur and Helen's children were born in Uganda, but brought home at an early age. Arthur Johnston, known as "A. J.", was Head of his House at Sherborne and read English at Clare College, Cambridge. He served in India as a Captain in the Royal Corps of Signals. He later joined the Dominican Order as "Brother Benet" and, with his friend Laurence Bright, edited *Blackfriars* and *The Life of the Spirit*. He returned to lay life in 1963 to teach English literature and died in 1976 at the age of 56.

Peter, the youngest of the family, studied water engineering at Bristol University, was commissioned in the Royal Engineers and sent on a further 6-month course in Cambridge.

Between "A. J." and Peter came Margaret, who trained during the war as a nurse in the Nightingale School, St Thomas' Hospital. In 1947 she sailed from Newcastle upon Tyne to Mombasa to join the Queen Elizabeth Colonial Nursing Service in Uganda. *The Uganda Herald* welcomed her with an article headed "UGANDA BABY RETURNS". Old friends remembered carrying

her as a baby. She had the distinction of being posted to Arua, the town founded by her father, as the first District Nurse of the West Nile District, of which he had been the first District Commissioner. She was known locally as "Sisita Malagalita".

She returned to Britain in 1953 and married in 1958 Geoffrey Green, Senior Classics Master at Sherborne. We all drove to the wedding and stayed the night with Robin and Agnes. Nicknamed "Graggers", he had taught "A. J." and run the School Officers Training Corps and the Shooting VIII at Bisley. For several years Margaret was Matron of the School Sanatorium. They retired to Wells, where he died after 24 years of marriage.

On several occasions Margo and I stayed with them and they with us. Together we visited the Royal Horticultural Gardens at Wisley and the gardens at Stourhead. On one occasion I joined them at Bisley when he was with the Sherborne Shooting VIII.

Since Geoffrey's death, Margo and I have visited her on occasions when, in view of the state of Margo's health, the presence of a trained nurse has given us a greater sense of security. We have several times celebrated together in March her birthday, Robin's and mine, and our wedding anniversary.

Shortly after Margo's death, Margaret invited me to meet her brother Peter and his wife Hilary. They were on a visit from Australia. I was delighted to see them again for the first time for over 30 years.

Cicely Wilcox

Robin and I spent happy days at Wincanton with the Wilcox and Weatherhead families during summer holidays. Kind neighbours let us use their tennis court and Cicely, the youngest of the three sisters, would take us to Bath, Glastonbury and other places of interest.

For our performance of *The Merchant of Venice* by Gilbert and Sullivan, Cicely came from Wincanton to play Portia. On the second occasion, "A. J." came with her to play a minor part.

Stephen Weatherhead Stallybrass

Stephen, the elder son of Pater and Mother, was born with Down's Syndrome. He required constant care, but we all loved him; his responsiveness and his cheerful nature drew the best out of us all.

Though never able to express himself in words, he was a great music lover. He would lie awake in bed, singing his way through a book of nursery rhymes, which Mother had sung with him at the piano, in the correct order. He had his own gramophone and collection of records, which he could select and play for himself. He had his own little jokes. A neighbour who had told him the story of Goldilocks was always greeted with "Who's been eating my porridge?" For Margo, it was "Margo is a prune".

He could be very difficult. His brother Andrew took him out one day and they returned very late for lunch. They had taken a bus to the village. At the bus station he had insisted on getting onto another bus; they had done a tour of the Wirral.

Mother used to take him shopping in the village. Though only in his twenties, he looked much older. He would never walk with her, but always followed a short distance behind. A boy named Robin Knox-Johnston, who lived in Pipers Lane and was destined to become the world's most famous yachtsman, amused her with the comment, "Your husband keeps very much to himself".

Shortly after the war, Mother's doctor persuaded her that the burden of looking after him was too much for her and suggested that he might be happier in an institution specialising in cases like this. This proved to be so. He would welcome any of us who visited him but, after a short time, he would say a firm "Goodbye now" and would return to his own routine.

I visited him once at his home in Surrey. I stopped the car at an entrance to a common where we could walk, but he refused to get out. Twice I left him, walked a short distance and came back. The third time he gave in and we had a happy walk together.

Mother was staying with us in White Cottage in January 1955 when we received a telephone message from Stephen's home near Lancaster that he had pneumonia, but was in no immediate danger. It was the end of a Sandhurst term and my only commitment was to mark a pile of French essays which I could take away with me.

Mother and I booked into a hotel in Lancaster and set off immediately. We found Stephen in bed looking remarkably well and he greeted us cheerfully. We had only just returned to our hotel when we were informed by phone that he had died peacefully. We stayed on for the funeral, grateful for all the love and laughter he had brought into our lives.

The Bulley Family

My great-grandfather, Samuel Marshall Bulley, founded the Liverpool cotton-broking firm, S. M. Bulley and Sons. His wife, Mary Raffles, was a cousin of Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore and of the London Zoo. They had four sons and ten daughters, of whom the sixth, Leonora Stallybrass, was our grandmother.

"Gan" as we called her, lived at 21 Mount Road, "Gaggy" Weatherhead, our other grandmother, next door at No.7. On Sundays, Robin and I went to tea with them alternately. At Gan's we played with a box of German bricks, which today is enjoyed by children visiting our home, or with a Noah's Ark with carved animals. When we moved to Heswall, Father bought the house next door, "Moorside", as a home for Gan. She spent her last years with us in "Dinglefield".

The Bulleys' eldest son, Great Uncle Raffles Bulley, Great Aunt Louise and three daughters, lived across the adjoining Mount Pleasant Road in "Breck Hey", a large house with extensive gardens, since turned into a housing estate. Midday Christmas dinner there was the great family event of each year. The main course included a roast turkey, a roast goose and two game pies. I remember Uncle Raffles complaining that there were "only" 24 of us present.

"Breck Hey" was the scene of my earliest rebellion, when I was about four. I was never fond of meat and there were often battles to get me to finish my first course. One Sunday, the day I had dinner with my parents, I left the table in a rage, put on my coat and hat and left home. Both Father and Mother showed great courage in not trying to stop me. I walked along the road to "Breck Hey" and rang the bell, which was answered by the butler. I told him I had come to live. "I will inform Mrs Bulley, Master Billy," he replied. Presently, he returned and ushered me into the drawing room, where the family was gathered. Aunt Louise received me politely and sat me down in a chair. Nobody took the slightest notice of me. After a few minutes I announced, "I think I'll go home now".

The most distinguished of the Bulley family were the youngest son, Arthur Kilpin Bulley, Arthur's wife, née Harriet Whishaw, and their daughter Lois.

Shortly after we moved to Heswall, Great Uncle Arthur offered help over our new garden. Mother asked for some daffodil and narcissus bulbs. A lorry from Bees Ltd, his Liverpool bulb and seed firm, deposited one ton of mixed bulbs at the top of our drive. After our garden had been plentifully supplied, Robin and I trundled around to our friends with a little cart loaded with bulbs.

A former director of Ness Gardens, J. K. Hulme, recounts the following story, as told him by George Teller, an Austrian refugee to whom the Bulleys gave a home for a time, "One Sunday morning he noticed a man walk up the drive with a rough sort of parcel under his arm and he went into the house. About an hour later the man emerged still carrying the parcel. A week later and the same incident was repeated, and again a week later. Curiosity caused George to keep watch and, after several weeks, he could contain himself no longer. 'Who is the man' he asked, 'who comes each Sunday morning with a parcel and departs an hour later with the parcel still under his arm?' 'Oh him,' was the reply. 'He burgled the house twice and on the second occasion Mrs Bulley enquired into his circumstances. She found he lived in a miserable cottage which didn't even have a bath, so each Sunday morning they gave him the freedom of the bathroom at Mickwell Brow!'" (1)

It is also said that she tried to trace the burglar to let him have the matching pair of trousers to a jacket he had stolen.

We saw little of Lois in early years. It was only after she had set up house with Nancy Kershaw in a charming maisonette on Chester City Walls and after they moved to Tarvin that we made a point of visiting them whenever we were in Cheshire.

When Lois died at the age of 94, I was invited to speak at a Thanksgiving Service for her life. A family friend, Peter Brinson, wrote a splendid obituary of her in *The Independent* of 1st January 1996:

"Born into wealth, which she rejected ... Lois Bulley was an exceptional human being.

"Her socialist, agnostic father, Arthur Bulley, was a pioneer Fabian and a successful Liverpool cotton broker. He used his wealth to become perhaps the most important patron of British plant

collecting this century, creating at Ness in the Wirral a garden which holds today one of the finest plant collections in the British Isles.

"Her mother ..., an equally committed socialist, was a devout Anglican whose marriage worked happily in spite of the religious difference. Both Lois and her brother Alfred, however, were deeply affected by these contradictions. Brought up as agnostics so they could choose their own religion when old enough, they spent their early childhood closeted at Ness in a household of older people, and rarely mixed with other children. They were taught by French and German governesses, which gave Lois a German accent which lasted all her life.

"Overawed by her upbringing and later by boarding school, she was left with permanent difficulty in establishing personal relationships.

"The conscience and passionate integrity passed on by her parents troubled Lois Bulley. She felt she had no right to her inherited wealth, but owed a debt to the society which gave it to her. This was her morality and her motivation, which she pursued through charitable and political work ...

"Joining the Labour Party in 1930, Bulley won a seat on Neston Urban District Council, where she championed low-paid railwaymen. In 1934 she became county councillor for Neston, including Ellesmere Port, lost the seat three years later, then won Bebington including New Ferry in 1938. She served as alderman from 1939 until 1946. One of only two socialists and five women on the council, she campaigned on issues of the unemployed, low levels of public assistance, social deprivation and women's and children's rights.

"Dressing simply and never one for fine living, Bulley was well-known for her ability to clarify, explain and win understanding ... She saw no contradiction in standing as Labour candidate for Chester in the 1935 general election, then joining the Communist Party in 1936 while remaining a Labour Party member.

"The pro-Franco attitude of the Tory government in Britain towards the Spanish Civil War shocked her. 'Only the Communists,' she said, 'offer an effective opposition.'

"The Second World War and its aftermath changed Lois Bulley. Still serving on the County Council, she drove ambulances through the Merseyside blitz, then stood against Selwyn Lloyd as Labour candidate for the Wirral in the 1945 election. Although she did well, pushing a powerful Liberal challenge into third place, she lost her seat on the council the following year. Known for her work on behalf of mental health, she was drawn into the new National Health Service, appointed to Liverpool Regional Hospital Board and the management committees of two hospitals, chairing the board's mental services committee, then the board itself until 1972.

"Charitable work replaced political activity as her principal commitment. She began to look beyond Merseyside, especially towards Africa whence came some of her wealth – she often recalled how Liverpool's prosperity was built on the African slave trade. At the same time she experienced a personal conversion to Christianity. Introduced by Labour Party friends to Quakerism and the Society of Friends, she was accepted into membership in 1954.

"She travelled to Nigeria to help a Muslim educational trust. In Nairobi in 1956 she established a trust to give back to Africa, she said, the benefit of profits she had inherited through shares in Motor Mart East Africa. Already in 1948 she had given to Liverpool University the great gardens at Ness, the house, the large estate which went with it and an endowment of £75,000. It was the largest bequest the university had received other than its Cohen Library. Yet Bulley refused any university honours.

"This was the final disposal of her wealth. Always open to the public as her father would have wished, the Botanic Gardens at Ness are of international distinction. Ness is also the university's environmental and horticultural research station; it continues the work of Arthur Bulley, commemorating his enormous achievements.

"The gift and the end of financial giving brought about a further change in Bulley's life. For more than a decade she had worked closely with Friends, especially with Nancy Kershaw, Warden of the Heswall Friends' Meeting House. In 1970 they formed a partnership. Moving to London for some years, they pursued the

cultural life of theatre and music which Bulley had rarely had time to experience. It was a kind of liberation.

"They travelled several times to Kenya to her trust in Nairobi. The money was divided between water sewage schemes, later adopted by the government, the management of a mixed-race hospital for children, and a scholarship scheme through the National Council of Churches for Kenya. All three projects flourish today. Bulley insisted the scholarships went exclusively to girls, in this way helping to pioneer women's education in Kenya. She insisted, too, that everything she gave or established be administered by Africans, upsetting white colonial prejudice by mixing with Kenyans on equal terms, going to their homes, eating and travelling with them, rejecting a white superiority which refused to mix or trust.

"Sustained for more than 20 years by Nancy Kershaw, Lois Bulley watched from a small house in Tarvin near Chester the success of her ventures. She attended university events in Liverpool and occasions at Ness, retaining to the end her agile mind and fund of anecdotes."

Our friendship with Nancy Kershaw has continued. A few years ago she put us in touch with Bulley cousins. Rex Bulley, one of Samuel Marshall's sons, had settled in America to represent the cotton firm's interests. His granddaughter Hebe was living with her widowed mother-in-law Phyllis in Philadelphia.

On a visit to our son Peter, Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, we were invited by Hebe, herself a graduate of U. Penn, to lunch with her and Phyllis in a University Club where Peter himself often lunched without knowing of the family connection.

Nancy Kershaw has presented us with a handsomely illustrated biography of Arthur Bulley (2), and with a video entitled *A Growing Legacy*.

- (1) J. K. Hulme: *Ness Gardens – Bulley's Beginnings to the Present Day*, (University of Liverpool Botanic Gardens, 1987), p.27.
- (2) Brenda McLean: *A Pioneering Plantsman – A. K. Bulley and the Great Plant Hunters*, (Stationery Office, 1997).

Margaret Rosa ("Margo") Stallybrass, née Bigland

I have known Margo since she was seven. We grew up in the village of Heswall in the Wirral. I was at the same schools with her brothers, Tom and Ernest.

In September 1936 her youngest brother Tony arrived as a new boy at The Leas School, Hoylake, where I was then teaching, very shortly after his mother had died of cancer. At our staff meeting on the first evening of term, the Headmaster asked us all to keep a watchful eye on him as he might well be emotionally upset.

Something about Tony's quality of life greatly intrigued me. He was not outstanding either at work or at games, but got on well with everybody, was always cheerful and seemed less in need of special care than anyone else in the school. Thinking that Margo might have something to do with what I saw in Tony, I added her name to a lengthy list of girlfriends. It was two years before I discovered what it was that intrigued me, but during that time she remained the only girl with whom I never tried to take liberties. I valued too highly the comradeship she gave me; it generated a sense of uplift in place of the down drag which seemed to follow my usual evenings with girls.

Shortly before leaving The Leas for a post in the Johnston Grammar School, Durham City, I overturned my car while drunk and dressed only in pyjamas. By running barefoot away from the scene of the accident, I was lucky to avoid the police until I had sobered up and to get away with a £5 fine and an endorsement. Knowing that local tongues were wagging, I felt sufficiently ashamed to avoid the Biglands for a time. I went for nine months without seeing Margo.

On Good Friday 1939 my brother Robin and I were camping in Glencoe with a Scottish friend, who fell on the Buachaille Etive Mor and broke a leg. I was able to lower Robin to the foot of the climb to raise a rescue party. I then managed to reach our leader and lower him to comparative safety. By the early hours of the next morning, he was installed in Fort William Hospital. We moved camp to Glen Nevis to be nearer to him and, after a few days, Robin went home.

Aged 28, alone in a tent for several days of heavy rain and without anything to read, I had plenty of time to think. For years I had been filling my life with activity. I seldom read a newspaper; I preferred not to know

what was going on in a world I had come to hate. I had at one time made a half-hearted attempt at suicide.

I knew that I was the slave of my own self-centredness, but I could see no way of escaping. I considered marriage, but was discouraged by the thought that if I married a woman as selfish as myself we would clash like hell, but that it would be very dull and extremely bad for my character if my wife always gave in to me. Then, through the clouds of my depression broke like a sunbeam a magical thought, "See Margo again".

The day before taking her out, I visited a mutual friend. "Have you heard what's happened?" she asked. "Margo's gone all religious and joined the Oxford Group." "How terrible!" I replied. "I'm told that they ... Never mind! Leave her to me! I'll change her back!"

The evening started with a round of pubs and finished in a flat full of artistic friends of mine whose ways were totally strange to her. It belonged to a woman who had left her drunken husband for another man; he was there, together with his wife, whom he occasionally took away for a weekend as a change from his mistress. When someone told a dirty story, I decided the time had come to take Margo home. I had been deeply moved by the care and sensitivity which she had shown to my friends, about whom I myself couldn't have cared less. I longed to find the freedom I had seen in her way of life and in Tony's; on the way home, I surprised myself and her by asking her to marry me.

Months later, I learned that, on the morning of that day, she had prayed to be shown how best to help me. Her one thought had been, "Don't be shocked at anything!" It was I who had been shocked at the way I had tried to undermine her faith.

When she got home, her father was waiting up for her. When she told him of my proposal, he said, "You can't do that; you're both too emotionally immature".

The following weekend I drove from Durham to join Margo, her brother Tony and their brother Ernest's fat spaniel "Sam Small", in Eskdale. We did an interesting walk across the flank of Scafell Pike, known as the Corridor Route. At one point we had to make a short, steep rock descent with a ledge in the middle. Margo pushed Sam over the top; I was supposed to stop him on the ledge in the middle, but he shot past me and landed on his nose at the

bottom before Tony could stop him. Fortunately, Sam seemed none the worse for wear.

The next weekend I spent at home in Heswall. Staying with the Biglands were their old friends Keith and Rhoda Wilson. Keith had rowed for Royal Chester with Margo's father. They drove Margo and me into Wales for a picnic near a well-known waterfall, Pistyll Rhyader. Though fully aware that they might be reporting on me to Margo's father, I was totally at peace; I was in no hurry for Margo to decide.

On the third weekend after my proposal, we had stopped on the top of the Wrynose Pass on our way to a weekend in Eskdale when Margo agreed to marry me. She slept in a guest house, I in my tent in the garden.

I used to expect all my girlfriends to pass tests in music and rock-climbing. I had already taken Margo to a Liverpool Philharmonic concert, which started with a Bruckner Symphony lasting over an hour. As we walked out for the interval, she asked, "When does the next movement start?" I reckoned she had passed with flying colours. The day after accepting me she took the climbs to which I introduced her on Pillar in her stride.

I learned that Margo's mother had been to an Oxford Group house party in 1934. Margo, who had been known as "Nellie Bigland's difficult daughter", had been suffering from anorexia, an illness about which little was known at that time. Her mother had apologised for her efforts to control her and they became close friends. Two years later, when it was discovered that she had terminal cancer, Margo, who had been trained as a children's nurse, had recovered sufficiently to nurse her; she died victorious and an encouragement to all who visited her, having lost her two greatest fears: of death in any form and of cancer in particular. After her death, first Margo, then Tony had also found a faith. I was told that during his first term at The Leas he had encouraged the boys in his dormitory to start each morning with a time of Bible reading and meditation.

Early during our engagement we talked honestly about our pasts. Margo had had a few very innocent "affairs"; like most girls in that "prehistoric" age before "the Pill", she relied on the only really safe contraceptive, the little word "No". I, on the other hand, had to admit to a visit to a brothel in France and to having lied to my mother to obtain money needed for a girlfriend to abort our child. Margo forgave me willingly.

An idyllic time during which we spent a number of weekends climbing in the Lakes or in Snowdonia, came to an end when Margo had to undergo an operation. By then, our future was threatened by the certainty of war.

The outbreak of war that September was the blackest day of my life. I had developed a sentimental love for Germany and the Germans and it took me some months to reach the point where I could accept to fight against the evil that had overtaken that country. Rightly or wrongly, I felt divided by my pacifist views from Margo and from my family. I broke off our engagement in a ruthlessly cold and brutal letter. While I branded myself a disillusioned bachelor, she waited faithfully seven years for me. She spent the war running her father's home and nursing in the Heswall branch of the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital.

For five years I closed my heart to any thought of ever marrying. Then one evening in the winter of 1944-5 at a gathering of British and American friends in the services in my room in Versailles, one of them told of his recent engagement. The protective ice in my heart melted and I admitted that I was still in love with Margo. Later, some of them on leave in Britain told her of their meeting with me and encouraged her to write to me. As she handed her letter to the postman, asking him to post it for her, he handed her one from me. It was to be two years before we became engaged again, but by then there was no doubt in the minds of either of us that we were meant to build a solid partnership for life.

By the autumn of 1946, I had been "demobbed", was teaching in Durham and had started to look for a better post. I had no hope of finding suitable accommodation for a married couple, yet I kept feeling that I should ask Margo to marry me and to face the uncertain future with me. My decision seemed mad in the face of reality and in the eyes of my more practical friends, but neither Margo nor I have ever regretted that I followed my heart rather than my head. Taking decisions jointly has been the hallmark of our relationship, in which her courage, whole-heartedness, and deep empathy with others have played a great part.

We were married in Heswall Parish Church on 29th March 1947 and spent our honeymoon in a cottage in Braemar, lent us by cousins. We drove up in my Ford 8, spending two nights on the way. Over lunch in Blairgowrie, I rashly accepted the word of a waitress that the Devil's Elbow, a notoriously difficult pass, was open. We soon ran into snow – quite literally. There was a clear road ahead of a patch of snow through which I thought I could drive.

Margo was not amused. I had to borrow a spade to dig us out and to take a long coast road.

We spent the first fifteen months of our marriage in other people's homes, the first three months in my bachelor digs in Durham City. I returned from school one day to find Margo in tears. She had told our landlady that there would be an addition to the family and we had been given notice. That same day I received a telegram summoning me to the War Office – the first step to my being appointed a Lecturer at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Before we left, our landlady joined us in a dinner party which included our MP and the editor of our local paper.

Andrew was born on 2nd January 1948 in Liverpool Maternity Hospital under the supervision of a leading gynaecologist, Maurice Datnow, who treated us free on account of his admiration of Pater's work. Margo had spent the previous month with her father in Heswall. After leaving hospital, she and Andrew stayed with Mother in Dinglefield until she was fit enough to join me in rented accommodation near Sandhurst.

In the summer of 1948, with the help of our families, we bought our first home. White Cottage, Goldney Road, Frimley, had been the gardener's cottage to a large house, Edgemoor, the name of which had been inappropriately changed to Toad Hall – there was no river within miles. Goldney Road was a rough lane leading from Chobham Road at the top of the Camberley Heath golf course through the woods to the back of the Brompton Sanatorium and the road from Frimley to Blackdown. The state of the lane was such as to discourage motorists from taking the shortest route from Camberley to Blackdown.

The cottage which, though charming, was small and poky, was later greatly improved by the addition of a new wing, brilliantly designed by an architect friend, Edna Mills, and financed by Mother. With the cottage went part of an old walled garden, a large apple tree, a glorious old lime tree, gooseberries, raspberry canes and masses of rhododendrons. Such was our home until 1963, when we moved to Ascot.

Peter was born on 22nd December 1949. He was one of seven boys – no girls – to arrive in the maternity ward of Frimley Hospital shortly before Christmas Day. On Boxing Day, a party was held in the maternity ward to which fathers were invited to bring siblings. When Andrew and I arrived, Peter was sleeping peacefully in a cot at the foot of Margo's bed. Andrew

was delighted to see his mother, who made a great fuss of him. Presently, he crawled to the foot of the bed, looked over and shouted excitedly, "Look, Mummy, a baba!" So Peter was his discovery and not an interloper forced on him – a good start to what Pater used to call the "dethroned monarch".

Wherever I was called to go, Margo accompanied me willingly. In 1960, when I was offered the temporary post of Director of Studies at the Ghana Military Academy, which was about to be established, she immediately urged me to accept. Our sons, Andrew and Peter, benefited from the experience of two summer holidays in Ghana, but for Margo it meant spending most of a year without seeing them.

In a letter from Ghana to my mother, Margo wrote, "I simply love these sewing classes – it's the only way we have of knowing the African wives. Most of them neither speak nor understand English, but there is a wonderful universal language between women with homes and families and husbands which seems to need very little interpreting. I notice there is usually an African sergeant or corporal – sometimes more – within sight and sound of our gatherings. They evidently don't altogether trust their women. Last week I was involved in a row between two of them, which was soon joined in by the whole 30 or so. The noise was terrific, everyone shouting, and I could see the men bearing down on us. Neither woman understood English, but I went up to the one who'd caused the trouble. I had to pull her by the arm as she was shouting so much and in such a temper. I said, 'I'm sorry'. It was like a miracle. She stopped shouting and smiled at me with such warmth and took my hand. Then I went to the other wife and did the same and the same thing happened. They all went away friends and so happy. The CO's wife and another officer's wife were there and they were retreating from the storm. When it stopped so suddenly they were almost stunned. I said to them I'd rather have the Ghanaian way of doing things than ours. If it had been Europeans they'd have said nothing but gone home furious and criticised and discussed behind each other's backs".

Even more courageous was Margo's willingness to spend two years with me in Germany, a country she found very difficult and whose language she never mastered. Andrew said of her at that time, "You could parachute Mum into China and she would cope because she speaks the language of the heart".

Since we moved to West Dulwich 19 years ago, we have experienced many wonderful friendships. Four families in the road combined to give us a champagne lunch party for our Golden Wedding in 1997. She, however,

endured 15 years of various health problems and five major operations. At King's College Hospital she became something of a celebrity, having been operated on twice for what turned out to be an extremely rare obturator hernia and being the first patient to have a blocked artery cleared by rotablation after angioplasty had failed. "The more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace" (1). This was so true of Margo.

It was during a time of undiagnosed pains in 1989 that we were invited to Pakistan. My immediate reaction was "No", to which she replied, "I am going, if it is the last thing I do". We had first met General Malik 30 years previously, when he had been a Sandhurst cadet and had stayed in our home. As Commandant of the Pakistan Military Academy, he was inviting us to spend a fortnight as his guests and kindly allowed us to take Andrew and his Swiss wife, Eliane, with us. Margo duly suffered one of her undiagnosed pains which, as usual, seemed to strengthen relationships with all concerned.

In July 1992, Margo celebrated her 80th birthday. Her brother Tom and his housekeeper, Betty Holloway, gave a big lunch party in his garden in the Wirral, at which I read part of a heart-warming birthday message from Andrew. In it, he wrote, "You have always been aware – too aware? – of all your faults and weaknesses. You are not one to hold yourself in high esteem, surrounded by men and daughters-in-law that you saw as intellectual giants. It's true that you don't have a degree. But you deserve a double first in home-making and friendship".

Margo has herself described in the February/March 1995 issue of the magazine *For a Change* how she took up painting (see Appendix B).

In February 1997, Margo and her local friends arranged a "Carson Road Art Venture". A professional artist took on 11 pupils for two days from 10 till 5, with a break for a light lunch. We were joined by friends from Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Herefordshire. This was repeated in September 1998, when the numbers increased to 17.

A devoted mother and mother-in-law, she flew regularly to Geneva to visit Andrew and Eliane and to America to visit Peter and his American wife, Annie. Our last trip was in March 1999, when Peter and Annie were working as Fellows of the Folger Shakespeare Library. She had always longed to see Washington in the Spring and we had a glorious fortnight. But her final

illness started there. She barely survived the flight back and was in and out of hospital for the next few weeks.

When, after an apparently successful operation, complications set in, we all agreed with her decision not to undergo another, but to die in peace. Thanks to the outstanding care of doctors, nurses, and staff at King's and to the support of our sons and their wives, she remained lucid till the end and was able to welcome and say farewell to many friends, a number of whom think of her as an honorary mother or grandmother.

For her last four nights, Andrew and Peter took it in turns to sit with her and she died peacefully at 2 am on Wednesday 28th April with Andrew at her side.

We were very fortunate to be able to arrange the funeral within three days. May Day was bright and sunny. About 30 relatives and close friends came to the cremation in West Norwood, taken by Dr John Brothwood and about 120 came to the Thanksgiving Service at All Saints, taken by our Vicar, Dr Robert Titley. The five of us each gave a chosen reading.

About 90 came to tea at 5 Carson Road, the home of Jodie and Roger Lomax who, with their daughters Catherine and Lizzie, have been our dearest friends for the past few years. We sat out in the garden, celebrating Margo's life as much as mourning her death.

(For a detailed account of Margo's last weeks, see Appendix C; for the Thanksgiving Service, see Appendix D; for tributes to Margo, see Appendix E.)

On Sunday 19th December, the five of us took Margo's ashes to Heswall Parish Church, where Margo and I were married in 1947. In bright sunshine the Rector, Dr Jonathan Gibbs, led a procession of 30 to the Stallybrass family grave, where he conducted a brief interment service. The grave is a simple horizontal slab of the local red sandstone. Carved on it are the names and dates of my father, my grandmother, my brother Andrew, and my stepfather-uncle. Below them, a mason had added, "Margaret Stallybrass, née Bigland, 1912-1999". Apart from ourselves, there were 12 of Margo's relatives present, as well as many friends of her late brother Tom.

(1) Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, (Collins), Book 2, Ch.12, v.8.

Mr, Mrs and Robert Powell

Robert Powell, known in his early years as "Rab", was my contemporary at St Fillan's Heswall, and at The Leas, Hoylake. An only child, he was somewhat spoiled.

The legend goes that when he was about two, his parents, then living in Birkenhead, planned a holiday in a boarding house in West Kirby. Terrified that their treasure might be infected by germs, they ensured that their rooms had been fumigated. They then set off, Mother in a fumigated horse-drawn cab, Father pushing Rab in his pram, changing places on the way.

When we were about twelve, I had the good fortune to be selected as a suitable companion for Rab on a fortnight's visit to Scotland with his mother. On the journey from Liverpool to Glasgow on the old London & North Western, I was thrilled to be ascending Shap Fell, which I knew from photographs in *The Railway Magazine*.

After a night in Greenock, we boarded a steamer in Gourock and sailed down the Firth of Clyde, past the Island of Arran and up Loch Fyne to Lochgilphead, where a schoolfriend from The Leas, Colin Allen, whose parents lived there, had arranged to meet us for a chat. We sailed on through the Crinan Canal and up the Firth of Lorne to Oban, where we stayed the night.

Next day we sailed on up Loch Linnie to Fort William, where we stayed about a week in a boarding house and were joined for a weekend by Mr Powell. A fellow lodger introduced us to fishing from the end of the pier and we spent happy hours trying to dam a stream. One day we took the train to Mallaig and back and had our first sight of the Isle of Skye.

Finally we took the magnificent old West Highland Line to Edinburgh, where we spent our last few days in a hotel. I remember especially visits to the Castle, to St Giles's and to the Botanical Gardens.

On another holiday with the Powells at Penmaenmawr, we used to watch the Irish Mail on its way from Holyhead to Euston pick up and drop the local mail, an action which I managed to photograph on an old "Box Brownie".

Robin and I had been allowed to take over a shed in our paddock. We had a work-bench and a tool-chest in the middle, and Rab, who was a good handyman, helped us to erect a shelf all round at a suitable height to take our model railway. We then tried, not very successfully, to rig a mail coach to do what we had seen happening at Penmaenmawr.

Rab had a bad reputation in Heswall for rudeness. Living next to the Powells in Oldfield Road were Mrs Widdowson with three young daughters, whom he used to tease mercilessly over the garden fence. After receiving a number of complaints, Mrs Powell invited me to join Rab in a reconciliation tea party after playing suitable games with the girls in the garden. The eldest girl, Betty, later became a close friend of Margo's.

After moving on from The Leas to Loretto, rude Rab was soon forgotten and Robert Powell became a respected citizen. In those days we met only occasionally at Old Leasian Dinners.

After her husband died, Mrs Powell moved to Moffat. Over the years she had worn well back on her head a hat with a broad turned-up brim, which she replaced every few years with another exactly similar. At a farewell party which she gave for her friends, including my mother, she had a good fire going which she stoked from a pile of old hats. On journeys to or from Scotland, I visited her once or twice in Moffat.

At Easter 1939, Robin and I were camping with a Scottish friend in Glencoe and found Robert camping on the same site with skiing companions.

On our way back from our honeymoon in 1947, Margo and I spent an uncomfortable night with Robert and his wife in Alloa, where he was working in the textile industry. He was a sensitive host, but she made it clear that she did not regard us as friends. Sadly, from then on my friendship with Robert waned.

The Carlisle Family

One of the most colourful Heswall characters was Dr Carlisle, family doctor to several generations and loved by them for his charming originality and cheerful humour.

He came to see me when I was in bed with some minor ailment. The handle of my bedroom door had jammed on my side and he could not get in. The room next to mine opened out onto a balcony from which, armed with the necessary tools, he climbed in through a window and quickly repaired my door. He was about to leave when reminded that he had not yet looked at his patient.

My brother Andrew was out for a walk one day with a visiting aunt, when Dr Carlisle drove past waving excitedly. "Who on earth's that?" she asked. "Oh, that's our doctor," he replied. "He's quite mad, you know."

He could be firm when required and was known to have expelled Rab Powell from his surgery. He arrived one day wild with rage. He had just seen Mrs Powell. When told he was on his way to see my mother, she had said, "Ah! Mrs Stallybrass goes in for quantity, but I go in for quality". "Just think of it," he added, still fuming, "with that bat-eared boor of a boy!"

An unmarried sister of Dr Carlisle lived in Oldfield Road and was a practising physiotherapist. She gave me excellent treatment in 1936 after I had fractured my skull in a climbing accident.

Working as a nurse during World War II in the Heswall Branch of the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital, Margo got her arm caught and nearly severed in the metal gate of a lift. There was no doctor on duty, but a phone call to Dr Carlisle brought him straight from his garden, wearing old clothes. He took one look at the patient and summed up the situation. A surgeon was urgently needed, but any delay would necessitate amputation. He remembered bringing Margo into this world and decided to act himself. Much later, a qualified surgeon commented that he could not have done a better job.

It transpired that he had always wanted to be a surgeon, but family funds would not cover the extra length of training. When Margo tried to thank him, he stopped her and said gruffly, "You know as well as I do that it was a miracle".

Dr and Mrs Carlisle had three daughters and a son, Ian. He was for many years Tony Bigland's best friend. He followed in his father's footsteps and became a general practitioner. Just after Christmas 1947, Ian and Tony accompanied us as I drove Margo to the Liverpool Maternity Hospital for the birth of Andrew. The fact that we had at least a medical student with us gave me a sense of security.

Their youngest daughter, Griselda, studied piano at the Royal Academy of Music under Harold Craxton. Margo and I invited her down to Sandhurst to give a recital in the Central Library to the Music Club. It was a great success and the Royal Marines Captain in charge of the club found her most attractive. She married Keith Rawlinson, son of a distinguished Liverpool

surgeon and himself a surgeon. Over the years we occasionally saw them at Tom Bigland's parties in Willaston.

Andrew, Eliane, Peter, Annie and I were all delighted that Keith and Griselda were able to join us for the burial of Margo's ashes and for the lunch afterwards. We saw a plaque in the Church that morning, "Henry George Carlisle strove to relieve suffering and to give courage, gaiety and peace of mind".

Since then I have been corresponding with Griselda's older sister, Mary, whom I hardly knew, though she came to our wedding. She served in the navy during the war and married Geoffrey Hall, who eventually became Hydrographer of the Navy and retired as Rear Admiral. I have found his autobiography fascinating (1).

I have recently discovered a photograph of Dr Carlisle arriving at our wedding with two of his daughters, Mary and Tony, and have had it photocopied for Mary and Griselda.

- (1) Rear Admiral Geoffrey Hall: *Sailor's Luck – At Sea & Ashore in Peace & War*, (The Memoir Club, 1999).

Miss Gore

I spent three years between the ages of six and nine as a day boy at St Fillan's Heswall, walking over a mile there and back each day. The much feared Headmistress, Miss Gore, a Bishop's daughter, gave me a good grounding in Latin and French. She also tried to help me to overcome the insecurity caused by the death of my father and to experience the reality of the school text, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians, ch.4, v.13).

Tim and Isabel Dealtry and John Hood-Daniel

Four of the happiest years of my life were those when I was aged from 9 to 13 at "prep school", perhaps because I found myself among boys older than myself and men, so could escape from the pressure at home to behave responsibly as the oldest male.

The Leas, Hoylake, under the joint headmastership of Messrs P. S. Dealtry and Jackie Barr, was at that time considered to be the best preparatory

school in the North of England. The spirit of the place was summed up in the motto, "*Deo parere libertas* – to obey God is freedom", and in the School Song, the chorus of which ran:

Courage is born of freedom,
Freedom to do the right;
Deo parere libertas –
This be our strength and might.

Keeping cash was forbidden; all pocket money had to be handed in to Mr Barr, who kept an account of our expenditure at two school shops run by members of the staff and returned the balance to us on the last afternoon of term. Once at the end of term, three of us decided to enliven the long evening without "prep" by slipping out to a shop in West Kirby to buy sweets. We were seen on our way out by Mr Dealtry's son, Tim, who, though not a member of the staff, told his father. We returned to find the rest of the school already in their dormitories. We had missed the only roll call ever to be held in our time and were condemned to stay in bed next morning while all the others left for early trains. On my arrival home on a mid-morning train I received a lecture from my grandmother. Mother, bless her, made no comment, but gave me the distinct impression that she was rather proud of my escapade.

In the middle of my education course, I was invited over to The Leas. A new partnership had replaced that of Dealtry and Barr. Tim Dealtry, who had once reported seeing certain boys sneaking out of the school grounds, had taken over together with "Bunting" Wainwright, who had played rugby for Birkenhead Park and Cheshire.

To my amazement, Tim offered me the post of French master, starting the following autumn. He made it clear that he did not expect me to remain a prep school master, but that the job would be a stepping stone to a further career in education. I was aware that teaching posts were hard to find, but I did not fully realise at the time how lucky I was.

As a cynical and bad-tempered master, I was far from happy. I found it difficult to relate to boys aged 9 to 14, and I disliked the long hours of policing that such a school entails. I also experienced the mixed pleasure and embarrassment of teaching my youngest brother, Oliver.

Tim had a profound insight into boys' characters and helped me to understand the problems that some of my more difficult pupils were facing. He had married Isabel Hood-Daniel, whose husband had been killed in World War I. She had a fine contralto voice and I had been privileged as a boy soprano to sing in quartets with her and two of the masters. As a master, I encouraged her to sing in school concerts and accompanied her on the piano.

Her son, John, who had been my contemporary at The Leas as a boy, was working in industry and was living in the school. I introduced him to rock climbing and we spent nine weekends over the next years in Wales.

In October 1936, while starting to lead him up the Idwal Slabs, I was hit on the forehead by a small sharp piece of quartz, which knocked me out and fractured my skull. John took on the difficult task of seeing me into Bangor Hospital and informing my parents and his of what had happened. Tim was landed with doing my teaching for several weeks; he duly made a deduction from my salary. John, fortunately, was not put off and was climbing again with me four months later. The woman who dislodged the quartz, a beginner on her first climb, sent me a book, *The Romance of Mountaineering*. I don't think any hint was intended, as she never replied to my invitation to take her climbing as soon as I was fit again.

John and I were invited out one evening by another climber. We went expecting supper and were provided with plenty to drink, but only a few sandwiches to eat. We returned to the school ravenous. The cupboards in his mother's larder were all locked, but we tucked in on bread and marmalade prepared for the boys' breakfast. John promised to inform his mother in the morning, but forgot. At lunch, Wainwright announced, "The larder has been raided again; if this happens once more, all sweets will be stopped for the rest of the term". I saw the accusing finger of a colleague, to whom I had told what had happened, pointing at me across the room and the whole school stared at me. Isabel was not amused.

After three years, I applied for several jobs in secondary schools. The fact that I had no paper qualifications in French and no school experience of teaching German militated against me. Eventually, I was invited to an interview at the Johnston Grammar School in Durham City.

Tim gave me a fatherly talk, "We who know and love you accept you as you are, but if you want to sell yourself at the interview, make sure you put

on a clean shirt". He also advised me to ask for time to think it over if I were offered the job.

The Johnston School was situated in South Street, looking across the River Wear to the Castle and Cathedral. The buildings had been condemned before World War I, but it was not until after World War II that a new school was built outside the City.

Curiously, the interview hinged on games and extra-mural activities, although neither played much part in the life of the school. I discoursed on the Music Club I had founded at The Leas. The Chairman, Alderman Jim Murray, ex-miner and Labour MP for Spennymoor, interrupted me, "And what exact qualifications have you in music?" "None whatsoever," I replied, "except unlimited enthusiasm." He liked that. A little later he asked me, "Why, after Shrewsbury, did you go to Liverpool rather than to Oxford or Cambridge?" "My mother gave me the choice," I replied, "between Oxbridge or Liverpool plus a year abroad and I wanted the year abroad." "Canny fellah!" I heard him remark. When I was called in again, he extended his hand to me across the table saying, "Mr Stallybrass, you're a very lucky man; I congratulate you". Whatever reservations I had, I did not have the heart to ask for time to think it over.

I left The Leas feeling that I had not lived up to Tim's expectations; I suffered from a sense of failure which haunted me for years.

I kept in touch with Tim and Isabel for some years. When I visited them shortly after deciding to live by the School motto, *Deo parere libertas*, Tim expressed amazement at the change he saw in me. I could only wish it had taken place in time for him and The Leas to have benefited from it.

Francis Smith

Educational standards at The Leas were high: six in my year won scholarships to public schools: Francis Smith, the Head Boy, to Rugby; No.2, Michael Longson to Eton; No.3, Bill Beattie to Fettes; No.4, myself to Shrewsbury; No.5, Dick Seddon, to Sherborne; No.6, James Pinkerton, a "Foundation" scholarship to Fettes.

I met Beattie and Pinkerton later as medical students at Liverpool. Sadly, Pinkerton, whose father had been drowned as a ship's doctor when the

Germans sank *Lusitania*, died of a rare disease before qualifying. Seddon, who later held an important post with Shell in Iran, persuaded us in his dormitory to join the Scripture Union and to read our Bibles each morning, a habit which I kept up until I left school. Francis, son of a Manchester medical professor, set the right tone.

I remember his mother, Irene, and younger sister, Isabel, coming to watch him high jumping in the School sports. Sometimes on a Sunday he would come with me to our home in Heswall.

Later, Tim Dealtry told me that Smith had abandoned the chance of a distinguished career by joining the Oxford Group. I saw him at work in 1939 at a businessman's conference in Southport, at which I made a start on a new life, and told Tim that, in my opinion, Francis was using his talents to the full.

In the winter of 1945-6, Francis and I, as Captains, shared a room for some months, while working with the Americans at Höchst near Frankfurt. Back in London after the war, we worked closely together at times.

In 1977 Margo and I were living in Oxford for a time. I had had a prostatectomy in the Lister Hospital, Knebworth. At the check-up I had complained of minor blockages, but had been told I must be imagining things. Admitted to the Radcliffe Hospital with yet another blockage, I understood a young woman doctor to say how lucky I was to be under an outstanding "neurologist". "So I am just neurotic," I thought. Then the name "Smith" struck me: of course, "Joe" Smith, *the* urologist, Francis's famous cousin. Some days later, without an incision, he removed something that had been overlooked and I was released the next day. Years later I met him at Mrs Smith's funeral and thanked him for my state of fitness.

On the wall of our dining room hangs a water colour by Bernard Eyre-Walker of the Black Cuillin, which I traversed from end to end in 1936. Given me by Francis when his mother's home was sold, it brings back happy memories, not only of my climbing days, but of a good friend who is no longer with us.

Michael Longson

My best friend at The Leas was Michael Longson. After he had complained of being bullied, Mr Dealtry appealed to me as one who had lost his father to befriend him.

He became the school wicket-keeper and opening batsman and once scored 50 against another school. He first roused in me an interest in first-class cricket. He wrote amusing light verses about school events.

In his autobiography he paints a glowing picture of The Leas. Remembering the nickname earned by my round face and spectacles, he describes the disaster which befell me as a budding concert pianist:

"Poor Pickwick. If anyone thinks the keyboard works of Haydn and Scarlatti dangerously simple, let him try *The Old Gardener*. *The Old Gardener* is what Bach might have called a two-part invention, in that each hand had only one note to play at a time; but the two parts were so many octaves away from each other that if anything untoward happened at either end it was only too easily apparent. Even as the earnest red head bent over the right hand to ensure its good behaviour something would go wrong in the bass, when it transferred its attention to the left hand something else would go wrong in the treble, and so with gathering momentum it proceeded: the more things went wrong the wronger they continued to go, and the red head turned incessantly this way and that like the head of a spectator at Wimbledon. An encore was ecstatically demanded, and the demoralised pianist obliged us by starting at the point where he had left off and going on from there. We even tried for a second encore, but authority decided that the Roman holiday had lasted long enough" (1).

We never met after he left for Eton with a scholarship, but we corresponded for a time; his letters were always highly amusing.

John Hood-Daniel told me that he had met him during the war working as a Sergeant in intelligence.

After the war he taught Classics in an Edinburgh school and made his name as a regular contributor to *Punch*.

(1) Michael Longson: *A Classical Youth and Other Pieces*, (Blond, 1985), pp.31-32.

Canon and Mrs H. A. P. Sawyer

My time at The Leas was formative; my next four years at Shrewsbury were stultifying. At that time a rigid conformity was imposed in dress, behaviour and thought. Games were considered more important than anything else and I was an extremely poor performer in the best games-playing house. I left feeling a nobody and with an overriding ambition to succeed in some sport.

In one sense, however, my future was decided. An attack of faintness in an early morning Greek exam caused me to fail my Higher School Certificate. I had never felt that Classics was my calling and was happy to move on to the Modern Side and gain a basic grounding in German before leaving.

I have, however, never regretted my early study of Classics and owe much to Canon Sawyer, the headmaster, "The Arch" in Salopian jargon, who introduced us to Horace. I can still recite an English parody of one of the Odes which he taught us. It was the Arch who prepared me for Confirmation and I owe it to him that, hard as I find it to accept recent developments in the Church of England, I continue to find food for my faith in the 1661 Communion service.

When Robin wanted to be confirmed, he had first to be baptised. Our grandfather, Canon Weatherhead, had insisted on my baptism, but had died by the time Robin was born. Father, who was strongly opposed to infant baptism, had had his way with Robin. Canon Sawyer arranged in the small chapel in School House a private service at which Mother and I were the only witnesses.

Our housemaster, A. E. Kitchen, "The Bull", taught the form next to ours and used to play pranks on our form master. One morning when the Arch had arranged at short notice to exchange lessons, the door from the next room opened, swinging across the podium so that the Arch could not see into the doorway. We could see the Bull crawling towards us on his hands and knees and holding over his head like an umbrella an enormous mushroom. In vain did we try to signal to him to stop. Peeping round the door, he at last spotted the Arch, threw the mushroom back into his own room, leapt to his feet and said, "Excuse me, Headmaster, I've run out of chalk; may I borrow some of yours?"

At the end of a holiday in the Nant Ffrancon, Peter Brown, Robin and I decided to walk over the Carneddys and travel by train from Penmaenmawr to Heswall. As we were descending from Foel Fras into a valley, we saw ahead

of us the unmistakable figures of Canon Sawyer, short and thick-set, his wife, large and imposing, and their two spaniels. A young man some distance behind them turned out to be A. D. Ellis, the Head of the School, who was staying with them. He told us that for Penmaenmawr we needed to cross the ridge immediately to our right. As we were short of time for our train, we asked him to give our greetings to the Arch and set off up the ridge. As we looked back, we saw him waving to us with his handkerchief.

Some months later, while showing prospective parents round the school site, the Arch, who liked to show off how well he knew his pupils, spotted Robin and called, "Stallybrass, come here! Did you ever catch that train?" Robin looked puzzled. "You remember – that time I saw you in the mountains!"

At Henley Royal Regatta one year, a fine-looking elderly woman, spotting my tie, accosted me with "I'm an Old Salopian too". It was Mrs Sawyer, by then a widow. Shrewsbury had twice in her time won the Ladies' Plate and her support of the crew each year became legendary.

Sir Eric Drake

As new boys at Shrewsbury we were six in the house called "Ridgemount". No "man", as we already called ourselves, ever walked anywhere alone. We formed pairs and for the next four years Drake and I always walked the quarter mile to the school buildings together and, when school was over, whichever was out first would wait for the other to walk back to the house.

One summer half-holiday, Drake and I went up river together, he in a light, I in a heavy dinghy. The light dinghies were notoriously difficult to manage and Drake succeeded in overturning his. We ended in my boat, both sculling hard to tow his waterlogged craft back to the boat house. As we passed below Ridgemount, the evening callover was in progress outside the house overlooking the river. We were cheered on by the whole house, missing not only callover, but our tea as well.

Though often coached together in a tub-pair, we neither of us achieved inclusion in the house third IV. Like my brother-in-law, Tom Bigland, he achieved fame as an oarsman later, rowing for Pembroke College in the Grand at Henley and for England in an international event in Australia. Like Tom, despite an undistinguished school record, he became a School Governor.

It was only after we left school that we became "Eric" and "Bill" to each other. He twice invited me to stay with his family in Great Shelford near Cambridge, where his father was a general practitioner, and he came to stay with us in Heswall.

Eric's distinguished career with Shell earned him a knighthood. We met occasionally at Henley, but had lost the closeness of our youth.

I was delighted to get to know his daughter, Anna Freer, through Carson Road Neighbourhood Watch, but sad not to see Eric again before he died.

Aenid Picton

In the autumn of 1929 I went up to Liverpool University. An entrance exam for the Honours School of French was based on different set books for Higher School Certificate from those I had studied at Shrewsbury a year earlier and I failed. The private lessons which I had taken in my last term were not enough to get me into the Honours School of German. I therefore started on an ordinary BA course in French, German, Economics and Mathematics and did well enough in German to join the Honours School in my second year.

Aenid Picton was the Lecturer in German. An excellent teacher and a good friend, she entertained us students in her home and, during one vacation, arranged to meet me in Hamburg and take me out for an evening.

My parents and I met her occasionally at the Sandon Studios Society, a Liverpool club for artists and art lovers of which we were all members.

She kindly phoned us before the final results were published to say that I had been awarded a 2/1 and had narrowly missed a first.

Welsh by birth, she spent weekends in Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, where Mary Bigland and her twin sons were based during the war. Margo met her there on a number of occasions.

Clair Baier

Clair Baier was the son of a Pastor of the German Lutheran Church in Liverpool and an English mother. We were the only two students of German in our first year class and shared the attention of Aenid Picton. He had a

grandmother living in Ulm in whose home we met occasionally. He got a first class degree and became Professor of German at Hull University.

Drs Henry and Eileen (née Chrimes) Davies

During my first year at Liverpool, I lived in a men's hostel in Ullett Road near Sefton Park, sharing a large room with two other ex-public schoolboys, one of whom was convicted of stealing and sent down. In the next room lived George, who possessed the broadest Yorkshire accent we had ever heard. He would stand in our doorway, roaring with laughter at the "posh" way we talked.

The third man, Henry Davies, a medical student, was the son of an Anglican Vicar living in Wrexham. He invited me during the Christmas vacation to his home, where we enjoyed several dances and some ice-skating. I invited him to Heswall for a weekend, which my brother Robin remembered as the time he was promoted from schoolboy to man, drinking beer with us in a pub.

From our second year onwards we shared the top floor of the house in Huskisson Street, where Pater had lived as a bachelor and often slept after evening engagements in Liverpool. Henry and I each had a bedroom and shared a living room.

Our ways of life were totally different. Henry worked every evening and confined his social activities to vacations. I would give up my numerous activities a few weeks before each exam to do some urgent cramming.

My bedroom was lit by two open gas jets without mantles. One evening, when I was getting ready for a dance, I returned from the bathroom to find that a curtain had blown into a gas jet and was in flames. I yelled for help, tore the curtain down and managed to stamp out the flames. Indignantly, I said to Henry, who was quietly studying in the next room, "Didn't you hear me shouting?" to which he calmly replied, "Didn't you hear me shouting to know what you were shouting about?"

Henry persuaded me to spend £5, which I had earned tutoring a boy for a scholarship to Rugby, on an ancient motorbike and taught me to ride it. It was not a success. I skidded once on Liverpool tramlines and came off in

front of a tram, which had to brake violently. It never took me more than ten miles without a breakdown.

After graduating, we lost touch for many years. On one of our frequent visits to Margo's brother, Tom Bigland, in the Wirral, their cousin Peter Williams informed us that his wife, née Chrimes, was a cousin of Henry Davies's wife and put us in touch. I remembered Eileen Chrimes as a charming young medical student and her late cousin Lawrence, with whom I had rowed for Mersey Rowing Club.

In November 1991, Henry and Eileen invited us to stay a night on our way back from one of our visits to the Wirral. They had run a joint medical practice in Colwyn Bay and had retired to a lovely house in the Nant-y-Glyn through the hills to the south of Old Colwyn. We talked at length about the past. They had just had a big family gathering to celebrate Eileen's 80th birthday. They took us on an afternoon drive through Conwy and Llandudno and showed us round their beautiful garden. We set off next morning on a glorious country road over the hills, stopping occasionally to admire the Snowdonia ranges and eventually joining the A5 at Pentrefoelas.

John Kidd

In my first year at Liverpool, I joined the Dramatic Society and played two walk-on parts in a memorable production of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. I also understudied all the male parts. It was directed jointly by Graham Holford and John Kidd, who also played the two main parts. One evening, John arrived so late that I was already putting on his costume. He graciously offered to change places for the evening, but I did not think it was fair on the audience.

John, whose father was a Birkenhead doctor, and I gave several performances of *Box and Cox* for fund-raising events in Birkenhead, his mother taking the part of the landlady. We took the dialogue at such speed that we occasionally got lost. John would then fling his hands in the air, cry out, "What are we to do?" and leave it to me to get back on track.

We also performed with friends a one-act comedy by A. P. Herbert, *Love Lies Bleeding*, poking fun in an English setting at Russian tragedy. I played the part of a tragic professional goalkeeper, who was always addressed in Russian style by his full name – Thomas William Love.

That same year, Graham Holford won the Rome Scholarship in Architecture; he later became Professor of Town Planning at University College, London, and was made Baron Holford of Kemp Town.

John was a distinguished rugby footballer. After graduating in Law, he confided in me that he wanted to become a professional actor. To my shame, I tried to dissuade him. I had failed to evaluate his remarkable talent. He never held it against me and always received me graciously in his dressing-room when I went to see him play.

His greatest success was as Mr Rat in *Toad of Toad Hall*, which he played at a series of Christmas seasons in London. Margo and I took our sons and her great-aunt Florence Bigland to a performance and met afterwards both John and his wife, who was heading the chorus of *Animals of the Wild Wood*.

Mrs McCann

Mrs McCann was Pater's Irish housekeeper, whom we all loved dearly. She treated Henry and me as if we were her grown-up sons. She provided us with breakfast and supper each weekday in the ground floor dining-room.

Her husband, who worked as a docker, was a good man, a gentle soul. They had a son, who later joined the Liverpool Police, and two daughters. Their living rooms were in the basement, their bedrooms in the attic.

At Henry's suggestion, she gave us kippers one evening as a treat. "If the Doctor were to come in," she said, "why, he'd put the kippers and me into the dustbin."

At one time the youngest child had regular tantrums. Her screams in the basement could be heard upstairs. Pater very hesitantly ventured to suggest that the child might be a little spoilt. Her reaction, which he had feared, was unexpected; "Spoilt, is it, Doctor? Why, she's ruined entoierly". "Ruined entoierly" duly became one of our family sayings.

Her Irish brogue could lead to misunderstandings. Mother called one day when I was preparing for an exam and heard her say, "Why, he's walkin' away, walkin' away, all the time". "Why is he walking," she said indignantly, "when he ought to be working?"

To us, the McCann family represented the best of Ireland.

A. B. Hargreaves, Colin Kirkus and Menlove Edwards

I had the good fortune to be introduced to the Climbers' Club by an outstanding climber and personality, A. B. Hargreaves, and to count the two best rock-climbers of my generation, Colin Kirkus and Menlove Edwards, among my best friends.

In October 1929, I joined the Wayfarers, a Liverpool club of which "Pater" was a member and which owned the Robertson Lamb Hut in Langdale. In a Liverpool café I met a fellow-member, Alan Hargreaves, who preferred to be known as "AB". He told me that he had been a mountain cyclist, but that after an accident in which he had escaped unhurt, but in which his bike had been smashed, he had been taken on by a party of rock-climbers and had switched to climbing. He made a point of taking on younger climbers and setting them on the right lines.

He invited me to a joint weekend meet of the Wayfarer and Manchester-based Rucksack Clubs at the latter's Tal-y-Braich Hut on the A5 between Capel Curig and Ogwen.

On the Saturday afternoon, AB led me up Faith on the Idwal Slabs and, joined by L. H. Radcliffe, the Holly Tree Wall. On the Sunday, AB arranged that Radcliffe should follow me up my first lead, the Milestone Buttress of Tryfan. With such slender qualifications, I was proposed by Hargreaves, seconded by Radcliffe and duly elected to the Climbers' Club.

As I was starting my lead, AB and Colin Kirkus streaked past us unroped on their way to do a first ascent on the North Buttress. Noticing my solemnity, AB imitated the Abraham brothers and called to Colin, "Do you think it will go, Ashley?" to receive the reply, "I think so, George." This was my first glimpse of Colin, who had already made his mark in the climbing world. His very ordinary, undistinguished appearance did not quite live up to my expectations.

We met a few weeks later at a Climbers' Club Northern dinner in the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Colin, who was working as a clerk in a Liverpool office, drank a little too much. I was living in a University Hostel in the Sefton Park area near the Kirkus home. We took a tram together and I saw him home.

Early next morning, a bitterly cold November day, a fellow student told me that there was an odd-looking chap outside looking for me. It was Colin, who asked me to cycle with him to the red sandstone crags at Helsby, 20 miles away. After following him up 19 short climbs, I kept falling off the crux of the 20th, totally exhausted. We then cycled the 20 miles back.

A month later on a very cold and wintry day, AB and Colin hauled a Liverpool University lecturer and me up the Central Buttress of Tryfan in thick snow. I remember swearing that I'd never climb again in the winter, but by the time we got back to the Climbers' Club hut, Helyg, I thought what a wonderful day we'd all had.

Over the next two years, AB took me climbing five times at Helsby and once from Helyg, when he led me up the Terrace Wall Variant on Tryfan.

Menlove Edwards was studying medicine at Liverpool University and later qualified as a psychiatrist. We first met in 1930 and, together with his elder brother Hewlett, founded the Liverpool University Rock Climbing Club, inviting Graham Macphee, Lecturer in Dentistry and a distinguished mountaineer, to be our President.

Eight of us, including Bob Shackleton, who later became Professor of Geology at Liverpool, held our first meet in December 1930 at Helyg. Menlove distinguished himself, making three first ascents, including Route 5 on the East Wall of the Idwal Slabs.

Most club huts in those days were male preserves and for a time, I am ashamed to admit, our policy was to discourage women from membership. However, on four occasions I took girlfriends to Helsby, including two meets of our Club.

Our July 1931 three-day meet at the Robertson Lamb Hut drew eight members; one, a woman, slept at a farm across the road. We all enjoyed a splendid first day's climbing on Gimmer. The next day Menlove, another man and I went to Doe Crag, where Menlove rashly tried to lead a very severe climb, Black Wall, and stuck. The other man and I made a very rapid ascent of Black Chimney to a point where we could lower a rescuing rope to him. Unlike Colin, Menlove tended to rush at things. Days with him tended to be tense and dramatic.

When the meet broke up, Menlove, another member and I moved to Wasdale and enjoyed an excellent week's climbing on Great Gable and Scafell

without much drama. AB joined us for two days, leading us up Tophet Wall on Great Gable and Walker's Gully on Pillar with a certain amount of drama and much colourful language.

I had cycled to Langdale and had left my bike at the hut. Menlove gave me a lift back to Liverpool on the pillion of his motorbike, an extremely uncomfortable and somewhat frightening experience.

Mountains were not the only element in which Menlove liked to test his strength to the limit. I firmly declined an invitation to row with him from Liverpool to the Isle of Man. He did, however, persuade me to join the Adelphi Hotel Gymnasium, where he devised special exercises for rock-climbers. One was for "laybacking", a recently introduced technique for climbing steep cracks. Gripping the edge of the crack with both hands and placing the feet squarely against the outside wall, you literally walk up the wall with your backside stuck out in space. There was an ulterior motive behind Menlove's emphasis on laybacking, as I was to discover a few months later.

In August 1931 we had a three-week family holiday in Wasdale. Ten days of rain were followed by an unusually long period of superb weather. A lone climber called on us, looking for a partner for the next two days. After following him up climbs of a "very severe" standard, I started to lead them myself.

I have already described the two memorable days which Robin and I had together. We were joined on the summit of Pillar by Menlove Edwards and Marco Pallis, who had followed us up Route I. Marco, who had led an expedition to the Gangotri Glacier, was a musician. He had taught us as a family to play recorders and had persuaded us to buy a "chest" of Dolmetsch recorders. Marco had had enough for the day and Menlove asked to lead Robin and me up Route II, at that time the hardest climb on the cliff.

Next morning, a Sunday, I returned from an early morning bathe in Ritson's Force to be told that Menlove and Marco were on their way to Scafell and wanted me to join them. After swallowing a quick breakfast, I set off as fast as I could and caught up with them in Hollow Stones.

The Central Buttress of Scafell was considered at that time to be the hardest climb in Britain. The crux, the overhanging Flake Crack, had previously been climbed only by combined tactics. The leader would thread

a loop of rope over a chock-stone, tie himself securely onto it, then bring up his second, who would swarm onto his shoulders, then onto his head; he might then just be able to reach the top of the Flake and pull himself up. But speculation was already rife as to whether a bold leader might layback the Flake Crack unaided.

A strong party consisting of Alf Bridge, Maurice Linnell and A. B. Hargreaves had camped below the crag, fearing that in such remarkable weather there might be a queue to tackle the Flake unaided. I arrived just in time to see Alf have a go. His foot slipped, but he managed, by an extraordinary feat of strength, to save himself, then brought Maurice up to complete the climb by the standard method.

When our turn came, I was carrying, as last man on the rope, a spare 100-ft line and was climbing in stockinged feet, having left my rubbers behind in my haste. Menlove tied himself onto the chock-stone, called to Marco and me to change places on the rope and brought me up. Our whole performance was hair-raisingly chaotic; I was still carrying the spare line, which hampered my efforts to climb onto his shoulders. He was only loosely tied in and we both swung out into space. I had to descend, exhausted, to a secure position lower down the crack. Despite having witnessed Alf's near disaster, Menlove then succeeded in laybacking up the crack. He had made climbing history.

We met the other party on the summit. AB was the only one with time to spare and invited me to follow him on the second ascent of Mickledore Grooves, a very severe climb pioneered shortly before by Colin Kirkus. I was at the peak of my form and followed him without difficulty.

Next morning I offered to lead any of the family who would like to join me on the third ascent of Mickledore Grooves. They all refused; I had only been climbing for two years and they felt, justifiably, that I was over-ambitious and pushing. I set off alone and did the climb solo.

Courage did not come into it; there was not a single moment of fear, just an amazing sense of freedom without a rope in front or behind me. A few days before, while leading Botterill's Slab, I had been aware of a twitch at my back; my second was not allowing me enough slack; I felt safer soloing. That day I did three more climbs solo.

The next day the family left by train for home. I decided to solo any of the Kern Knotts climbs on Great Gable which I had not led, to spend the night

in Langdale and to hitch-hike home. I was defeated by Kern Knotts Buttress, up which I had once followed Menlove. The crux comes within a few feet of a fine stance and belay and an escape route. I was not prepared to risk it without a second.

As I was about to leave for Langdale, I met a lone climber carrying a rope. We agreed that he would second me up Kern Knotts Buttress and that I would lead him up the Eagle's Nest Direct.

I was inordinately proud of myself. At last I was going to emulate my friends Colin and Menlove. A boastful letter to AB received a very curt reply. He saw more clearly than I did that I was a mediocre climber, that only extraordinary luck in the weather had led to my recent successes. I now see that I had exploited his lead of the second ascent to boost my own ego.

AB was six years my senior, he could be quite fierce, and I always treated him with respect and a certain amount of awe; he was the only one of my friends at that time who tried to help me tackle the defects in my character. There was never any rift between us, but it so happened that, though we met occasionally, we never climbed together again.

Events the following summer showed me how foolish my pride had been. I have never since led a climb of a standard higher than "very difficult", nor have I climbed solo. I had come to feel ashamed of the Mickledore Grooves episode.

In June 1933, Robin and I accompanied Graham Macphee and Menlove Edwards to Wales. I have already mentioned how Robin had the "Sexton's Route" named after him. On the previous day I had sat my last exam paper for an Honours degree in German and was in such poor condition that I could not even start the climb.

The next day we all followed Menlove up a new route on Twll Du, the Devil's Kitchen cliff. He was by then developing a preference for steep grass and heather over pure rock. My memory is of steep, slimy vegetation. He named it appropriately "Botany Bay".

The death in a motorcycle accident, on the day that Menlove and I graduated, of his elder brother Hewlett, whom both he and I greatly admired, had an adverse effect on his mental health, which slowly deteriorated over the years.

In September 1933 Menlove and I made the first ascent of "Bees' Buttress" on Allt-yr-Ogof, the cliff opposite Helyg. It was named after a swarm which we met on the steep heather, the main feature of the climb. Menlove insisted that I lead the only rock pitch, in which he was no longer interested.

My last climb with him was in December 1937, when he led his Old Fettesian friend A. M. Keith and me up the Primitive Route on Lliwedd in exceedingly difficult conditions of snow and ice. The climb took us 5½ hours and it was 6.30 pm, long after dark, before we reached the road.

Sadly, the war put an end to our friendship. Registered as a Conscientious Objector, he developed a persecution mania and regarded me as his enemy. He eventually committed suicide.

Colin and I visited Helsby together twice in 1930, but then our ways parted until 1936. By then I was teaching at The Leas, Hoylake, and had a car. Colin was living in Heswall, and I would pick him up on the way for weekends at Helyg.

In September 1936, while working on the Glyder Fach guidebook, Colin led Robin and me on the first ascent of the Errant Route. At one point, Colin led up a strip of very steep grass, brought me up and then went off in a totally different direction. I was making heavy weather of descending the grass, realising that, if I came off, I would do a big swing on the rope. He called down, "The art of descending steep grass is to ascend at half the rate the grass is falling off". I was laughing so much that I managed without thinking.

The following weekend we did the Home Climb and Zig Zag on the Gribin Facet, measuring them for the guidebook. I was struck by Colin's diligence in his work.

I have already described my accident on the Idwal Slabs. In his delightful book, *Let's Go Climbing*, written to encourage beginners, Colin writes, "A friend of mine was climbing ... on the Idwal Slabs a short time ago. He was about 30 feet up when a large stone shot down the rocks and hit him in the middle of the forehead. He knew nothing about it until he found himself lying at the bottom, with an anxious crowd around him. His skull was fractured, but a little thing like that didn't worry Bill: he walked down to the road. He still has a neat little dinge in the centre of his forehead" (1).

In October 1937, we had a marvellous Sunday on Lliwedd, climbing Mallory's Slab and the Great Chimney. We walked down to the Pen-y-Pass Hotel in lovely late afternoon sunshine. Miss Williams, who presided, had a soft spot for climbers. She would look shocked if we asked for a drink on a Sunday. She would disappear for a moment, then come back and say, "The policeman is way down the road now. I'll get you a pint". We rounded off the day with the Nose Direct on Dinas Mot, a perfect finish.

In January 1938 we spent two splendid days climbing snow gullies on Snowdon. On the first day, as we were about to descend the zig-zag track down to Llyn Glaslyn, Colin told me how he and two friends had once spotted three people and a pool of blood in the snow at the bottom of the slope. Glissading down to help, he had gone out of control and had finished a slide of several hundred feet on his tummy. The only damage had been a torn glove. He quickly stood up, shook the snow off, walked across to the only slightly injured people and said, "You seem to have had rather a nasty fall". They had been attempting to reach the summit in ordinary shoes and had all fallen from near the top of the slope.

Colin had just told me this when I started glissading down the slope, lost control and had my ice axe wrenched out of my hand. I had the good luck to come to a stop in soft snow and to be able to retrieve my axe. Colin, who had been watching my performance with interest, called down, "Thank you! Now I know it's safe to glissade".

My last climb with Colin was in April 1938, the Great Gully of Craig-yr-Ysfa, together with Graham Macphee.

I have already described the tragedy of Easter 1940, when I put my friendship with Colin before the needs of my brother Andrew.

Colin had invited me to be best man at his wedding to Eileen Foster, a Heswall girl whom he had introduced to climbing. They were married in April 1940 in Heswall Parish Church; the reception was in the Hotel Victoria. There I met Colin's younger brother Guy for the first time. The previous evening I had taken Colin to a D'Oyly Carte performance of *The Yeomen of the Guard* in Liverpool.

Colin and Eileen lived in Mere Lane, Heswall, in a house which they christened "Mickledore", suggestive of one of his most outstanding first ascents, Mickledore Grooves.

As early as September 1939, Colin's elder brother Nigel had lost his life as pilot of a Hampden bomber in an unescorted daylight raid on German destroyers. Colin, aged 29, in a "reserved occupation" in insurance and with defective eyesight from a climbing accident, succeeded at last in August 1940 in being accepted for the Royal Air Force.

Eileen, who was teaching at the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital in Heswall, where Margo was nursing, told her how on one occasion Colin had arrived on leave one day early and had found her cleaning the kitchen floor with her hair in a terrible state. It had taken her a moment to welcome him as she wanted to.

Colin's wedding proved tragically to be our last occasion together. Navigator of a Wellington in a Pathfinder unit of Bomber Command, he and all his crew lost their lives in a raid on Bremen in September 1942.

Colin was a very neat climber. It was a delight to watch him, his moves were thought out and fluid, he was a natural. Though often strenuous, days on the hills with him were remarkably relaxed and peaceful. We talked very little, certainly never about anything serious. We were just friends enjoying days on the crags quietly together.

By my desk hangs a photo of Colin sitting half-dressed in the opening of his tent amid boulders by a stream. I know that it was taken in India, but it might just as well have been behind Ogwen Cottage.

In 1994, I was taken by friends to the Climbers' Club dinner in Llanberis. They arranged for A. B. Hargreaves, approaching his 90th birthday, and me to meet at Helyg. It was a very happy time of reminiscing. At the dinner, he was helped onto a chair to make an outstanding impromptu speech. We met again shortly afterwards for the last time at Jack Longland's funeral.

(1) Colin Kirkus: *Let's Go Climbing*, (Nelson, 1941), p.138.

John Bernard Shaw

John Shaw, a nephew of the writer George Bernard Shaw, was an architectural student at Liverpool University. He was a keen climber, but was several years junior to the Edwards brothers and myself and had not taken part in our meets.

I first knew him as an outstanding cross-country runner. I was keen, but was seldom chosen for the first team. On one occasion when I was running for the second team against a local school, John Shaw and our Captain decided to run round the course just ahead of us. I was in good form that day and took the lead from the start. I kept my distance just behind them and did not look round until the finish, when I discovered that I had a lead of several hundred metres.

During my first year of teaching at The Leas, I discovered that John, still up at Liverpool, was living in Heswall. We decided to pay our first visit to the Alps in the summer of 1936.

From Grindelwald in the Berner Oberland we walked for about an hour up towards the Grosse Scheidegg and camped beside a stream descending from a glacier at the top of the north face of the Wetterhorn. We spent just over a fortnight there without being asked to pay a rent.

We spent our first few days doing long walks to get fit. The weather was wet and one night we lay awake listening to the stream which, to our relief, stopped rising just short of our tent.

Then came a spell of fine weather and we woke one morning to find that our stream had disappeared. We were without water until the afternoon, when we saw it descending the face of the Wetterhorn again. From then on, we filled our containers each evening.

We had very little money, but budgeted on having one day with a guide. We arranged with Herr Adolf Burgener, custodian of the Glecksteinhütte, to take us on a traverse of the Kleine Schreckhorn, which would give us the maximum amount of practice on snow and ice before launching out guideless. Unacquainted with Alpine ways, we arrived at the hut well after 8 pm to find everyone already asleep. An indignant Burgener had given us up and agreed to take another party up the Wetterhorn. However, he let us follow his party on our own rope and lowered a rope to us over the steep snow at the summit. The ascent of the long rock gully leading to the col between the Wetterhorn and the Mittelhorn was the most dangerous part of the whole holiday owing to the efforts of a gentleman above us whom we christened "the man who left no stone unturned".

Next day we had Burgener to ourselves on the Kleine Schreckhorn. He was most considerate, let us lead most of the way, taught us to cut steps and to glissade and recommended a first day's guideless expedition.

This we set off to do next day, crossing over the Grosse Scheidegg and down to Rosenlauri, then up round the back of the Wetterhorn range to the Dossenhütte. The way to the hut lay through a picturesque gorge with a toll-gate. Indignantly refusing to pay for what we thought must be a right of way, we climbed up, traversed across and abseiled down onto the path above the gate.

We left the Dossenhütte at 4 am and climbed the Dossenhorn, Renfenhorn, Rosenhorn and Mittelhorn without difficulty. The sharp ridge between the Mittelhorn and the col below the summit of the Wetterhorn, for which the guidebook estimated four hours, we found very difficult. It took us seven hours, and dusk was already setting in when we reached the col, where we had been three days earlier. As we knew the way down, we unroped for greater speed and reached the Glecksteinhütte at 8 pm. There we stopped for a plate of soup and a welcome from our friend Burgener. There was some moonlight, so we continued down to camp, arriving at midnight after a splendid 20-hour day.

Our final expedition was also our highest and most difficult. The climb to our base, the Berglihütte, was by no means easy. The Fiescherwand, up which our route lay, was a steep and heavily crevassed wall of snow and ice. We had taken a minimum of provisions to save weight, but had loaded our rucksacks with firewood, as the cost of fuel in the huts was high, but this we gradually jettisoned.

Next day we made our way up to the Untermönchjoch, whence we climbed the Walcherhorn and the 4,000-metre Grosse Fiescherhorn, returning via the Fieschergrat. At one point, as we were traversing a ridge with a massive cornice, I suddenly saw Grindelwald through a hole at my feet. We must have been about 20 feet away from the edge, but we quickly moved back another 20 feet. We spent a second night in the Berglihütte, hoping to climb the Mönch, but the weather turned nasty.

My last climb of all ended in disaster. I was descending a steep snow slope and was leaning out and down to clear away with my ice-axe the snow which had covered the steps cut on the ascent. Suddenly my axe slipped from my grasp; I managed to grab it, but fell myself. I surfaced lying on the floor

of a third class railway carriage. My axe, on which I had been resting my chin, was on the floor and I was firmly grasping the ankle of a girl sitting opposite me.

I owe a lot to John, a man of far greater courage and determination than myself. On several occasions he persuaded me not to turn back. Sadly, we lost touch and have never met since.

Walter Pullan

Walter was my closest friend in the Honours German class. We were expected to spend the winter semester of our last year at a German university and we both chose Munich. Our greatest common link was a love of Wagner. 1933 was the 50th anniversary of his death and the Opera staged all his operas from *Rienzi* to *Parsifal*. I followed the whole sequence through twice; Walter was rather more choosy.

Together we went to see a performance of *Twelfth Night* with incidental music by Humperdinck. Though both admirers of his opera *Hänsel und Gretel*, we found the music repetitive and boring. In Act II Scene IV, when the Duke asks Viola, "How dost thou like this tune?", we answered the German words, "Magst du die Weise?" with a loud "Nein!" and we were nearly thrown out.

Walter spent a weekend with us in Heswall. On a favourite walk to "The Dungeon", a small red sandstone cave, where a stream dividing Oldfield from Thurstaston descends a steep gorge, he was reminded of the *Wolfsschlucht*, the setting for Act II of Weber's *Freischütz*.

I visited him and his widowed mother in their home in Bradford more than once. Walter had built himself a miniature theatre, on which he experimented in settings and lightings. His masterpiece was Act II of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. I had a set of gramophone records which we played while Walter produced the most wonderful lighting effects, starting with a brilliant red sunset through to the deep blue of night and on to a ghastly green dawn, symbolic of the betrayal of the lovers.

Sadly, as with Menlove, our friendship did not outlast the war. He became a pacifist so militant that he could not sit at a meal with his own sister.

Rudolph and Ernst Betz

Rudolph Betz worked for a time as Tutor in German at Liverpool. His home was in Munich and he arranged that I should use his room in his absence and be his parents' lodger. They had a comfortable flat in a block overlooking the River Isar close to the *Deutsches Museum*.

Rudolph's brother, Ernst, was an artist and pestered me to sit for him, but I was working too hard for my finals to spare the time. I got up at 6.00 every morning to work, but went out almost every evening to a concert or opera.

Ernst helped me to cultivate a proper German "O". He would teasingly ask me, "Gehen Sie heute in die Eeooooouuper?"

On Christmas Eve his parents included me in the family celebrations and took me to the midnight Mass in the Cathedral.

During the Easter holidays Pater, Robin and I met in Munich. We visited the Betz family and Ernst renewed his appeal to me to sit for him, this time with Robin. He painted a splendid portrait, which Mother bought and which now hangs in our drawing room. A recent photograph of us, taken by my sister-in-law Gunnvor on her lawn, now hangs beside it together with a "fun" photograph approximately reproducing the portrait, taken by our son Peter.

Rudolph and I met a year or two later at a skiing resort in France. Sadly, I broke a ski a short way down the run we were doing together.

Dietrich Stern

Every morning in Munich I did a written translation from English into German. I had a weekly arrangement with a fellow student, Dietrich Stern. We would talk English over lunch and on the walk to his room, where he would correct my translations. After my return to Britain, he wrote to tell me of the persecution he was facing on account of his Jewish ancestry. To my shame, I was unwilling to be involved in any way.

"Tante" Olga Traumann

Olga Traumann, a middle-aged widow, was a professional musician, giving singing lessons and accompanying singers. She had a comfortable flat close to the *Englischer Garten*, where she provided good, reasonably-priced lunches at which I could talk with many interesting people.

She was like an aunt to me. One Sunday we took a picnic by train to one of the Bavarian Lakes, the Traunsee, where we bathed. At Easter 1934, I took Pater and Robin to visit her. She stayed with us in Heswall for a time and I took her on my favourite walks. She and Mother got on very well together.

After the war, we corresponded again, but never managed to meet. When one of my Sandhurst colleagues, Peter Vigor, spent some time in Munich, I gave him Olga's address. As I had hoped, they found much in common.

Ernst Konrad Haase

Haase was a professional baritone singer. After a concert one evening he and I sat in a corner of a café, while he poured out his fears for Germany's future, keeping his voice well down, as Nazis in brown shirts were sitting at the next table.

A year later I called on Haase. He had meanwhile made a successful recital tour in America and showed me his press cutting book. One headline roused my interest, "MUNICH BARITONE SAYS 'HITLER OK'". "You see," he explained, "I am an artist, a singer. I am not concerned with politics. I can practise my art equally under any government." Like many other Germans and like myself, he preferred to close his heart and mind to realities.

Norman Suckling

The pianist and composer, Norman Suckling, my parents and I were all members of the Sandon Studios Society, a Liverpool club for professional artists and those interested in the arts. He gave piano recitals there, sometimes with the Manchester-based pianist Gordon Green.

Norman was once the butt of his Sandon colleagues at the annual New Year cabaret in a song to the tune of *Tom, the Piper's Son*, which went:

Norman was a tuneful one,
He learned to play when he was young,
But the only tunes that he could play
Were over their heads and far away.
Over their heads and a great way off
And louder than Rachmaninov.

I was fortunate to have him as my piano teacher while I was in Liverpool. He taught French at the Liverpool Collegiate, where I did my teaching practice for a Dip.Ed.

When we performed *The Merchant of Venice* by Gilbert and Sullivan for the second time, he was our conductor, made up to look like Sir Thomas Beecham.

In July 1933 I had the honour of being best man at his wedding to Blanche Meyrick, a Liverpool teacher who sat on a high-powered Education Committee during the war. At a family dinner in the Adelphi Hotel on the eve of the wedding, his mother told me that he had not yet done any packing for the honeymoon and made me promise not to go to bed before helping him pack. Back at his flat in Huskisson Street, he was so exhausted that he insisted on postponing packing till the morning. I kept my promise by going to sleep on the floor after clearing a space for myself among wedding presents strewn all over the place and ensuring that we were both up at a very early hour to pack. I then slipped out to buy myself a more suitable tie; when I returned he had slipped out, too, before even shaving. He then cut himself and we left in a rush to the church by taxi, Norman bouncing up and down in excitement and shouting "Faster! Faster!" all the way. We arrived just in time and he partnered the organist, humming loudly and joyfully Bach's "Air on the G String".

That was the first of three occasions when I have been best man. I realise now that each represented one of my three main interests in life: Norman – music; Colin Kirkus – mountains; and Robin – family.

In January 1935 Robin and I were privileged to be invited to join the studio audience when Norman's unaccompanied *Mass for Eight Voices* was broadcast by the BBC Radio Chorus under Leslie Woodgate. It was performed again in March 1986 by the BBC Northern Singers under Stephen Wilkinson.

Margo remembers first meeting him coming out of a Liverpool Philharmonic concert in a long red-lined black cape and a huge black sombrero. Back in his flat there were two pianos and a huge mural painting, but few chairs. We sat on cushions on the floor to listen while he played.

Norman took up the bassoon at a comparatively late age and within two years was playing with the Liverpool Philharmonic. He wrote a biography of Gabriel Fauré (1).

Norman and all his friends were aware that his talents were not being fully used at the Liverpool Collegiate and were delighted when he was appointed Lecturer (later Senior Lecturer) in French at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and later Visiting Professor at the University of Maryland. During our brief time in Durham, Margo and I visited Norman, Blanche and their daughter Julia in Newcastle.

Norman visited us at White Cottage on one occasion to give a piano recital in the Central Library at Sandhurst. He was shattered by Blanche's death and came to us for a time to recuperate. Margo thought it unhealthy that he listened every day to a recording of Delius's *Sea Drift*. A short time after her death, I too was listening to *Sea Drift* and, as I wept at the last lines of Walt Whitman's poem, *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*:

But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more!

I realised how therapeutic it had been for Norman.

The proof lay in the happy visits he paid us with his second wife Margery and daughter Julia. Later, Margo and I lunched frequently with Norman and Margery in their home at Haydon Bridge on journeys between Kendal and Pencaitland. We were also invited to Julia's wedding reception in Hexham, where I was happy to meet again Blanche's brother and sister, who had been fellow students at Liverpool.

Norman died in Haydon Bridge shortly before his 90th birthday. An obituary appeared in *The Hexham Courant*.

(1) Norman Suckling: *Gabriel Fauré*, (Dent in "The Master Musicians" series, 1946).

Robert Heger

As Secretary of the Liverpool University Music Society, I once bearded in his room in the Adelphi Hotel the great Viennese musician Robert Heger, who was to conduct a Liverpool Philharmonic concert, marched him up Brownlow

Hill to the Students' Union, gave him a sausage and chips lunch, and got him to address a meeting of the Society.

Today I am amazed at the graciousness he showed in accepting a raw student's plan for his lunch hour.

Wagnerian Friends

I was once invited to a party in Liverpool after a performance of *Tristan and Isolde* in English to meet **Aylmer Buesst**, the conductor, and some of the cast. The lovers were a most unlikely couple, **Walter Widdop**, short and stout, **Eva Turner**, tall and stately, towering over him.

At one point Widdop forgot his words and lapsed into the original German. When I commented on this, he replied in broad Yorkshire: "Why aye, lad; ye can sing in Deutsch, in Yarkshire or in Dubble-Dutch, if ye like; all ye've got to do is make a great big 'ole in the middle of yer face and push through it."

Years later, Buesst and I were students together in Oxford at the introductory course for officers commissioned into the Intelligence Corps. I was surprised to find the man whom I had seen conducting with complete confidence a Wagner opera totally out of his depth; I was very happy to be able to help him on several occasions.

Professor Willibald Gurlitt

After graduating in 1933, I was awarded a post-graduate exchange studentship at the University of Freiburg-im-Breisgau. I intended to write a thesis for an MA on the literary tastes of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Hugo Wolf. To do this I joined the *Musikwissenschaftliches Seminar* under Professor Willibald Gurlitt, who specialised in Baroque music. He had had built in his Seminar an organ to the specifications of Michael Praetorius (1571-1621). Charles Sandford Terry's biography of J. S. Bach had recently appeared and the Professor asked me to write a paper on it for the Seminar. My own thesis was soon forgotten and I have remained a BA all my life.

During *Fasching*, the carnival preceding Lent, the Professor taught us what he called a *Chinesentusch* (a *Tusch* is a musical flourish played by a band to call for silence). It consisted of communal clapping, stamping on the floor, beating the chest, thumping the table and shouting, all carried out in a certain

rhythm. He drilled us to perfection, then took us on a round of pubs to perform.

I got to know the Lecturer in Russian, Alexander Kresling, who conducted until his death 40 years later a small Russian choir. He was looking for a light baritone to sing in a duet and offered me the part if I would learn enough Russian to read the text.

Fifteen years later I revisited Freiburg and called on the Professor and his wife. To my surprise, he handed me back my paper on Bach. I asked after Herr Kresling and was told that he lived in the same block of flats. His door was opened by a woman whom I recognised; a fellow student in the choir, she was now his wife. They took me to visit, also in the same block, my former partner in the duet, now, like myself, happily married. All this after fifteen years and a war!

Werner Grossmann

During my year in Freiburg, my closest friend was a colourful and adventurous medical student from Saxony, Werner Grossmann. We first met on a skiing course and subsequently made several ski tours together. During a summer break we took the train to Colmar and walked over the Vosges. In the train he told me that his last visit to France had been as a teenager, when he had slipped across the frontier without a passport, had got into trouble with the police and had been bailed out by a German consul.

In Colmar we stayed a night in a hotel and went next morning to look at the famous *Isenheimer Altar*, painted by Matthias Grünewald, the *Mathis der Maler* of Hindemith's opera. When we returned to the hotel to collect our rucksacks, Werner was arrested by two plainclothes detectives and not released until late in the afternoon. He had apparently failed to pay a fine in connection with his previous escapade.

It was dark when we reached the crest of the Vosges, hoping to find an inn for the night. Seeing a light in the window of a farm building, we peeped in and saw two bearded men sitting at a table being served by a hefty wench. We knocked on the door, were admitted, given seats and served with large bowls of bread and milk. Not until we had finished eating were we questioned. We realised that we were experiencing an ancient traditional form of hospitality.

Our hosts were responsible for a herd of 100 cows, each of which they knew by name, not only from its appearance, but from the sound of its bell. During four summer months they worked each day from 4 am till midnight, milking and making cheese. They regarded themselves neither as French nor as German, but as Alsatian. We had already noticed that most officials spoke German with each other, but insisted on speaking French with us. We had a good night's sleep on hay in a barn.

At Hartmannsweiler Kopf, where many French and Germans, killed in one of the fiercest battles of World War I, are remembered, I found myself unexpectedly estranged from Werner, divided by our feelings about the war.

Against his parents' wishes, Werner had joined the *Hitler Jugend*, seeing in National Socialism the one real hope for the future of the country. He had been particularly impressed by the Strasser brothers. Otto Strasser had been expelled from the party by Hitler, who accused him of "professing the cardinal sins of 'democracy and liberalism'". He had then "tried to form a truly 'socialist' movement, the Union of Revolutionary National Socialists" (1). After the "Blood Purge" of 30 June 1934, in which Gregor Strasser was executed without trial in a prison cell, Werner became disillusioned with the party, though he still professed many of its theories.

At his instigation, I bought two of the works most admired by the Nazis at that time, but did little more than dip into them.

My only love affair that year, an unrequited one, was with a stunningly beautiful blonde English girl, to whom I introduced Werner, realising that she conformed to his ideal of the Nordic type. When he told her that she might easily be taken for a girl from Mecklenburg, she replied, "Well, in fact, I'm a Portuguese Jewess". Her parents were both English, but her father had been born a Portuguese Jew.

After our year in Freiburg, we arranged to meet, once visiting vineyards in the Mosel valley, once in Hamburg, when we spent an evening in the fishing village of Finkenwärder, where we bought a smoked eel and shared it with a penknife on the bank of the Elbe. Then we danced in the village hall with two local girls.

In September 1937, I invited Werner to stay with us in Heswall and took him to Skye to stay for a week with the Macphersons of Crossal. On the first day I took him up Sgurr nan Gillean. Two days later he decided he would like

to do the classic walk from Elgol via Loch Coruisk to Sligachan, which involves a section known as "The Bad Step".

I drove him to Elgol and walked for the first mile or two with him along the sandy shore of Loch Scavaig. We arranged that he would phone me when he reached the Sligachan Hotel. Supper came and went without any phone call. Willy and I concluded that he must have stuck at the Bad Step and gone back. We set off for Elgol, calling in vain at the hotel. On a sharp bend we encountered a pony in the middle of the road. I avoided it, but we finished up in a ditch with the car on its side. We were unhurt, but were unable to lift the car back onto the road. We set off on foot and were lucky to find a pub, from which we phoned Sligachan to hear that Werner had arrived at 9.20. Some kind men at the bar volunteered to help us lift the car and all ended well. The rest of the week was wet and we did very little.

Willy thought Werner was using me to spy for the Nazis. I found it hard to believe. He was in no way responsible for my conversion to Nazism. The books he recommended were, I believe, intended to help me understand German history better. He never attended Nazi meetings and appeared to have no friends. I believe that, like Haase, he preferred to take the line of least resistance. My friendship posed no threat to him. I remember him with affection and gratitude. My one regret is that I have no idea what happened to him after 1939.

(1) William L. Shirer: *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, (Pan Books, 1964), p.186.

Sir Frederick Marquis, Lord Woolton

In 1934, while I was taking a Diploma in Education, I got to know Miss Elizabeth Parry, a Lecturer in Economics, who was living on the first floor of Pater's Huskisson Street house. She had offered to help Sir Frederick Marquis, a Liverpool business magnate and philanthropist, to run a number of courses for the unemployed at the David Lewis Club for working men.

Knowing that I was preaching National Socialism because of the way I had seen unemployment tackled in Germany, she asked if I would give up one afternoon a week to run a German class, to which I readily agreed.

The initial enthusiasm for these classes was such that on my first afternoon I had over fifty pupils of both sexes and all ages, plus one dog. There were not enough textbooks and some arrived late. The last man to

arrive puzzled me. When I asked him if he had ever done any German, he said, "Yes, but I only wanted to look in". "Well you might as well have a go," I replied, found him a chair and made him share a book with his neighbour. After a minute or two he slipped out. "My first failure," I thought. Over tea, Elizabeth asked me, "How did you enjoy your visit from Sir Frederick?" I looked puzzled. "Yes," she said, "he came out again very quickly and said, 'Well, I think that young man can look after himself all right'."

He kindly invited me to a dance one evening in his home in Woolton and teased me for thinking he was one of the unemployed. Later, as Lord Woolton, he became wartime Minister of Food and Chairman of the Conservative Party.

I continued teaching this class for four years, devoting to it my one free afternoon from The Leas. It consisted eventually of about a dozen men and women, some of whom were keen and made good progress; others came for the warmth and company. Some time after I had moved to Durham and had to give the class up, I met one of my ex-pupils, who told me he had a good job with a business firm and was responsible for their correspondence with Germany.

Heaton and Ophelia (née Gordon Bell) Cooper

Before accepting my proposal of marriage, Margo wisely introduced me to the Lakeland artist and climber, Heaton Cooper who, she believed, might help me take some much needed steps in my life.

Heaton joined Margo, Tony and me one weekend in Eskdale, We walked up to Mickledore and followed him up the Broad Stand to the summit of Scafell. The stories he told roused in me the hope that some power might be able to change someone as selfish as myself.

In June we stayed at Brackenclose, the Fell and Rock Climbing Club's hut in Wasdale, together with Heaton and his fiancée, the sculptress Ophelia Gordon Bell, and together climbed the Arrowhead Arête on Great Gable.

After further talk, Heaton passed on to me a book of letters to *The Times* on the need for moral and spiritual rearmament, edited by the Davis Cup tennis player "Bunny" Austin, and a leaflet by Harry Addison entitled *The Golden Age of Moral Re-Armament*. These finally dispelled whatever misconceptions I had held and passed on about the Oxford Group and its latest campaign.

In July Heaton invited me to take part in a weekend conference in Southport. By then I had started to read the New Testament again, to compare my life against Christ's absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, as he had explained them to me, to give my best to my work and to think about my classes. For a week I had written down the same thought, "Don't lose your temper with 4G", the worst form in the school in my opinion, but each day I did lose my temper.

Nothing would have induced me to go with my sense of failure to a teachers' conference, but this one was to be for businessmen; with them I felt secure. I set off by car after the worst row ever with 4G. I was in such a state that I skidded on the first difficult corner, crashed through a fence into a field and had to have the car towed away for repairs. However, thanks to a good train service, I arrived in time for the conference.

Heaton welcomed me and introduced me to his fellow Lakeland artist and friend, Bernard Eyre Walker. Together they looked after me over the weekend. A moment of enlightenment came after hearing a managing director tell what happened when he started to trust his employees instead of fighting against them. I compared this with my battles at school and had the thought, "Apologise to 4G for losing your temper and admit that, while you accuse them of being lazy, you are equally lazy in preparing your lessons".

I was afraid that this step would mark the end of my authority, perhaps of my career. I was genuinely surprised at the number of men who, knowing of my decision, told me they would be thinking of me next day, when – they clearly took it for granted – I would be putting my thought into action.

The sun was just rising as I walked to my digs from the night train. I still considered myself an agnostic but, as I was about to switch on my alarm clock, I thought, "If there is a God and He wants me up at that time, He will wake me".

My apology, which came remarkably easily and naturally, marked the start of a new relationship with my pupils. I felt carried forward by a force outside myself which I accepted as the God I had so long resisted.

I did not see Heaton again until, in 1947, Margo and I stayed with him and Ophelia in Grasmere on our way back from our honeymoon in Braemar. He showed us round the gallery, promising to paint a picture especially for us if there were nothing we particularly liked. We were honest, and a few months

later a splendid specially-commissioned watercolour of the Langdale Pikes arrived.

We also called on Bernard and Dorothy Eyre Walker in Elterwater; they gave us a beautiful framed watercolour of Blea Tarn with Wetherlam in the background.

Heaton and Ophelia stayed with us twice at White Cottage. On one occasion she had completed a bust of Tensing and was working on one of Brigadier Sir John Hunt, who was then Assistant Commandant of the Staff College. It was important that the bust in a large wooden crate should spend the night in a room of a certain temperature and we had decided that the best place would be my office at Sandhurst. I asked a passing cadet to help carry the crate into my office. I remember the look on his face when Ophelia remarked, "I expect John would like a drink" and poured water into the crate from a bottle labelled "Dram Bhui".

Three Generations of Vickers

The man whose story started me on the road of change at Southport was Farrar Vickers, Chairman of Benjamin R. Vickers & Sons Ltd of Leeds, founded in 1828, which formulates, manufactures and markets specialised lubricants for the textile and marine industries world-wide.

In 1946 his son John was a fellow passenger on the *Queen Mary* from New York to Southampton. That summer I joined the Travel Team at Caux which he had started. He later took over from his father the family firm.

In 1947 he married Ellie Bourdillon. Their elder daughter, Virginia ("Ginny") married Jim Wigan, whose parents I occasionally visited in Kingston when stationed in Bushey Park in 1945. Margo and I visited his widowed mother in Saffron Walden in 1978. Andrew and Eliane were closely involved in Jim and Ginny's wedding. They have lived with their children for many years at Tirley Garth, where we have enjoyed their hospitality. Jim has worked wonders in the gardens and Ginny has taken excellent photographs for Christmas cards.

The Vickers' younger daughter, Anne, looked after us when we were living in the Leans' home in Oxford in 1977. She had just got engaged to Chris Evans and is now one of the six Mrs Evans of Whitbourne whom we see on visits there.

Later that year we went to live for a time with Robin Evans in Cambridge. His son, Francis, had just won a scholarship to Radley. With parents of scholarship boys we were invited *in loco parentis* by the Warden to be briefed on their future and were delighted to be welcomed by Farrar Vickers' grandson, Peter, who was then Head of the "Social" to which Francis belonged. After graduating from Oxford, he joined the family firm in 1982. He was appointed Managing Director in 1995 and succeeded his father as Chairman in 2000.

Harry Addison

At the Southport conference Heaton had wisely arranged for me to share a room with Harry Addison, whose *Golden Age of Moral Re-Armament* I had recently read. He had taken firsts at Durham and Oxford Universities. His widowed mother lived with her sister in Sunderland and whenever he was there he made a point of visiting me in Durham. That first evening, after a frank talk, I decided to give up smoking until I had saved enough to pay an outstanding bill for an engagement ring for Margo. I have never smoked since.

Coming out of school at lunchtime, immediately after making my apology to 4G, I met a friend who asked me if I could recommend a speaker for the Durham Rotary Club lunch a few days later. After a moment's hesitation I said, "I will speak to you about moral rearmament". Fortunately, I had the sense to phone a trusted friend who, horrified at my audacity, suggested that I should ask to include two men with greater experience. These were Harry Addison and Alderman Will Locke, former Lord Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The lengthy and self-centred speech that I had prepared had to be drastically cut to allow them to deal with more important matters, but I was now well and truly launched on a new life and could never turn back.

On the outbreak of war, I wrote to Harry about my desire to proclaim myself a Conscientious Objector. He pointed out that, as a schoolmaster over 25, I was in a "reserved occupation" and was unlikely to be called up for some time. "Why try to jump your fences before you reach them?" This prompted me to change from pacifist into peacemaker.

During my first few months as an officer in the Intelligence Corps, we spent a great deal of time waiting for courses to begin. If not entitled to leave,

we benefited from an arrangement known as "Home Duty Stations". This amounted to indefinite leave without leave allowance.

I spent one such happy occasion in Sunderland with Harry, his mother and his Aunt Connie, who was an Air Raid Warden. They were both great North Country characters. I visited my colleagues in the Johnston School and other friends in the area.

Towards the end of the war, Harry served as a Sergeant in the Army Education Corps in Britain and Burma. In the summer of 1948 he spent a few days with us in White Cottage when he was in need of a break.

Mr, Mrs and Sydney Harland

During the first year of the war I agreed to take over from a young man being called up the Scoutmastership of a Durham City troop based on the Methodist Church. I had been an unenthusiastic Assistant Scoutmaster at The Leas, but I now saw in scouting an opportunity to contribute to the character training of boys, many of whom were underprivileged.

I was then asked by one of my pupils, Sydney Harland, whose father was a miner, to start a troop in Brandon Colliery. I agreed and appointed him Troop Leader. It was a short-sighted move on my part since, when I was called up, no one could be found to replace me.

Sydney's parents often gave me hospitality in their home. Mr Harland and his next-door neighbour took me one evening down their pit. I had already been down one pit with a mining engineer, but this visit to the coal face along an 18-inch seam, crawling on our stomachs and with throat and nostrils filled with coal dust when explosives were used, gave me a more vivid idea of the conditions miners face.

Back in Durham with Margo after the war, I invited to tea and the cinema one evening the Harlands and their neighbours. The wives accepted, saying that they would explain why they alone would come. On arrival, they told us that their husbands always took their teeth out to eat meals; that they would not permit in our home. I had noticed that in their home Mr Harland never sat down to a meal with me.

Mr and Mrs Frank Rushford

During the first year of the war, a friend of mine in London was writing weekly articles, entitled "Mr Sensible's Column" and aimed at promoting a much needed wartime community spirit. These were printed by local newspapers all over the country and I undertook to deliver a copy each week to Frank Rushford, Editor of *The Durham County Advertiser*.

We became good friends. He told me one week that the Vicar of my parish had objected to the column on the grounds that, though written in a Christian spirit, the name of Jesus was never mentioned. I had been attending the Methodist Church, but this challenged me to return to the Church in which I had been baptised and confirmed. I made friends with the Vicar, who came to realise that the strength of the column lay in its appeal to people of all faiths or of no faith. He later invited me, together with Mrs Alington, the wife of the Dean of the Cathedral, who had been Headmaster successively of Shrewsbury and of Eton, to speak at an open air service in the Market Place.

After the war, Frank and I renewed our friendship. One weekend he and his wife, who had been Mayor of Durham City, joined me on the overnight train to London to see Alan Thornhill's play, *The Forgotten Factor*, at the Westminster Theatre and to meet my fiancée.

Just after we were married, Frank invited us, together with another couple who had been married on the same day, to write him an article on married life, which he bravely published.

The Rushfords, together with our MP and his wife, were among the guests at a dinner party which our landlady, Mrs Campbell, joined us in giving before we left for Sandhurst.

The Thwaites and Jackson Families

Michael Thwaites was an Australian Rhodes Scholar in 1937 in Oxford, where he won the Newdigate Poetry Prize with Milton Blind (1) and later the King's Medal for Poetry. His Australian fiancée, Honor, joined him and they were married.

In 1939 he joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) and served throughout the war in trawlers and corvettes in the Atlantic and North Sea, finally commanding the corvette *Guillemot*, in which Nicholas Monsarrat had been First Lieutenant. Monsarrat, author of *The Cruel Sea*, had been my senior by one year at The Leas; his father had worked with Pater in the Royal Army Medical Corps in Serbia during World War I and later in Liverpool.

The Bigland family, who had a large house in Heswall, gave Michael, Honor and their son Peter a home, when Michael was based in Harwich. Their daughter, Penelope, was born and christened from their home.

Michael's best-known work is his epic poem *The Jervis Bay* (2).

After the war the family returned to Australia where, after three years lecturing in English at Melbourne University, Michael was invited to join the Australian Security Intelligence Organization. His book, *Truth Will Out*, tells how he supervised the defection of the KGB couple, the Petrovs, in 1954.

Penelope graduated in music at Melbourne University and became a concert pianist, specialising in the works of Percy Grainger.

Both Peter and Penelope travelled with *Anything to Declare?*, she as Director of Music, he playing the trumpet.

After Peter's marriage to Rosemary Phelps, they spent some time in Germany and visited us twice in Wuppertal. A graduate in Russian, he made an adventurous journey from Moscow to Beijing, where his brother was correspondent for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

In 1982, the centenary of Grainger's birth, Penelope gave a number of recitals around Britain. We were able to arrange one in our local arts centre, South Hill Park in Bracknell, where I was a District Councillor at the time.

Michael and Honor visited us on a number of occasions in Ascot, one being in November 1981, shortly before Penelope's wedding to Edward Jackson, a widowed lawyer with Inland Revenue and an authority on cricket. They came to visit us and I drove Michael and Honor to visit a Jackson relative.

The wedding in Hampstead was a colourful occasion. Will Reed and Kathleen Dodds, both professional musicians, played a remarkable piano duet, arranged by Will, one of them playing Grainger, the other wedding music, amazingly synchronised.

Penelope, now with a daughter and a son, keeps up her career as a concert pianist and is often heard on Radio 3.

In May 1995, she celebrated her father's 80th birthday at University House, Australian National University, by giving with him a concert of poetry and music, of which I am happy to have a cassette.

In November 1998, Penelope directed a two-day Percy Grainger Event in St John's, Smith Square. Our Scottish friends, Hazel Hastings and Penelope Ogilvy, stayed with us for the whole occasion. I joined them for the final concert. It concluded with three grand pianos, each with three players; at the very end, a curtain parted to include a small brass band.

Michael and Honor together achieved national fame in Australia with a bicentennial hymn which they wrote jointly and was sung in 1988 at the Sydney Opera House, at the opening of the new Parliament House in Canberra by the Queen and on other public occasions including Anzac Day in Westminster Abbey.

Four years later, Honor died unexpectedly of cancer. She would, I am sure, be proud of the way Michael has continued to live to the full.

At the time of the Grainger event, he was in England and stayed with us twice. On the first occasion we went together to hear Penelope give a piano recital at the prestigious Reform Club in Pall Mall. On the second occasion, he read aloud to us on the first evening some passages from his book, *Atlantic Odyssey* (3). We were hoping to hear more, but the very next morning, while out with me, he tripped on a traffic hump and broke his kneecap. I drove him to King's College Hospital, and Penelope arranged for him to be transferred to the Royal Free Hospital, near to her home. Margo and I took him his possessions next morning and found him remarkably cheerful. He made a quick recovery and his book was launched in Oxford in May 1999 by Robert O'Neill, Chichele Professor of the History of War at All Souls College.

As a family, we were delighted to welcome Michael, Edward, Penelope, Lucy and Matthew to the Thanksgiving service for Margo on May Day 1999.

That summer I saw the Jackson family giving their best at Caux. Edward gave an interesting lecture on Bernard Shaw.

At Christmas 1999, Michael sent me a poem which he had written about Honor and which had been published in *The Canberra Times*. Its last four lines describe exactly my own recent experiences:

But as I range these shared eventful years

sudden, unbidden, breaks a flow of tears,
not for the piercing grief of loss or pain
but joy that was, and may not be again.

- (1) Michael Thwaites, *Poems of War and Peace* (Cheshire, 1968), p. 56.
- (2) Op.cit., p. 32..
- (3) Michael Thwaites, *Atlantic Odyssey*, New Cherwell Press, 1999.

Pughs, Hoars and Daukes

During the war, Margo met at Tirley Garth Amy Pugh, whose husband Cecil, a Chaplain in the RAF, had lost his life when his ship, S.S. Anselm, taking a contingent of officers and men to Takoradi, had been torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine. When he heard that some of his men were trapped in the hold, he had insisted on being lowered to join them. He had been posthumously awarded the George Cross.

Amy's courage in facing her husband's death helped Margo through her pain over our broken engagement. Amy and her family lived for a time in Bridgnorth, through which we regularly drove on our journeys to and from the Wirral. Our favourite picnic spot was at the edge of the cemetery, where Amy is buried.

An article on Cecil Pugh appeared in *The Sunday Express*, written by Tim Carew, whom we met at Papplewick School as the father of one of Peter's contemporaries when he was head boy there.

Cecil and Amy's son Geoffrey was a close friend of Tony Bigland; they spent some time together in India. Geoffrey spent a weekend with us at White Cottage and went to a Sunday morning service at the Congregational Church in Camberley, where his father had once been Minister. We drove with him to see Cecil's name on the RAF War Memorial at Runnymede.

Geoffrey married Wendy Hoar, whose father, Stanley Hoar, I first met at the end of the war at SHAEF HQ in the I. G. Farben complex in Frankfurt. A senior official in the Bank of England, he had been sent out to help get Germany's banking system working again. His presence in civilian clothes led at first to embarrassing incidents with both Americans and Germans. He was one of the first civilians to be issued with a uniform and given the equivalent rank of Brigadier. He was seconded to the World Bank as Loan

Director and later as Director of Operations for Africa, Asia and Australasia. He and his wife Florence visited us at White Cottage.

I first remember the Pughs' daughter Fiona singing the part of the Turtle Dove in the Christmas musical *We Could Go In* at the Westminster Theatre. She married Geoffrey Daukes, whom I had first got to know on a weekend with my Pakistani friend Malik in Berlin. I was taken to visit Geoffrey in hospital, where he was recovering from a motor accident. On my return, I phoned his mother to give her the latest news of her son. About that time Geoffrey's nephew, Clendon Daukes, was in one of my elementary German classes at Sandhurst at which we aimed to prepare cadets for service in Germany.

Geoffrey and Fiona Daukes spent much time in India, Holland and Germany. Geoffrey visited us twice in Wuppertal. We first got to know them well when we came to West Dulwich. Since Geoffrey's tragically early death from cancer, we have often met Fiona at Annejet Campbell's.

Their daughter Jacqui was one of the young people who invited us to join them at Caux for "Intergenerational Dialogues". On my bedroom wall is a photo of an international birthday party in the Daukes' home in Croydon to which she invited us. She is a poet and has recently received a Waterston Award for excellence in her studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies.

The Lean Family

Garth Lean will be remembered as the man who encouraged Peter Howard to accept God in his life and as the official biographer of Frank Buchman.

I first met him in the summer of 1940 when he was leading an MRA weekend meeting in Sheffield. My thinking at that time was very confused. As a supporter of Chamberlain's policy of appeasement, I reacted against Churchill's rousing speeches. After Dunkirk, I thought not in terms of fighting on the beaches, but of how we could best adapt to Nazi occupation. I even went so far as to voice this at the meeting. Garth immediately dealt with me severely from the platform.

After the meeting, he sought me out, put an arm round my shoulder and, with great sensitivity, helped me to realise just how insensitive I had been to other people's feelings.

In 1942 I was sent on a short course to Long Melford in Suffolk. Hoping to see my friend Peter Howard, I motorcycled one evening to Hill Farm, Brent Eleigh. Peter was away, but I had a very happy time with Garth, who was staying there.

Garth married Margot Appleyard in 1946. In the summer of 1949 they stayed with us at White Cottage. The Leans borrowed from a friend a caravan, which they parked in the lane and which provided a home two summers running for their son Geoffrey and a retired Scottish schoolteacher, Chrissie Fotheringham, who looked after him.

In Margo's *The Touch of Magic*, an unpublished series of "nuggets" about our early days at White Cottage, she wrote:

"Geoffrey was just six months older than Andrew. His home was in London; in the country he could enjoy fresh air and freedom.

"Much of the time seemed to be spent washing, ironing, cooking and cleaning, which is inevitable with two small children, but there was freedom and space and laughter too.

"When the weather was fine, as it nearly always seemed to be, all meals were eaten in the garden. This became a habit that continued even if it rained, when mackintoshes were worn. The children ran about naked; there was a paddling pool and the garden hose was also a great joy, weather permitting.

"Geoffrey was small, wiry, active and very intelligent. He had discovered a wonderful game to play on grown-ups. When his will was crossed, he would fling himself on the ground and produce the most nerve-shattering screams while lashing out with his arms and legs. We had no idea how to cope with this.

"Not so Andrew! He was fascinated and made a very careful study of the whole proceeding. When he had mastered it, he decided to have a go. He was large, fat and rather placid compared to Geoffrey and not nearly so athletic. He cautiously lowered himself onto his tummy, rolled over onto his back with arms and legs sticking into the air and emitted strange shouts. We were so helpless with laughter that Geoffrey had to stop his performance to investigate. Somehow, Andrew's efforts took all the fun out of his and he never tried it again."

In the autumn of 1956 the Leans' daughter Mary came to stay with us, together with a young woman, Barbara Triggs, who was looking after her and who taught us colourful ways of celebrating Hallowe'en.

In the spring of 1977 we spent four weeks in the Leans' home in Oxford while Garth and Margot were in America. She was a qualified botanist and was especially keen that we should tend to her fine garden. We were far from expert gardeners, but at least nothing went seriously wrong during our stay.

Amongst the many good friends who helped us were Anne Vickers, who later married Chris Evans, Jean Turner, wife of the distinguished columnist, Graham Turner, and Angela Cook, who was nursing in the Radcliffe Hospital and who later married an American civil servant, Will Elliott.

The fact that we were in Oxford at that time led to my prostate trouble being effectively dealt with.

Over the years I have been much helped by Garth's books, especially *Good God It Works* (1), *Frank Buchman – A Life* (2) and *Cast Out Your Nets* (3). He co-operated with Sir Arnold Lunn to oppose the trends of the "Permissive '60s" in three timely booklets: *The New Morality*, *The Cult of Softness* and *Christian Counter-Attack*.

Garth and Margot are now dead, but Geoffrey and Mary follow in their parents' footsteps. Geoffrey is a prize-winning environmental correspondent, who has worked for *The Yorkshire Post*, *The Observer* and *The Independent* and has published an outstanding book (4).

For several years I have been privileged to be a proofreader for the magazine *For a Change*, edited by Mary. It is an inspiration to spend a morning in her office, reading her inspired writing and absorbing the co-operative atmosphere which she creates around her.

(1) Garth Lean, *Good God It Works – An experiment in faith*, (Blandford, 1974).

(2) Garth Lean, *Frank Buchman – A Life*, (Constable, 1985).

(3) Garth Lean, *Cast Out Your Nets – Sharing your faith with others*, (Grosvenor, 1990).

(4) Geoffrey Lean, *Rich World, Poor World*, (George Allen and Unwin, 1978).

Tony Sursham and his Family

Early in 1941 Signelman Stallybrass was undergoing training as an Operator (Wireless and Line) at the 3rd Signals Training Centre in Huddersfield.

A valiant team of ladies at Tirley Garth kept men and women in the Services in touch with friends wherever they were posted. With the address of Marine Sursham in barracks at the other end of the town, I called on him one evening. We both had the address of Philip and Audrey Gross, in whose home we met occasionally. Over the next months we also met at the MRA HQ in Hays Mews.

By 1942 I was an Intelligence Corps officer with HQ Eastern Command at Luton Hoo. Tony was going through a difficult time, having been discharged as unfit from the Royal Marines, much to the disappointment of his father, who had been an officer in the Coldstream Guards in World War I. One free morning I cycled over to see Tony, who was living with his parents in Markyate Cell, Hertfordshire, once a convent and later the home of a notorious highway-woman, whose story formed the plot of the film *The Wicked Lady*, played by Margaret Lockwood. On my arrival I saw Tony's teenage sister playing with a friend in the garden. On leaving, I found that the two girls had let my tyres down. I think that they had, with some justification, considered me rather pompous.

In the autumn of 1961, Margo and I returned from an assignment in Ghana rather sooner than had been expected. White Cottage was let under contract and we found ourselves temporarily homeless. Tony came to our rescue with the loan of a flat in 64 Pont Street, which he was not using.

During a year spent in Cambridge between 1977 and 1978 Tony became a close friend. By then he had become a distinguished architect, restoring churches and helping many of his friends with advice and plans. An outstanding artist, he has contributed drawings to two books on Cambridgeshire churches (1 and 2).

He lives in Godmanchester, across the River Ouse from Huntingdon. As a Councillor he has rescued from destruction and bought a medieval house in Earning Street and turned it into two flats, in the upper one of which he lives.

A plaque on the wall of "Plantagenet House" was unveiled by his MP, John Major. Later, Tony twice served as Mayor.

After returning from Cambridge to Ascot, I joined Tony twice for short walking holidays. We called one afternoon at Markyate Cell. The couple who looked after his parents were out. Both in their 90s, they were sitting in the library, unable to raise the energy to walk the 50 metres to the kitchen and back to make tea. Over tea, which we made, we reminisced. I told them how their daughter, Diana Campbell of Strachur, had let down my tyres. They were shocked till I explained to them that I thought I deserved it. Mr Sursham lived to celebrate his 100th birthday. At his funeral I met his daughter and we had a good laugh together about the tyres.

We frequently stayed with Tony in order to visit with him friends in the Cambridge area. He would choose country scenes where he and Margo could paint together, while I read aloud to them; sometimes we would leave her to paint while we went for a walk. On one occasion he drove us to Cardiff and back to stay with our friend Una Gray, stopping for lunch on the way with his niece, Fiona Cleeve, a former ski champion, in her beautiful old farmhouse near Raglan. She had invited her neighbour, Marilyn Anderson, to meet us. Together they looked after Margo with great sensitivity.

After we moved to West Dulwich, Tony would sometimes stay with us to join the Carson Road painting group and on one occasion helped them to mount an exhibition in All Saints Church.

In 1992, as part of our celebrations of Margo's 80th birthday, Tony joined us for a week's painting course at Inniemore Lodge, Carsaig, on the Isle of Mull.

Tony played a key part in Margo's two "Carson Road Art Ventures", bringing from St Albans Francis and Elizabeth Brown; he is a retired teacher, she a professional artist who is responsible for art exhibitions in the Abbey-Cathedral.

After Margo died in April 1999, it was unanimously decided to go ahead on Art Venture III", which she had planned for mid-June. In the absence of a professional, Tony, who was celebrating his 80th birthday, undertook to act as an instructor. We had three wonderful evenings and two happy days together in which Margo's buoyant spirit worked overtime.

In March 2000, Tony brought Fiona Cleeve's younger daughter, Susanna, to hear Peter give the Sam Wanamaker Lecture at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. Peter mistook her for an actress. A short time later, Tony drove me to stay a night with the Cleeve family. Susanna was at home and I met her father for the first time. Richard Cleeve had given up dairy farming to run from their farmhouse a successful business in the production of fodder for horses. Yet another family of good friends!

- (1) Carolyn Wright, *Exploring Cambridgeshire Churches* (Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust, 1991).
- (2) Eileen Clifford, *Cambridgeshire Epitaphs* (ibid., 1993)

Ivan and Maisie (née James) Poulton

I first met Ivan in March 1941 at Tirley Garth. The musical *Giant Otherfellow* was being rehearsed. He was playing the part of the young son of the leading couple and was celebrating his 17th birthday. I was an Acting Unpaid Lance-Corporal on leave. On account of the persistent slander that MRA was a pacifist organisation, we servicemen tended to wear uniform even when on leave. I was grateful to him for pointing out that failing to polish my boots while on leave was not in keeping with absolute standards.

Ivan's parents had been staunch supporters of the Oxford Group; his father, Edward, was a distinguished cartoonist who used his art to give messages of hope.

In the autumn of 1945 we met again in Höchst, a suburb of Frankfurt, serving under Neville Brazier-Creagh.

At our wedding, Neville was my best man and Ivan one of my groomsmen. He was given the important task of bringing from London flowers specially ordered for the bridesmaids.

Trained by Ray Nelson, Ivan ran the MRA Travel Office in London for some years. Repentance as an Englishman for his cavalier treatment of a Belfast colleague early in this time led him in retirement years to many links of friendship with Northern Ireland people.

Margo and I were delighted to take part in the engagement celebrations of Ivan and Maisie James, whom we had known as receptionist to our friend Jim Dyce, a distinguished Harley Street dentist.

Ivan and Maisie were with us at the party which Gunnvor gave us to celebrate our Ruby Wedding on Westwood Hill.

They spent some years in New Zealand and Australia and have since acted as hosts to visitors from those countries. We were glad that they brought to our home Australian friends Eric and Karin Parsons.

We are especially grateful that they have been able to help our Belfast friends George and Ruth Dallas in ways that Margo and I would love to have done had her health been stronger.

Wilsons, Woods and Richmonds

Throughout World War II the work of Moral Re-Armament in Britain was co-ordinated mainly by Roland ("Roly") Wilson, who was the first official Secretary of the Oxford Group. He was closely supported in this difficult task by Lawson Wood. Both men had the full backing of their parents, whom I met and regarded with great respect.

I first met Lawson on my first Army leave at Tirley Garth, when he helped me draft a letter to my MP on the value to the nation of the work undertaken by our full-time workers. After a heated debate in Parliament, they were all called up. Lawson was in the London Fire Service, Roly was Minister in a London church.

When the war ended, Lawson married Mary Wilson, Roly's sister, who had spent much of the war working as a land girl at Tirley Garth. Roly married Mary Richmond, who had been directing the MRA musicals, *Giant Otherfellow* and *Battle Together for Britain*, in which Lawson played a key role. As a scene-shifter, I learned much from Mary.

I also owe much to her parents, Admiral Sir Herbert and Lady (Elsa) Richmond. An outstanding naval historian and Master of Downing College, Cambridge, he had put at the disposal of MRA a room in the College Lodge. While based in Christ's College on an Intelligence course, I benefited from fellowship with others there each day before breakfast. As a solemn and somewhat troubled young man, I learned much from Elsa's down-to-earth humour. I was invited to join the Richmond family at a very amusing annual party at which they acted as hosts to their staff.

Some years ago, Mary Wood introduced me to her brother, John Wilson, who had been Director of Music at Charterhouse for many years. He

was making a collection of German hymns and wanted help with the German texts. He gave me lunch in Guildford Cathedral refectory and took me to his home in Onslow village. He later invited me to a recital in St Paul's Cathedral of some of the hymns he had edited.

When he died, I took our organist friend, Will Reed, who had been a close friend of his, to an excellent Memorial service in Charterhouse School Chapel.

The Wilsons' daughter, Margaret, married an Australian, Andrew Lancaster. Their eldest son, Christopher, a fine organist and 'cellist, was one of a number of young people who invited us in 1994 to join them in an "intergenerational dialogue" at Caux.

The Howard Family

Recommended for a commission while training in Huddersfield, I was told that to stay in the Royal Signals I would have to take evening courses in Maths and Science. I preferred to try for an infantry commission.

An excellent 4-week infantry course for those from other arms who had been selected for Officer Cadet Training Units was provided by the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry at Cowley Barracks. There I took part in at least one scheme with an outstanding soldier, John Howard, and learned much from his expertise. He had joined the Royal Artillery and had taken part in a Commando raid on Lofoten.

We spent the spring and early summer of 1941 at 165 Infantry OCTU at Dunbar. The weather was good and exercises on the Lammermoor Hills were a pleasure. Nights were seldom totally dark and we were often treated to fine displays of "Aurora borealis".

A friend had sent me a book by Peter Howard called *Innocent Men*. I had finished reading it and was sitting with it beside me in the Cadets' Club one Sunday afternoon when John Howard spotted it and asked in considerable excitement, "Where did you get that?" "Is the author a relative?" I asked. "Yes, he's my brother." "Well, you'd better read it."

His reaction to reading it was remarkably violent, but a few days later he asked me, "Where were you last night? I went to meet my brother Peter in Edinburgh and saw a marvellous play, *Giant Otherfellow*. Why don't you

come with me on Saturday and see it?" So John introduced me to Peter and his wife Doë, whom I had long admired from afar.

Peter had distinguished himself playing rugby football for England, winning a gold medal at the 1939 Winter Olympics with the British bobsleigh team and writing as one of London's most highly paid journalists in the Express newspapers. After meeting Moral Re-Armament, he had left Fleet Street to publish *Innocent Men*, telling the truth as he saw it. Doë, Doris Metaxa, had won the women's doubles at Wimbledon in 1932. They were to remain my life-long friends and to play a key part in some of the most difficult crises that Margo and I have had to face.

One long weekend, John and I travelled to London and saw another performance of *Giant Otherfellow* in the Wimbledon Theatre. There, John commented to a mutual friend, "There must be something about Moral Re-Armament to have made anything of such a bloody awful soldier as Bill".

Sadly, we never met again after we were commissioned, he in the Royal Sussex Regiment, I in the Intelligence Corps. He met a heroic death in the Battle of Arnhem (1).

Shortly after we moved into White Cottage, the Howards' elder son, Philip, came to us from an Eton OTC camp and travelled with us to join his parents in Caux. He endeared himself to the boys by playing wild games in the garden. A few years later, we went with the Howards' good friend Dilly Dyce to see Philip captaining the Black Watch team in an athletics match in Aldershot.

Our dream cottage proved an ideal home for both our boys until they reached their teens, but Margo never found it easy. When Peter and Doë paid us a surprise visit, she poured out her troubles. As they left, Peter said, "You have something very precious here; don't lose it".

That time also brought to light the many differences in our characters. My bad temper, which I thought I had left behind years ago, reared its ugly head. But, however much we quarrelled, we were always deeply in love and aware that we could not live without each other. I was so afraid that my temper would cause me to assault her that I used to rush out of the house and stay away until I had calmed down. On one occasion, when she locked me out of the house, I smashed a window with my fist, cut a blood vessel, and had to drive myself to the nearest hospital for first aid.

We had living with us about that time a good conformist couple, who took a very dim view of our rows. We should be ashamed of ourselves; it was just not done; they wouldn't have us at Sandhurst if they knew what we were really like.

One morning at Caux I walked out on Margo in a rage and spent some hours in a wood up the hillside. She was terrified that I might commit suicide and went to confide in Peter Howard. She found him in his room writing a play and at once burst into tears. He got up, opened a drawer, took out the largest handkerchief he could find, shook it out and offered it to her without a word. After she had explained what had happened, he invited us both to tea. With him and Doë we were able to talk through some of the deepest things in our hearts and to begin to find a new unity.

For Britain, 1963 was a year of much materialism and low morality. We had been told, "We've never had it so good". That year, a cabinet minister was forced to resign when it was discovered that he had been consorting with the same prostitute as a KGB agent. Another KGB agent was at the height of his influence in Church, Parliament and Palace. Peter Howard wrote that year, "At the very time when the spirit and moral passion of man, his knowledge of good and evil, must increase to meet the challenge of his strength and skill, there comes a world-wide onslaught on old virtues of faith, chastity, honour, patriotism and obedience" (2).

In that same year, I was given the choice between dissociating myself verbally from "the ruthless organisation of Moral Re-Armament" or leaving Sandhurst; there was to be nothing in writing. It was acknowledged that my work over the previous 15 years had been above reproach. I was not alone; others in supposedly key positions in the nation's life were warding off similar attacks.

With Peter Howard's encouragement, I sat tight until I received a directive laying down terms to which I should never have agreed. To my shame I surrendered, but withdrew my acceptance the next day. I had been ruled by my feeling of exhaustion under pressure, but have come to equate my cowardice with St. Peter's betrayal of Christ. Through this I learned a new compassion for those who allow themselves to be blackmailed into compromise. After a written statement explaining my position, which Peter had helped me write, had been accepted by the authorities, the matter was quietly dropped.

In my bedside New Testament I keep a birthday card, sent me by Peter and Doë at that time, in which he wrote, "Never forget that you are a permanent member of God's General Staff". It depicts a stained glass window of St Matthew in Freiburg Minster, a reminder of the year in which, having turned away from God, I allowed myself to be taken over by the Nazis.

Howard helped me to realise that I had roused opposition unnecessarily by behaving as though I were committed to proselytising for a particular form of faith rather than to living a quality of life. Zeal had to give way to a deeper and more revolutionary caring and I became truly grateful to those who had attacked me and exposed my deficiencies.

Two years later, I had sufficiently regained the confidence of my superiors to be recommended as the first lecturer to be sent to the École Militaire Spéciale St-Cyr-Coëtquidan on a four-week exchange with a French officer. I drove there by car via Southampton and Le Havre on the day of Peter Howard's funeral with a deep sense of gratitude for the way he had enriched my life.

In June 1962, Margo and I were among more than seventeen hundred guests invited to Lavenham Church and Hill Farm for the wedding of Anne Howard to Patrick Wolrige Gordon. Patrick, as MP for East Aberdeenshire, was among those undergoing attacks on account of his association with MRA, from which he emerged triumphant.

Anne writes, "Howard was to describe the wedding day as 'the happiest day of my life'. With infinite care he had prepared every detail – the food, entertainments for the children, where guests should sit, at what time each car should leave for the church, how the special trains from London should be met and, above all, how each person should be cared for individually" (3).

Doë has remained a good friend and has helped Margo on several occasions. On our many visits to Tony Sursham, he has usually driven us over to see her at Hill Farm or arranged to meet her for lunch in a restaurant.

- (1) Anne Wolrige Gordon, *Peter Howard – Life and Letters*, (Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), pp. 177-9.
- (2) Peter Howard, *Britain and the Beast* (Heinemann, 1963), p. 7.
- (3) Anne Wolrige Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

The Phelps Family

Among the new friends I made at the MRA HQ at the time of the Wimbledon production of *Giant Otherfellow* was Peter Phelps. Like several other full-time workers, he was called up in the London Fire Service. Later he helped to develop the work of MRA in the South of England, Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

Meals for those working in the offices at 4 Hays Mews were provided in the gracious setting of 12a Charles Street. Among the fine team of ladies hosting the meals were Monica Dennison-Smith and her mother. When the war ended, Peter married Monica. They lived for a time in Woodford, Essex, and later in Portsmouth with their two daughters, Veronica and Rosemary.

In March 1955 Rosemary and Veronica joined us with two ladies who were looking after them in their parents' absence at a picnic on Puttenham Common to celebrate my 44th birthday. I wore one of my presents, a dressing-gown made by Rita Sargent, who was then living with us, out of an old rug. The four children played games on the common.

Rosemary, like Andrew, was one of those who travelled the world in *Anything to Declare?* At Andrew's 21st birthday celebrations at Caux, she used him as a model in a fashion show, displaying and commenting on his varied collection of neckties. She married Peter Thwaites; they live with their two sons and a daughter in Mosman, New South Wales.

Veronica married Geoffrey Craig and spent some years with him in Japan. They now live in Wandsworth with their two sons.

Peter Phelps died a few years ago. Monica now has her own flat in Geoffrey and Veronica's home.

The Bourdillon Family

On Shotover Hill, a short walk up from Cowley Barracks, lived Bernard and Mary Bourdillon with their younger daughter, Dorothea. Their elder daughter, Elly, was in America and later married John Vickers. During my month at Cowley, they gave me, and sometimes my fellow aspiring officers, wonderful hospitality in their beautiful home.

Bernard had been a Balliol scholar and distinguished diplomat. I confided in him that bayonet practice had roused my old pacifist instincts. I responded at once to his suggestion that I compare it with the work of a surgeon using the scalpel to overcome evil.

After being commissioned in the Intelligence Corps, I spent some time at our base in Oxford. Our offices and accommodation were in Pembroke College, our mess in Oriel College. Dorothea took me to call on the editor of *The Oxford Mail*.

Dorothea married Ian Miller, with whom I had shared a room in Battersea, where he was curate to Basil Buckland at St Peter's, and who officiated with Alan Thornhill at our wedding. Sadly, they both died at a comparatively early age.

Many years later, I told Ginny Vickers and Anne Evans how greatly their two grandfathers, Farrer Vickers and Bernard Bourdillon, had helped me.

William Teulon Swan Stallybrass

"Sonners", as he was known to his friends, was Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, and later Vice-Chancellor of the University. His father's family, the Sonnenscheins, had been distinguished London publishers for many years, but such was the open hostility in World War I towards anyone with a German name that the family took the name of their mother, who was a Stallybrass and a distant cousin of ours.

My brother Andrew, as a student of New College, called on him. Climbing with the University Mountaineering Club, he was surprised to hear any sudden appearance of the sun being greeted with a united shout of "Stallybrass".

Sonners had been a keen cricketer in his early days. My brother Robin and I used to follow his successes as a bowler in club cricket as reported in *The Cricketer*. He used to lead an Oxford University team called "The Strollers" on a west country tour during the summer vacation. During the summer of 1946, Robin played for the Chudleigh CC, of which his father-in-law, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, was a patron, against The Strollers. To quote Robin, "Sonners was still alive then and directing operations from a deck-chair, save when he was asleep after his lunch-time port. This could be embarrassing. On one occasion the Strollers, including a sprinkling of Blues, had reached about 450 for 5 by about 5.30 with no sign of a declaration, the acting captain on the field being afraid to apply the closure without authorisation from Sonners".

I took advantage of being stationed at Cowley to introduce myself to Sonners, who invited me to dinner at High Table one evening. The Sergeant

in charge of us was sufficiently impressed by my having such a distinguished cousin as to back with our Company Commander my application for the evening out. Amid senior academics and a sprinkling of officers, I was quite the lowest form of life as an Acting Unpaid Lance-Corporal, but I enjoyed the occasion hugely.

Sadly, Sonners was stricken with blindness and was killed opening what he thought was the door into the corridor of a moving train.

Sciortinos and Nowlans

I first met Ian Sciortino at an MRA meeting in Oxford. He invited me to a weekend which he was arranging on an Oxfordshire farm belonging to Brigadier Peter Winsor. There I met another soldier who, like myself, had started the war as a pacifist, but had changed his views on meeting MRA.

In 1945-6 Ian and I worked together under Neville Brazier-Creagh in Höchst and became close friends.

In 1950 we invited him to be Peter's godfather. That year he married Sheena Stephens, who had worked during the war as a land-girl on Peter Howard's farm. They stayed from time to time with Ian's parents at Sunninghill, not far from White Cottage.

A visit which they paid us at that time nearly ended in Ian's death. He was stung in our garden by a wasp, not knowing that he was allergic to such stings. We had not yet registered with the National Health Service and did not have a regular doctor. After phoning two doctors who refused to respond to the emergency, I phoned a young Dr. Cule, who had recently set up practice in Camberley. He came at once, bringing with him the necessary medicaments. By that time, Ian was in a very bad way, fighting to breathe. Dr. Cule spent some considerable time with him before allowing him to be driven home. We were among his first patients and he became our faithful GP for many years.

Ian and Sheena then worked for some years in Italy and in Latin America and saw little of his godson, though they did come to his confirmation in Shrewsbury School Chapel.

Ian's father was Maltese and, encouraged by Archbishop Gonzi, he and Sheena spent twenty years in Malta until Ian's retirement in 1978. He has

since written a book about Malta, its history and significance in military strategy (1).

Meanwhile, we had established links with a younger generation. Working in Zimbabwe, our elder son, Andrew, met a young man, Denis Nowlan, who was training to be a Catholic priest. Together they travelled in Namibia. When Andrew married Eliane Maillefer in 1980 in Switzerland, he invited Denis to be his best man. When Denis gave up his training for the priesthood and married Joanna Sciortino, Andrew and Eliane took an active part in their wedding in Putney.

Joanna has made a comprehensive study of Dante and has taken a degree in religious studies. Margo and I once heard her give a fascinating lecture on Dante with Denis reading passages from *The Divine Comedy* in translation.

In July 1999 when I was staying with Peter and Annie in Massachusetts, Peter gave me some delightful photos of Denis, Joanna and their daughter Amica, taken on a visit there. These I sent on to the Sciortinos.

Denis has been working for years with the BBC on religious programmes. Margo and I regularly watched his Easter Sunday programme, when he introduces and translates the Pope's message, *Urbi et Orbi*.

On Easter Sunday 2000 I was delighted to watch on BBC1 a service from the Wiltshire village of Ramsbury, which Denis had directed. I was struck by the sense of community in the way parishioners took part in readings, prayers and music, and by the beauty of the filming of the Church, the village and the Kennet Valley countryside.

On May 8th 2000 I was privileged to attend a celebration of Ian and Sheena's Golden Wedding in Cullum Welch Court, Morden College, Blackheath, where they now live. Denis proposed his parents-in-laws' health and Amica played a recorder solo. HE Evarist Saliba, Malta's Ambassador to Greece, spoke of their work in Malta and a message from a number of Maltese citizens was read by a Maltese nun. I brought back a copy of Ian's recently published book, to which Mr Saliba has written the foreword.

(1) Ian Sciortino, *Malta – Island Fortress or Bridge of Peace* (New Cherwell Press, 2000).

David and Hilda Grimshaw

We servicemen – I cannot speak for the women – who spent spare time at Hays Mews always had plenty of work to do and not much time to talk. David Grimshaw was an exception. He made a point at meals of asking me about my work, as far as security would allow, and encouraging me to bring colleagues in for meals.

He had been classified unfit for military service, but after undergoing treatment went to an OCTU in India and served as Accounts Officer at the School of Artillery in Devlali.

In 1949 he married Hilda Collinson, who had served in the Woman's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) throughout the war. As Chief Officer, she was in charge of 1,000 "Wrens", working on the "Enigma" programme at Eastcote. When hostilities ended, she was posted to Donibristle on the Firth of Forth, where she organised a "Ideal Home Exhibition" to give those under her some preparation for their return to "Civvy Street".

I had met her brother, Stanley Collison, who was an officer in the Royal Tank Regiment, and we corresponded by post until he was killed in the fighting in Normandy. He had been transferred to a battalion of the Dorsets which, in an attack with insufficient air cover, had been overpowered by the Germans. He had been severely wounded and was taken prisoner together with his Company Commander, who persuaded the German orderlies to take Stanley to their dressing station, where an operation failed to save his life. An official report later stated, "This officer showed himself an outstanding leader and was a fine example to his men by his dash, determination and his complete disregard of his own safety".

At Christmas 1961, the Grimshaws were in charge of Tirley Garth and invited us to stay. We had returned from Ghana at short notice and had been unable to return to White Cottage, which we had let. It was just what we needed at that time. There were a number of youngsters whose parents were elsewhere, and we decided to stage *We Could Go In*, a Christmas play with music by the Scottish composer George Fraser.

The chief parts, the stubborn Ox and the Cow who could handle her husband, were brilliantly played by David and Hilda. Andrew played the Ass, Peter the Turtle Dove, Joanna Sciortino the Cat, Edward Peters the Dog, and Janet Nelson the Lamb. Basil Yates accompanied at the piano and I directed. We gave one performance to which we invited friends from around.

One summer David and Hilda with their son Stephen spent a day with us at the Bigland Hut on the Dee.

In 1967 they were invited to Australia, where they helped to promote *Anything to Declare?* and other MRA musicals and plays in Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney.

They now live in Alstonville, New South Wales, close to their son Stephen, who has a jewellery business, and his three sons, who are all doing well.

We have kept in touch by post. We met briefly when they visited Scotland and we were staying in Pencaitland with David and Penelope Ogilvy.

The Foss Family

Among the most colourful of my wartime friends were the Foss brothers. Pat was a regular officer in the Royal Air Force, Hannen a wartime officer in the Royal Artillery, Denis an officer in the Merchant Navy. Two splendid little wartime pamphlets were published: *Wisdom from the Desert* by Hannen, and *Wisdom from the Sea* by Denis.

As a Wing Commander, Pat gave me invaluable help one weekend when I was facing difficulties with my "boss", a fiery but basically sensitive Lt-Colonel. As Assistant Director of Organisation, Ferrying, Pat was responsible for organising some of Prime Minister Churchill's secret flights abroad.

In 1943, he was promoted Group Captain to pioneer the newly formed Air Transport Command. At the end of the war he was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE).

I met both Hannen and Denis occasionally, but got to know well Marjorie Mackay, who was to be Hannen's wife. She, her father Reg, a retired Edinburgh doctor, and her mother Ivy played the key parts in the musical *Giant Ootherfellow*, for which I worked as a scene shifter. Reg and Ivy acted very much as parents to us youngsters as well as in their parts on the stage. Reg amused me by introducing me to his friends as "one of our props".

While spending a leave working at the Howards' Hill Farm, I met for the first time Pat's wife-to-be, Margaret Ogilvie, working as a land-girl. Marjorie Mackay was also working there; we groomed a horse together one evening.

When the war ended, Pat retired from the RAF to work with MRA. Charles Burns, who was a permanent invalid and had been advised to move to a warmer climate, bought a single-engined Percival Proctor aircraft and persuaded Pat to fly him to South Africa, together with a man suffering from the effects of German imprisonment. Their remarkable experiences are told in Pat's autobiography, *Climbing Turns*.

From then on, Pat spent much time in Africa, working for a time with his friend, Alan Knight, who had commanded the Athi River Prison Camp for Mau Mau detainees. Pat persuaded the authorities that the camp should be used to train detainees to take responsibility in independent Kenya.

It was in Kenya that he got engaged to Margaret Ogilvie; they were married in Sussex in 1952 and soon had a son and a daughter. They continued to make frequent visits to Kenya.

When Pat and Margaret moved from London to Beaconsfield, we often drove over from Ascot to visit them, especially at the time of their daughter Phoebe's wedding to Chris Gill.

After they moved to Kilmington in Devon, we regularly stayed with them on a "West Country Round", which included Robin and Agnes in Oakhill, Somerset, and Una Gray in Cardiff. We would usually see something of Denis and Nancy and of Phoebe and her children. Pat would drive us to beauty spots and I would go for walks with him.

On one of our visits to Robin and Agnes, Robin took us to Lewiston Girls' School for their annual concert with Downside. We were surprised to meet Denis and Nancy Foss, whose granddaughter was, like Robin, singing in Haydn's *Nelson Mass*.

Since Pat's death, we have kept in touch with Margaret by phone. I occasionally see Phoebe, who works as a receptionist at the new MRA HQ in Greencoat Place.

The Buckland Family

While at Luton Hoo, I started spending the night before my free day at the MRA HQ in Hays Mews. Many of the "whole time" force had been called up and manpower was short. I made the mistake of going on the basis of "helping out" and looking to others to tell me what to do. Eventually one of my "gurus"

put a stop to it and it was at that point that I cycled to Markyate Cell to visit Tony Sursham.

Posted to GHQ Home Forces in London early in 1943, I had drifted into spending every spare moment at Hays Mews, working backstage on musical shows and spending hours in the kitchen sink, but making little use of the talents God had given me.

There came a point when accommodation for serving officers in London had become so scarce that we were encouraged to accept lodging allowance and make our own arrangements. My friends Basil Buckland, then Vicar of St Peter's, Battersea, and his wife Norah kindly arranged for me to stay in the garden annexe of Old Battersea House with three civilian bachelors, all active in their parish.

I wrote in a foreword to Basil's autobiography, "The ten months I spent there marked a turning point in my life. My efforts over the previous four years to live out my Christian faith ... had been largely joyless and humourless. My broken engagement had killed something in my heart" (1). In Basil and Norah I found true friends who never tried to control and who always encouraged me.

In the old days I had earned popularity with my fellow oarsmen by singing and reciting bawdy songs and poems. Now I started to use my talents by singing songs and writing light verse of a very different nature.

One of my friends, Alderman Tim Rignall, an active member of the Society of Boiler Makers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers, told me how he was helping to build at Dorman Long's steelworks a mysterious construction which turned out to be sections of the prefabricated "Mulberry" harbour to be towed to Normandy and anchored off the beaches. Michael Sitwell, who was killed on the crossing to Normandy while in charge of one of these sections, was godfather to the Bucklands' younger son Michael. I was privileged to be asked to take his place.

Our intelligence section had been formed to prepare for the invasion of Normandy and eventually became the G-2 Intelligence Division of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEP) under General Eisenhower.

Under Major (later Lt-Colonel) John Austin, whom I had known as a brilliant classical scholar at Shrewsbury and who had become an even more

brilliant Oxford Philosophy don, I was responsible with a small Allied team for producing an administrative handbook to Normandy, which he christened *Invade Mecum*.

When the Americans arrived in London, those selected to work in Intelligence were placed at first under us for training, as they knew little about France or the Germany Army. It was a difficult situation in which jealousy of our wealthy allies played a part, and we were often outranked by them. The atmosphere between my women secretaries, two British Privates and two American Corporals, was so hostile that I summoned the British women to my office. They admitted very shamefacedly that they were jealous of the American women's silk stockings. From then on, relations improved.

My section discovered my connection with the Oxford Group and any who seemed to be coming under my influence were asked, "Have you joined the Oojahs?" An attractive young American secretary was encouraged to try to entice me into an amorous relationship.

When work on *Invade Mecum* finished, the Bucklands kindly arranged a farewell party for us in the Vicarage. After an excellent supper came a musical evening to which several of the section contributed. I sang my own words to a well-known tune and they all backed me heartily in the chorus, "Have you joined the Oojahs?"

After the liberation of France, it became clear that we were to be stationed in Versailles and that I would be the first person connected with Moral Re-Armament to link up with those brave men and women who, at the risk of their lives, had fought in many different ways for freedom from Nazi domination. My flirtation with Nazism had bred in me an active dislike of the French. "Why me?" I argued. The reply came in the form of a promise, "You will learn to love France and the French as much as you have ever loved Germany and the Germans – and don't spare the shoe leather!" The last point was to prove relevant, as neither the Metro nor the buses were yet operating in Paris.

The ten months in Battersea had proved an ideal preparation for this next phase of my life. Over the next two years the Bucklands had me to stay in the Vicarage whenever I was on leave in London.

On the day after we got engaged for the second time, I took Margo to a civic service at St Peter's.

Our friendship with the Bucklands continued over the years. We visited them in Sandon and Longton in Staffordshire and in Wantage and Newbury in Berkshire. On one occasion we had Michael and his elder brother Peter to stay with us at White Cottage. Though considerably older, they got on well with Andrew and Peter.

Michael's wedding to an Austrian girl, Traude, took place in Longton, where Basil was then Vicar. We drove there with my former Battersea friends Tim and Lilian Rignall. I was able to help interpret for the bride's Austrian family.

Michael became Professor in the School of Information Management Systems of the University of California at Berkeley. Peter qualified as an engineer and settled in Vancouver, specialising in the repair of bridges.

Michael, usually accompanied by Traude, has made a point of visiting us whenever he has been in England, but my only links with Peter have been at the funerals of his father in Newbury and of his mother in Birmingham, where I got to know their much younger daughter Mary and her family.

Michael visited me in June 2000, when he was taking part in an Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative Conference in the British Library.

(1) Basil Buckland, *Take Heart*, (Linden Hall, 1987), pp. 7-8.

Colonel Robert Lee Snider

I first met "Bob" Snider in 1944. He had been an Olympic horseman and later trained an American Olympic team in equitation. A pilot in the army Air Corps, he was working in London on the successful deception plan to convince Hitler that the main invasion force would land in the Pas de Calais rather than in Normandy.

He invited me to join a party which he was flying one weekend to Bristol to take part in the official launching of a Moral Re-Armament booklet entitled *Battle Together for Britain*. We took off from Northolt on a Saturday afternoon, but were forced by bad weather to turn back. Bob decided to land at Greenham Common, where one of the party, Captain Michael Barrett, was stationed. Michael arranged for us to stay the night in Newbury with the Rev. Harold Taylor, Headmaster of Cheam Preparatory School, and his wife. Harold was deeply involved in preparing a Sunday sermon, but Michael

persuaded him to ask Bob to give an address, which went down well with the boys.

Bob and I next met in Versailles. One Sunday he invited my room-mate, Neville Brazier-Creagh, and me to fly with him to Tours on the Loire, where he had to make an official visit. On the way out we circled over some half-dozen of the famous "châteaux", while Neville, who had stayed in Tours before the war, commented on their history. While the Colonel did his business, Neville and I visited his former landlady, who gave him a great welcome. On our way back we flew directly over Chartres Cathedral.

One evening Bob Snider dropped into my office in the Petites Ecuries of the Palace and asked if I could arrange a meal for him. There was a British Mess in the town, patronised by British senior officers, which we younger men found much too formal; we preferred to walk across the gardens of the Palace to the American Mess in the Trianon. Americans ate early and I knew that their mess would be closed; my only option was to take him to the British one. As we walked in, he was so overcome by the "stuffiness" that he let out a "whoopee" at the top of his voice.

In the spring of 1946, I was sent on a special mission to Washington. For most of the time I stayed with Bob Snider and his wife. He flew a party one weekend to the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to see the Moral Re-Armament play *The Forgotten Factor*, which was being shown as part of the staff course. After the play, a student officer told some of us how angry he had been when the General had made attendance at the play compulsory, but how glad he now was to have seen it. On the way back we stayed a night at an air base in Cleveland, Ohio. A few days later, we saw the play again in Washington.

Mrs. Snider rightly took exception to the terrible steel-rimmed Army issue spectacles which I always wore and insisted on my buying a more becoming pair.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

My next task, after *Invade Mecum* was finished, was to collect, collate and distribute information about the underwater obstacles which were rapidly appearing on the Normandy beaches. I had scarcely started on this when I was called from our offices in Peter Robinson's in Oxford Street out to Bushey Park to brief the Chiefs of Staff. Lt-General Sir Frederick Morgan welcomed

me with a fatherly pat on the back and encouraged me not to be nervous. I was sent back to the office for further details and a staff car was ordered to collect me from Old Battersea House next morning. Little did my three companions know that under my pillow were a locked briefcase containing detailed plans of the Normandy beaches and a loaded revolver.

The conference was my first opportunity to see General Eisenhower at close quarters. I stood behind a Major-General, who waved from time to time a hand behind his back for me to hand him an appropriate photo or plan. I was deeply impressed by "Ike"'s "unflappability".

When SHAEF was disbanded in the autumn of 1945, our American colleagues gave us a party in the Frankfurt Officers' Mess, at which the General exhorted us to continue the co-operation which had been so effective in the war years and would be even more needed in time of peace.

When in Washington, the Sniders were expecting other guests, I moved out. A fellow officer in Germany, Major Patrick Wilson, had given me a letter of introduction to his parents, Field-Marshal Lord Maitland Wilson ("Jumbo"), head of the British Staff Mission in Washington, and Lady Wilson. They kindly invited me to stay for a few nights in their beautiful house on the banks of the Potomac. I had the privilege of being included in a dinner party with two of the outstanding Generals of the campaign in Europe, Omar Bradley of the 12th Army Group, to whom Tom Bigland had been General Montgomery's liaison officer, and Jack Devers of the 6th Army Group.

I was taken by Lady Wilson in place of the Field-Marshal, who had another engagement, to a cocktail party at the Eisenhowers', where the General received me, a very humble member of his former staff, with great charm.

Jean and Madeleine (née Fleury) Leininger

On my first free day in Versailles I took an Army bus into Paris, armed with three addresses given me in London of people with whom there had been no contact for the past four years. During the morning I covered many miles on foot, but failed to run to earth the first two.

The third address, that of a Mademoiselle Fleury, named a street which did not exist in Paris. I sat on a park bench, looking across the Seine to the Eiffel Tower in glorious autumn sunshine, ate my lunch pack ration and pondered. In a nearby post office I asked to consult a directory called *Didot-*

Bottin, which we had found useful in our work on *Invade Mecum* and from which I now discovered that the address I wanted was in the suburb of Chatou to the north-west of Paris.

By 6 pm, after a short train journey, I was standing on Mlle Fleury's doorstep and ringing the bell in vain. Just as my morale was at its lowest ebb, a passer-by directed me to a baker's shop, where "Mlle Fleury" introduced me to her young daughter, then took me home to supper with her husband, Jean Leininger, a teacher and distinguished mountaineer. We remained good friends until his death recently. Army orders prohibited accepting meals from the French, whose food supplies were very limited, but I salved my conscience on this and other occasions by contributing my pack ration to the meal. A walk of about 6 miles including a somewhat dicey crossing of a badly damaged bridge over the Seine saw me back in Versailles by midnight after one of the most fascinating days of my life.

Through the Leiningers I met:

Jacques, Madeleine, Claire and Claude Weiss

They were a brilliant intellectual family. Claire, who at that time was a student at the Sorbonne, later wrote in her book, *Freewoman*, "One day in November our door-bell rang, and there stood an English army captain ... Our preoccupations at that time were rather basic, and I looked longingly at his khaki haversack, hoping that it held some of those army rations which to us meant culinary paradise. My parents took him into the sitting-room, and he opened it up. Disappointment! Not a single bit of food – nothing but books, pamphlets, newspapers. But I have never been able to resist a printed page. And besides, after four years of isolation and lying propaganda, we were famished for anything from outside.

"At the end of three days I had read every word. And I had discovered practical patriotism. Several times I had found the phrase, 'As I am, so is my nation'. France would be what the French made of her; but the French would be no different from what I was prepared to become. If I wanted France to be honest, united, clean, there had to be a revolution in my own quality of life and my own motives. It was so simple."

From then on I enjoyed Madeleine's hospitality frequently and she arranged numerous meetings for me, including a weekend with the Schweisguth family on their country farm.

Robert and Diane de Watteville

The first of the three Paris addresses which I had been given was that of the Baron and Baronne de Watteville's beautiful home in Boulogne-Billancourt. I found it occupied by an unhappy lady whose husband was in prison for suspected collaboration with the Germans. She informed me that Robert and Diane, who had been the heart and soul of the pre-war Oxford Group in France, were in Alsace and encouraged me to call on their son-in-law in the Mallet family bank. This I had done before catching the train to Chatou. He had promised to pass my address to them when they returned to Paris.

Their only son had been killed in the early weeks of the war. Their courageous adventures and encounters with the German authorities in Alsace are brilliantly recounted in Diane's book, *Le Fil Conducteur* (1).

On their return to Paris they were unable to regain possession of their home for some time and had to live in a single-room flat with a kitchen shared with other occupants. By then there were a number of British and American servicemen with experience of Moral Re-Armament stationed in or near Paris. I was struck by the way in which Diane, who had been brought up to a life with servants, coped on her own, entertaining us with the greatest gaiety and never a word of complaint. Most on their hearts was how to include Germany in the rebuilding of Europe.

When I returned to Paris on demobilisation leave, it was Robert who met me at the station and escorted me to the family with whom I was to stay. Knowing that he had a weak heart, I had difficulty in dissuading him, the perfect gentleman, from carrying one of my bags. He died a few years later with the question of unity with Germany much on his heart.

In the spring of 1966 we had a family holiday in France and Germany and spent two nights in the Baronne's home, which was by then the French centre for Moral Re-Armament. Andrew and Peter were both fascinated by her stories of her war experiences.

In the mid '70s, Andrew lived in her home for a time and we drove from Germany to spend a weekend with them. Diane was grateful for his help in her beloved garden, but found it difficult to accept that he was not an expert; all Englishmen were great gardeners in her eyes.

(1) Diane de Watteville-Berckheim, *Le Fil Conducteur* (Alsatia, 1973).

Bill and Clara Jaeger and Angela Owbridge

While on a special mission to Washington in 1946, I was fortunate to be invited to the wedding of Bill and Clara Jaeger in Philadelphia. Bill had grown up in Stockport, where his widowed mother, Annie, ran a small millinery shop. After studying at Regent's Park Baptist College, he started to work with the Oxford Group in East London, eventually taking responsibility for a major campaign, in which his mother joined him after selling her shop.

Bill was one of a number of men who, with the backing of the Ministries of Labour, Defence and Foreign Affairs, had spent the war with Frank Buchman in America, joined by his mother, who eventually died there.

Clara had broken away from her Quaker background in Philadelphia when she became secretary to the radical novelist, Theodore Dreiser. With the help of Annie Jaeger, she had found a new purpose in life. This she has described in a fascinating autobiography (1). She later wrote Bill's story (2).

I had at one time helped a friend to write an article about Bill and Annie for a magazine.

In the '50s Margo and I happened to be on holiday with her father in Heswall, when *The Forgotten Factor* was being performed in the David Lewis Club in Liverpool, where I had once taught German to a class of unemployed local people. It was a time of much Communist activity in the docks and Bill was leading a team in support of the play. It was my only experience of working with him. His deep insight into all that was going on made a great impression on me.

Among University friends of 20 years earlier whom we invited to the play was a social scientist. As his secretary ushered us into his office, she placed a tray full of books on his desk. He reacted furiously at what he saw as MRA's interference in his concerns. Margo tried to change the subject, "Speaking as a housewife ...", but was told she was not qualified to speak for housewives as she had never studied their problems objectively. Before seeing us off, he boasted of his plans for another area of the City's life.

Bill asked me to translate the life story of a German ex-Communist. Each evening while the play was being performed, Maisie James, who was later to marry Ivan Poulton, typed at my dictation in a small backstage office. I will never forget the look of amazement on the face of the cricketer Dickie Dodds, who looked in and heard me declaim, "Faster, Comrade!"

A musical about the Jaegers entitled *Annie* ran for some time at the Westminster Theatre.

On two occasions when I was faced with problems, Bill gave me most helpful advice.

Early in 1976, we had rashly accepted a visit to South Africa from a couple whom we did not know well. Bill, who had recently returned from that country, invited us to their home in Knebworth to brief us. During a cold wintry drive, I started to feel increasingly uncomfortable and arrived for tea a sick man. Angela Owbridge, a recently widowed friend living in the same road, kindly took us to her home and called her doctor. I was taken by ambulance to the Lister Hospital in Stevenage. Angela recognised the crew as the same men who had taken her husband to the same hospital shortly before his death.

Margo was faced with a lone winter's night drive home, where she had to cancel our plans and prepare the house for friends to whom we had agreed to let it. Angela very kindly provided us both with a home from which Margo could visit me and where I could recuperate after a prostatectomy.

Over the years we have, from time to time, visited the Jaegers and Angela in Knebworth when staying with Tony Sursham in Godmanchester.

Angela has moved to a home where she can be cared for. Bill is confined to the house with diabetes, but is well looked after by Clara and ready to receive friends who benefit from his wide knowledge of world affairs.

In November 2000, Clara, in her 90s, courageously accepted an invitation from the Theodore Dreiser Society to fly to Philadelphia to one of their meetings in the University of Pennsylvania, while friends moved in to look after Bill.

(1) Clara Jaeger, *Philadelphia Rebel – The education of a bourgeoisie* (Grosvenor Books, 1988).

(2) Clara Jaeger, *Never to Lose my Vision – The Story of Bill Jaeger*, (Grosvenor Books, 1995).

H. W. (Bunny) and Phyllis (née Konstam) Austin

During my first term at Shrewsbury I watched the first XI play football against Repton. Their linesman was a handsome young man with a fine cap, which I learned later was a 2nd XI colour. A friend said, "That's Bunny Austin, the Junior Tennis Champion". I would never have believed that one day Bunny, his wife, the actress Phyllis Konstam, and their children Jenny and John, would be our friends. To me, useless at all ball games, Bunny was, in Salopian jargon, a "tweak", a VIP.

I first met him in 1946 in New York. By then he was a legend, a member of the victorious British team which won the Davis Cup four years running (1933-36), and perhaps the finest player never to have won the Men's Singles at Wimbledon.

He had been through the fire of persecution. During World War II, he and others from Britain had joined Frank Buchman in America, after consulting the Ministries of Labour, Defence and Foreign Affairs. Their work was considered to be of wartime importance for both countries. Despite serving in the American forces, they were denounced as "draft dodgers".

About 18 months previously I had read in a Sunday paper that one of these men had been discharged from the US Air Force as mentally unsound. It happened that I had met him the previous day, a Corporal serving, as I myself was, on the staff of SHAEF. Such was the poison propagated by certain sections of the press at that time.

By the early '60s, the Austins had settled in London. Phyllis Konstam was acting in plays by Peter Howard and Alan Thornhill at the Westminster Theatre. Bunny decided that the time had come to renew his membership of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, which he had lost through failure to pay his subscription while in America. His application was rejected on account of his association with Moral Re-Armament and he had to wait until 1984 to be restored to membership.

From my own experience in 1963, it is clear to me that exponents of the "permissive '60s" would naturally oppose the moral and spiritual values for which the Austins stood.

On one occasion Margo took Jenny and John to Henley Royal Regatta.

We were privileged to be invited to Jenny's wedding to John Bocock, a Canadian farmer. I was happy to meet again Phyllis's nephew, Major General Sir Philip Ward, whom I had known as Adjutant at Sandhurst and who was

later Commandant. We met him again some years later when he gave the address at the Thanksgiving Service for fellow Welsh Guardsman Academy Sergeant Major "Phil" Phillips. Philip Ward's son, as a Sandhurst cadet, attended a course of lectures which I gave on German history.

Phyllis died some years ago and Bunny settled in an old people's home in Coulsdon, Surrey. In September 1994 he fractured two vertebrae in a fall and was transferred to the nursing wing of the home. Encouraged by his physiotherapists, he was eventually able to take a few steps, but he spent most of his time in a recumbent position. His hands being largely incapacitated, he learned painfully to feed himself, but could no longer write. A devoted friend and neighbour visited him almost every day, read aloud to him and wrote letters for him. In his 90s, Bunny looked like a 70-year-old. To visit him was always a joy; his courage and cheerfulness were an inspiration. A welcome member of the All England Club, he was taken to Wimbledon by ambulance for special occasions.

Margo and I were privileged to be guests at his 90th birthday party. His 93-year-old sister, who had distinguished herself at Wimbledon in Mixed Doubles, his two children and three grandchildren were all there. Jenny, who had flown over from Canada with her daughter, showed us a video which the BBC had made for her from Movietone News films of the '30s. In addition to shots of Davis Cup matches, we saw Bunny as the first man to wear shorts on the Centre Court, and Suzanne Lenglen shocking Queen Mary by failing to wear stockings. The film ended with Bunny and Phyll's wedding and Jenny's christening.

During the 1998 championships, *The Daily Telegraph* paid tribute to Bunny as the authoritative voice of Wimbledon. *The Radio Times* printed the following letter from me, rectifying the old "pacifist" slur:

No fault in Austin's service

IN HIS DELIGHTFUL ARTICLE in your Wimbledon 98 supplement, Sir Peter Ustinov unwittingly repeated a 50-year-old slander: "Bunny Austin ... was a conscientious objector who supported Moral Rearmament".

My friend "Bunny" Austin was never a conscientious objector; he served in the US Army Air Force in the Second World War. I was one of several pacifists of my generation who changed our views

and served in the armed forces on committing ourselves to Moral Rearmament.

A few days later, I received a phone call from a man who had read my letter and whom I had not seen for nearly 60 years. Norman Walton informed me that I had been his form master at the Durham Johnston Grammar School when he arrived as a new boy in 1938. He remembered an apology which I had made to the form after meeting MRA.

On 2nd May 1999, Andrew drove his sister-in-law, Danielle Maillefer, and me to visit Bunny. She had flown from Gabon to be with us for Margo's funeral the previous day. She had stayed for a time with the Austins in Victoria Square and was eager to visit Bunny. We arrived in time to prevent a nurse wheeling him to a morning service. The Rev. Canon Martin Goodlad, Vicar of St Andrew's, Coulsdon, looked in on his way back. Bunny apologised for his absence, introduced us, and we had a moving talk about death. The Canon's sensitivity to us, who had just deprived him of one of his flock, left a deep impression on me.

Bunny died on 26th August 2000, his 94th birthday. There were excellent obituaries in the leading papers. The Thanksgiving Service at St Andrew's on 1st February was a triumph and was described by Sue Mott in the Saturday sports section of *The Daily Telegraph* next day. Canon Goodlad took the service and I reminded him of our previous meeting. Brian Boobyer, a former England rugby player, and Gordon Wise, a wartime Australian pilot, spoke well. Bunny's granddaughter, Rachel Bocock, read a poem by Bunny and a letter written to him by Mother Theresa.

Ray Nelson

Ray Nelson was a colourful character, described by Garth Lean as "the ebullient leader of a jazz band, with a penchant for railway timetables" (1). He also composed songs with jazzy rhythms and strong messages. I used to sing one, *A house with a home inside it*.

Elsewhere, Garth describes "an assembly where the audiences totalled 25,000 people. They had come in 21 special trains from all over Britain" (2). I can add that it was Ray who organised those trains. An expert in world travel, he established a Travel Office in Hays Mews.

In July 1946 I spent part of my demobilisation leave acting as Ray's Paris agent for those travelling from Britain to the first Caux Conference.

Communications had not fully recovered from German occupation and allied bombing. Except on the Simplon Orient Express, passengers had to make their way across Paris from one station to another. Our French friends rose to the occasion magnificently, providing a coach between stations, a sight-seeing tour on the way and a supper at the Gare de Lyon.

On certain days, when Ray expected larger parties, he would phone me to arrange for a sleeper to be attached to the night train to Switzerland. The official responsible for this had met the Oxford Group before the war and christened me "Monsieur d'Oxforr".

One large party included a film unit with much heavy equipment. Anticipating that they might have trouble with the French Customs, I travelled to Calais in my uniform, introduced myself to the Chief Customs Officer and explained the situation. He was most co-operative; he asked me to stand behind the counter with his officers, inform them which of the passengers belonged to the party I was expecting, and they would be waved straight through. Later, I discovered that, though I was entitled to wear my uniform on "demob" leave in Britain, I had been out of order wearing it abroad.

Ray and Margot Nelson's daughter, Janet, was born a few weeks before our Andrew. A letter arrived for Andrew from Janet, telling how good it was to be a baby and advising him to get as much sleep as possible, since he would probably find, later on in life, that he could never get as much sleep as he would like.

Helping the Nelsons at that time was Jean McBain, a friend who was specialising in looking after new-born infants. She joined us in Mother's home in Heswall, where Margo and Andrew had moved from Liverpool Maternity Hospital. Jean instilled some discipline into him; he had been spoiled by hospital nurses, who enjoyed playing with him in the night. Thanks to Jean, Andrew only once, when unwell, gave us a disturbed night. Tying a string between his cot and my big toe, I rocked him without getting out of bed.

Ray died shortly afterwards of Hodgkins Disease, aged only 40, but not before he had trained a Travel Team to take on his work. His last days were, according to Garth Lean, "a deep experience for all those who came in touch with him".

(1) Garth Lean, *Frank Buchman; a Life* (Constable, 1985), p. 156.

(2) Garth Lean, *Cast Out Your Nets* (Grosvenor, 1990), p. 127.

Philippe and Hélène Mottu

In February 1945, a number of us Allied servicemen, together with French friends, were privileged to hear in Paris Philippe and Hélène Mottu tell of their remarkable 8-month wartime journey out of neutral Switzerland. It was nearly nine years since I had first met Philippe in connection with the Wirths.

Through his work with the Swiss Foreign Office on post-war problems, Philippe had made friends with the German diplomat Adam von Trott zu Stolz. In April 1944 Frank Buchman had invited Philippe to America. Trott wanted Philippe to transmit to the USA news about the state of preparedness of the German Resistance movement and arranged travel papers for him and Hélène to fly from Stuttgart to Lisbon, whence a few days later they crossed the Atlantic by Clipper Service. In Washington Philippe had called on John Foster Dulles and Vice President Henry Wallace, who received him favourably, but official policy was against having anything to do with the German Resistance.

The Mottus had then discussed with Frank Buchman the possibility of acquiring the Palace-Hotel in Caux-sur-Montreux as a neutral centre where leaders of post-war Europe might meet in informal surroundings. While still in America, they had learned of Trott's arrest and brutal execution.

The Mottus and a number of their Swiss friends succeeded at great personal sacrifice in buying the derelict hotel and restoring it sufficiently for the first post-war international conference for Moral Re-Armament to open there in July 1946.

Philippe was President of the Swiss Foundation for Moral Re-Armament. Amongst a number of his books, *Caux de la Belle Epoque au Réarmement Moral* is outstanding. I have been privileged, with the help of friends, to translate two of his most important articles into English.

We have been happy over the years to have an equally warm friendship with Philippe's younger brother Daniel, who has also been President of the Foundation, and with his wife Monique. Both brothers and their wives have given most generous friendship for years to Andrew, who now has Swiss citizenship, and to Eliane.

The Evans Family of Whitbourne

Before moving on from Paris to Caux, I handed over my job as Ray Nelson's agent to another "demobbed" officer, Robin Evans. A Major in the Worcestershire Regiment, he had been awarded a Military Cross serving with the Green Howards in Tunisia. Among those to whom I introduced him was Claire Weiss, whom he later married.

On my 66th birthday, spent with Peter and Andrew in Brighton, we received an invitation from Robin to share his home in Cambridge for a time. Claire had died of cancer a year previously, after dictating to friends the final chapters of a book, *Le défi féminin* (1), intended to steer the feminist movement in a more creative direction; it was published after her death.

Robin and Claire had spent years together working to create the right relationships between the "developed" and "developing" countries on which the unity of the European Community, of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and of the Lomé Convention depends. Our presence enabled Robin to travel, while we acted *in loco parentis* to his son, Francis, who had just won a scholarship to Radley. Both our sons were enthusiastic and we accepted at once.

It was a very happy time, lasting nearly a year, during which we made many friends. Robin and I worked together on a preliminary translation of Claire's book (2).

During Francis's first term at Radley, we were invited in Robin's place by the Warden, Dennis Silk, to a meeting at which he explained to the parents of scholarship boys how their courses of study would develop over the next years. We were met on arrival by the Head of Francis's "Social", and the Warden made a point of meeting us after his talk. As an Old Salopian, who had always regarded Radley as a rival, I had to admit that it was an outstandingly good school.

A happy event in February 1991 was the marriage of Tony Bigland's widow, Yvonne, to Robin Evans, who chose his son Francis as his best man. I had the privilege of toasting the bride and bridegroom, being the only person who had known Robin's first wife and Yvonne's first husband before they did.

By then, Robin had moved from Cambridge to the family estate of Whitbourne in Herefordshire, where Yvonne was one of six Mrs. Evans among a family of three generations.

At that time we were visiting Margo's widowed brother Tom Bigland in the Wirral several times each year. Robin and Yvonne often had us to stop off for a night or two on our way there and back. Their home, Longlands Barn, in the conversion of which Tony Sursham had played a part, is one of the most beautiful places I know. We were glad to get to know the whole family. We had a particularly happy lunch with Edward and Erica, the senior members, shortly before he died.

In February 1997, Yvonne Evans brought Erica, the matriarch of the clan, to "Carson Road Art Venture I". Recently widowed and an outstanding artist herself, Erica was the life and soul of the venture. As she left, she said, "Your road is like our village". On her return she arranged a successful "Whitbourne Art Venture" on similar lines.

In August 1997, Robin and Yvonne invited me to two concerts of the Three Choirs Festival which, that year, was based in Hereford. An afternoon concert by the UK Youth Orchestra in the recently built Nimbus Concert Hall at Wynastone Leys on the banks of the Wye was preceded by a super picnic provided by Yvonne on the river bank. The next evening we went to a performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Hereford Cathedral.

In September 1999 Erica was unable to join "Art Venture II", but Yvonne brought another sister-in-law, Kristin, wife of Robin's youngest brother Pat and sister to our son Peter's godmother, Hazel Hastings.

At "Art Venture III" in June 1999, Yvonne and Tony Sursham volunteered to act as instructors in the absence of a professional.

In June 2000 Francis and Rachel (née Turner) Evans had a baby daughter, christened Alice Claire Madeleine after her French grandmother and great-grandmother, and bringing back for me happy memories of my time in Paris in the winter of 1944-5.

(1) Claire Evans-Weiss, *Le défi féminin* (Editions de Caux, 1977).

(2) Claire Evans, *Freewoman* (Becket, 1979).

Lady ("Maisie") Fletcher (née Cropper)

In the Autumn of 1946 Margo was one of a team of ladies cooking for Frank Buchman at 45 Berkeley Square. She was living at 48 Pont Street, home of Mrs Kerr and her daughter Norah. They had put most of the house at the

disposal of musicians who were taking part each evening in the presentation of Alan Thornhill's play *The Forgotten Factor* at the Westminster Theatre.

Margo was sharing a flat with Lady ("Maisie") Fletcher, daughter of a distinguished Westmorland family, widow of Sir Walter Fletcher, who had been knighted for his work in medical research. She was a great music lover and their home in Cambridge had been a centre of cultural activity. Their son, Professor Charles Fletcher, a Cambridge Rowing and Athletics Blue, was noted for his research into silicosis and his appearances in medical programmes on television and radio.

I had confided in Maisie about my love for Margo and she had once very naughtily, but unsuccessfully, tried to hurry things on by organising Margo and me into washing up together in her small kitchen; Margo had felt that I was not to be hurried.

I had been the cause of much unhappiness in the Bigland family and thought it only right to talk to Margo's father before proposing again. I phoned him from Durham and arranged to see him in Heswall on the first morning of the school Christmas holidays. The moment I had rung off, he phoned Margo in a great state of excitement, "Bill Stallybrass is coming to see me on Saturday". "What about?" she asked. "You, you fool!" (I had never mentioned her.) When I got through to Maisie to arrange to stay the weekend, she and Margo were both high on the news of my coming, and Maisie wickedly told Margo to listen in on another line to my security-conscious message, which started "Re Operation Lovebird ..."

By the time I arrived in Pont Street with a headache from an overheated train which had been four hours late, the whole household had already celebrated our engagement in my absence.

A well-meaning friend, who had recently got engaged in California, had stressed the importance of choosing the right background for a proposal of marriage. Our first engagement took place on a summer afternoon on the top of Hardknott Pass, looking down into Eskdale, the second in the same small kitchen which had failed to precipitate the event a few weeks earlier, to the accompaniment of a bell ringing in the flat upstairs. I had pressed the wrong button, the occupants were away and it continued to ring all weekend.

In August 1947, when I started to work at Sandhurst, I was expected to live for a time in the Officers' Mess. The Kerrs and Maisie Fletcher welcomed

us back to Pont Street and for the next few weeks I lived as a bachelor in the Mess, commuting to London whenever I could.

In the autumn we found rented accommodation for some months near Sandhurst, but after the birth of Andrew it proved impossible and once again, at Easter 1948, our Pont Street friends received us back until, in June, we moved into White Cottage.

Some years later we visited Maisie in her old family home, Ellergreen at Burneside near Kendal, where there was a family paper mill. Her widowed brother, James Cropper, was Lord Lieutenant of Westmorland and she took the place of his lady.

Members of the Bigland family had lived for many generations at Bigland Hall, Buckbarrow, on a hill above Ulverston. It was at that time owned by a Mrs Bigland, whose husband had lost his life in the war. She courageously tried unsuccessfully to keep it in the family. Mr Cropper had never visited the Hall and used Margo as an excuse to ask her to invite us; she was, of course, delighted to receive the Lord-Lieutenant.

While I was in Ghana, Maisie and her brother invited Margo and the boys to stay. They were thrilled to be driven to local events in a flag-flying car.

After her brother's death, Ellergreen was converted into two flats, of which she occupied a large one. We spent many happy holidays with her. She enjoyed being driven around by Margo, dropping us off to climb and picking us up again.

Maisie's younger sister, Margaret Cropper, was living at Hallhead Green at the bottom of the Ellergreen garden. She was a fine Lakeland poet and we would spend delightful evenings listening with fascination as she read with a rich Westmorland accent one of her longer poems. We treasure a volume of her poems given us by Maisie (1).

Margaret was looked after by Mary Armer, a younger down-to-earth countrywoman, who would walk with us over the fells, accompanied by Sheba, the Cropper family Labrador.

It was Mary who informed us of Maisie's death. Before the funeral we were discovered with Mary in the kitchen of Hallhead Green by Maisie's son Charles, who took us through to the drawing-room to meet the other guests. I

had never known him well and was grateful to be able to talk at length with him about his mother.

In 1974 Margo and I drove Margaret Cropper to Oldham and back for our son Peter's wedding.

Our last link with the family was when Margo and I lunched with Philippa, James Cropper's daughter-in-law, in her new home, Barbary Crag, shortly after the death of her husband Anthony.

It has been a great joy to me to have been in touch again, after about 20 years, with Philippa, who has kindly supplied me with details which I had forgotten.

(1) Margaret Cropper: *Collected Poems*, (Titus Wilson, Kendal, 1958).

Norah Kerr

After we moved to White Cottage, Norah Kerr, who had given us so much hospitality in Pont Street, became a regular visitor and one of our dearest friends. She had taught music and physical education very successfully in a girls' boarding school. Her father had been an engineer, pioneering railways in Portugal and other countries. Her mother had been a distinguished artist; we have two of her paintings hanging in our home.

During the war Norah had remained buried for many hours under rubble after a bomb explosion with a dead friend close beside her. She had suffered considerable mental stress and later, as a form of therapy, she undertook voluntarily to teach music to the children of some of her friends. She came to us once a week and taught the boys not only music, but also swimming in a pool which kind neighbours allowed us to use.

Alone with the boys while I was at work, Margo sometimes saw no one else except the milkman for days on end. She often felt lonely and bored and found it difficult to see any relevance in her life to the world outside. She then found an outlet in writing a series of colourful "nuggets" telling how she and the boys tackled their problems.

Norah was fascinated by them, suggested as a title *The Touch of Magic*, and wrote in a foreword to them:

"I experienced the 'magic' on each of my many visits ... and it has made all the difference to my life. It seemed to have three ingredients – beauty, simplicity and the fight for everyone's happiness ...

"In addition to the natural beauty of the surroundings was the appreciation of the more usually accepted good things of life and of culture – like music and art and reading, fun and games and sport and gardening, variety and the unexpected – above and beyond all these was the third ingredient, the fight for everyone's happiness, that held the basic secret. It was that the children had from the beginning of their conscious life grasped the truth that getting what you want or think you want does not necessarily mean happiness, and they had found the only thing that could really guarantee it.

"The result seems to me to be a secret applicable to every home, but going far beyond. It would be valid in boardroom, factory or parliament ..."

Norah often took our sons to concerts and, when they grew up, they took her. She contributed generously towards their education at boarding schools.

While we were in Ghana, Norah, who knew both sides of the family, kindly offered to co-ordinate arrangements for holidays, exeats and visits to the school. She herself, together with Dilly Dyce, wife of a leading Harley Street dentist, visited them at school on more than one occasion, as did Mother.

After watching them box at Papplewick, Norah wrote, "They both won their first bouts. Peter and his opponent had a very close match. In the semi-final he had another close one with a very good little fellow. Peter lost to him gallantly. The Head mentioned him among the good losers. Andrew won his first match and also lost his second. He was quite a bit knocked about in the latter, but took it well ... They both enjoy the boxing ... Peter is a terrific fighter and attacks like a fury. Andrew seems more wily. Andrew said that he has quite lost the sense of boredom he used to get with school and that he finds something new each day. I felt tremendously inspired by their fighting spirit and so grateful for all they give".

Norah's last years were spent in a nursing home in Queen's Gate Terrace, where we visited her frequently. Through her we got to know her niece, Ann

Parker, who invited me in October 1988 to give the address at the Thanksgiving Service in Holy Trinity, Sloane Square. I write about the Parkers later.

Norah left generous sums of money to Margo and me and to Andrew. These we used for our air fares to Pakistan and back the following May. Norah had taken a keen interest both in India and in Pakistan.

Dr Frank N. D. Buchman

I first met Frank Buchman in April 1946 when *The Forgotten Factor* was being shown at the Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Later that month, I was at a farewell party in New York at which he gave a key speech, *A Revolution Under the Cross* (1). The next day I was fortunate to have been booked by the Army to sail to Southampton with the force of 110 accompanying him, with several of whom I formed friendships during the voyage. Over the next months I saw him again in London, Belfast, Paris and Caux, but never for long enough to talk at length.

When I was planning to propose again to Margo, I felt it right to tell Frank; he was regarded as the father of the household and would be losing a cook. I made an appointment to see him at 45 Berkeley Square one Sunday evening when I was up from Durham. He looked at me quizzically. "Bill Stallybrass, Paris! Wasn't there something about a train?" He had touched on an incident of which I felt deeply ashamed.

One evening when my passengers were enjoying a relaxed supper with our French friends, I had slipped out to check that all was well. To my horror I discovered that our sleeper had been attached to an earlier train, which was about to leave; I had intended to check on it earlier, but had been too busy to bother. Asking the guard to hold the train, I rushed back and marshalled my passengers onto the platform just in time to see the tail lights of the train disappear. One of them happened to be a distinguished elderly Indian in poor health. The French authorities admitted their mistake, but there was no other sleeper available and my passengers had to content themselves with an additional second class coach.

With quiet humour and sympathy, Frank helped me to see that I would not have got away with it as an Army Staff Officer. Only when the point had been adequately covered did he ask, "And wasn't there something about a

girl?" It was that same evening that Maisie Fletcher had tried to hurry things on.

On demobilisation, I had been keen to work full time with MRA, as many of my friends in the services had decided to do. It took me some years to get over the feeling that I was a second class citizen. I was ambitious for a place within the movement and tried to model myself on others whom I saw giving leadership.

One morning at Caux the thought came to me, "Accept to be the warm-hearted, violent-tempered, red-headed little boy that is the real you". A friend with whom I shared the thought took me to tell Frank, who was in bed. "Write it up on the wall," he said, "in letters of gold!"

Some time later, Frank invited Margo and me to a party. He had hired a launch to provide lunch while sailing down the Thames to welcome the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh back from a Commonwealth tour in the royal yacht. We felt at first insecure in such a select party. I feel sure it was Frank's way of helping the "red-headed boy" to feel fully a part of his force.

I have already written about the row which Margo and I had at Caux. After the tea with Peter and Doë Howard, we started to walk along the terrace overlooking the lake to talk things over, when someone called, "Bill, Margo, come here!" It was Frank, sitting on a bench and enjoying the view. We sat down one each side of him and he said, "Isn't it peaceful here?" "It is now," said Margo. "Oh?" he queried. "Bill walked out on me this morning," said Margo. "Oh, you did, did you?" said he, and I wished the earth would open up and swallow me. "Well, that took spunk," he went on, "and next time she does it, you do it again." "I'm not going to listen to such subversive propaganda," said Margo and marched off. I followed her. It marked the beginning of a new unity. Instead of feeling guilty over walking out, we both saw it as a good way to gain perspective and, from then on, rows became rarer.

Looking back on this episode, I wondered why was it that the people who helped us were Frank and the Howards; we had many friends there whom we knew better. Why had we not turned to them? Was it because we felt they were too busy to bother with us, whereas Frank and the Howards were always available to people? About that time I received a calling, "Feed my sheep". To me, this meant aiming to be as available to others as they were, while not in any way trying to imitate them.

When Margo's brother Tony returned from a long spell in India and our boys had a holiday, we drove up to Berkeley Square to welcome him back. We chanced to meet Frank, who immediately said, "Come to dinner this evening, all of you". His guest of honour was a Cabinet Minister but, over drinks before dinner, Frank appeared to be concentrating on "those two little cadets from Sandhurst", asking the Colwell Brothers, three wonderful artists from California, to sing a special song for them.

At the formal dinner, at which we were served by charming young women, we were worried about how our sons would cope, especially Peter, who was at that time a messy little child. We need not have worried. We were seated well away from them where we could not control them and they behaved perfectly.

During our year and a half in Ghana, though continents apart, we were closer spiritually to Frank than ever. When our friend Nana Kwakyi Arhin XVII arrived at Caux, Frank had him to sit beside him on the platform. When the Nana succumbed to political pressure and turned against us, Frank wrote him a letter which he asked us to deliver personally. On reading it, the Nana at once apologised for his defection and dictated to us a reply.

When our friend Kofi Karkari was sent on a training course for Welfare Officers, Frank invited him to do the practical part of his course under the auspices of Moral Re-Armament in Europe. This was agreed to by the man acting as Head of State while the president was in Moscow, but was stopped on Nkrumah's return.

Frank asked us to have two Japanese to stay. The president of the Seinendan, a youth organisation of 4,300,000, spoke no English. Hideo Nakajima, who had been trained in the war as a human torpedo, acted as his interpreter. They were attending an international conference for youth leaders at Legon University. They visited my boss, the Commandant of the Military Academy and Training School (MATS), who was in hospital suffering from the after-effects of his treatment in Japanese prisoner of war camp; he was moved by the apology which they made him. We invited the Tolon Na, Speaker of the parliament, to a Japanese meal which they cooked for him. Hideo's account of how he had lost his home in the Kurile Islands to the Soviet Union, Andrew said, helped him to overcome his depression over losing many friends in a change of school.

We invited to a meal the Finance Minister of Surinam, another friend of Frank Buchman, who was with an official delegation in Accra. He was fascinated to be introduced to Ghanaians from the part of the country from which he believed his ancestors had been sent to South America as slaves.

At Christmas 1960, Peter's godmother, Hazel Hastings, and her husband Andy took both boys to Caux. Afterwards Frank wrote, "Andrew and Peter were a great addition to Caux. They ... created a real spirit around them. They had a slight mishap in the snow, but seemed to recover quickly and thoroughly enjoy themselves. They wrote me two letters that were classics!"

The news of Frank's death reached us during our last weeks together in Ghana. Our Chaplain, Kofi Asare, who had met an MRA force in the Congo, took a short service of remembrance in our bungalow, attended by a few close friends. We had come to look on him as a trusted friend. His going imposed a great sense of challenge to us both to continue to the best of our ability living and working in the spirit which he had encouraged.

(1) Frank N. D. Buchman: *Remaking the World*, (Blandford, 1961), pp.147-8.

Robert Taylor ("Bob") Bigland

My first recollection of my future father-in-law is of riding on the pillion of his motorcycle with Tom in the sidecar one Sunday exeat from The Leas.

He played "The Duke" in the first performances of *The Merchant of Venice* by Gilbert and Sullivan and gave Margo as "Nerissa" away to me as "Bassanio" at the end.

As a sculler, he won the Championship of the Dee for five successive years from 1909 to 1913 and reached the final of the Diamonds at Henley in 1913. He was in the Royal Chester Rowing Club IV which won the Grand Challenge Cup at Marlow Regatta in 1921.

In 1935 Tom Bigland played a big part in organising the first provincial Head of the River Race on the Dee at Chester. On that occasion, Bob Bigland, aged 52, stroking Royal Chester 2nd VIII and I, stroking Mersey 2nd VIII, battled against each other down the long straight to the finish.

As an Assistant Scoutmaster at The Leas, I remember him visiting our camp as Assistant County Commissioner, I saw very little of him during our

first engagement. My chief recollection is of going to early Communion with him and Margo, which seemed to build unity between us.

After the war he moved from the big house, which had provided accommodation for numerous friends and refugees, to a small bungalow across the road. It was with some trepidation that I approached him before proposing to Margo for the second time, knowing how much pain I had caused the family. I found "Pop", as I was soon to call him, on the lawn in front of his bungalow, breaking down an enormous packing case. It was one of a consignment used to import glider parts from America, which were being sold cheap; he had bought it for the wood. "Come on, Bill, help me with this," he said. It was just the way he might have welcomed one of his sons and put me immediately at my ease. It was, however, some time before I could find the right moment to raise the purpose of my visit, which he had known all along.

The winter of 1946-7 was one of the worst in living memory. Pop, who had had no hot water for weeks, persuaded himself that if he lit a very small fire in his kitchen grate, it might thaw things out. In the middle of the night there was a colossal explosion as the boiler burst and part of the side of the house fell down. Margo's old black poodle, Henry Esmond, whom Pop had inherited, had been in his basket under the kitchen table; he disappeared for the next few days.

There was only a fortnight to go until our wedding. The head of a local building firm, who had been a Scout in Tom Bigland's Troop, undertook to have the damage repaired in time. Twenty-four hours before the deadline, they were scrubbing the kitchen floor and moving the furniture back with the plaster still wet. Pop did everything to make the wedding a happy occasion for everyone.

The news that he could expect a fourth grandchild drew from him a long letter, heavily underlined, full of fatherly advice, and ending, "... and work her to the end, like a horse".

"Ga Biggie", as he was known to some of his seven grandchildren, was a great success as a grandfather, especially at Christmas, which he often spent with us at White Cottage. He would bring imaginative presents for the boys, such as a fort which he had made himself. One year he brought us an unplucked male pheasant. Andrew was enchanted with it and would carry it around with him under his arm. It was with difficulty that Margo could find the right moment to pluck and cook it.

Neither Margo nor I had had any experience as handywoman or handyman. Unable to afford professional help in the home, we had to learn from scratch. We did all our own redecorating and even succeeded, after an initial disaster, in repapering a ceiling. Visits from Pop tended at first to cause division. He would go round the house pointing out umpteen jobs that needed doing, sometimes adding, "I told you that last time I was here". I would go into the garden and dig, my usual way of working off my anger. We soon found a simple answer. We would keep a list of jobs and when Pop arrived we would ask him to help. On that basis, we became a good team and enjoyed each other's company. One year he gave Margo a scythe as a birthday present and spent many happy hours cutting down bracken.

Pop's housekeeper, Fanny Cottrell, was one of our dearest friends. Two days after we moved into White Cottage, Pop drove her to us and left her to stay for a week, during which she gave us invaluable help.

On one of her many visits to us we had one of our worst rows. Pop was to spend a weekend with us after Marlow Regatta before going on to Henley. After lunch on the Saturday we all drove over to Marlow. The cost of tickets into the enclosure was an extravagance I was not prepared to accept, but Margo was determined to get Pop to pay for us all. I was furious and started walking home without saying a word to anyone. She was scared stiff by my disappearance, but managed to keep up some sort of pretence in front of her father. Driving home, she stopped and took me aboard in stony silence.

The incident left a deep soreness in us both and it was some years before we were able to face it honestly together. She then realised the hurt to my pride when she turned to her family for what I could not give her, and I saw how difficult my pride made things for her.

The Biglands are a powerful clan; I jokingly called myself "Founder-President of the Society for the Protection of Spouses of Biglands". On one occasion when we had arranged to pick up Ernest in our car, Pop said, "You'll have to let Ernest drive; he always does". That was one time when he didn't.

Pop enjoyed his visits to Sandhurst, especially the services in the Royal Military Memorial Chapel on Sundays. Sometimes there would be a Church Parade before and a cocktail party after the service. We on the staff had special places near the altar. With the Academy Band and the organ going full blast, he used to open his mouth and let fly, to the astonishment of those

sitting near us. He also enjoyed meeting officers of the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment, who spotted his regimental tie.

We often spent Easter holidays with Ga Biggie in his bungalow, well looked after by Fanny. The boys would enjoy exploring the Dales and climbing in the old quarry.

Henley Royal Regatta was always a time for family gatherings. Pop would book a room for himself in the Leander Club, to membership of which he and all three of his sons had been elected. We would often take guests from Sandhurst to join the family. Sometimes we would take the boys and an overseas cadet or two to the fireworks on the last night.

Best of all were summer holidays in the Bigland Hut on the Welsh bank of the Dee. It was situated about ten miles upstream from Chester in Trevalyn Meadows on land belonging to the Goodwins of Almere Ferry Farm.

The hut was a wooden construction, mounted on stilts to guard against flooding. It was entered by a covered verandah, leading into two rooms. The first contained a couch, a calor gas cooker and an open fireplace for logs; the second was divided into a double bedroom and two double bunkrooms. At the end of the rough garden was a shed containing a chemical closet. Drinking water had to be fetched from the farm, a quarter of a mile away.

Underneath the hut boats were stored. In our time these consisted of a dinghy, a Canadian canoe and a magnificent double sculling pleasure boat, in which four generations of Biglands were taught to row. Built by Searl Brothers of Putney and Oxford in 1854, she had won 14 prizes or medals for her design at exhibitions in London, Paris, Brussels and elsewhere. She is now housed in the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum.

Ga Biggie would come over to join us for longer or shorter periods. These were very happy times on what was his own ground. He helped to make the river and boats as much a part of his grandsons' lives as they had been of his own children's. He laid down strict safety rules to which we always adhered. No child was allowed in a boat without an adult until he or she had passed the test of swimming across the river and back fully clothed. Until then we spent much of the day with them in one of the boats. The day when both boys passed their test was a great relief to us parents, who could then relax.

There was always work to be done, repainting the hut, mowing the grass, clipping the privet hedges, collecting and chopping driftwood from the river for the fire. One year we joined Ga Biggie and Tom in fixing new wooden steps down to the river. On two occasions Ga Biggie recruited us to help cut down trees. The first was a poplar on the cop just outside the hut which came dangerously near to falling on the roof. With Old Ned from the next hut as the anchor man, we all heaved on a rope to steer it into the meadow as it fell. The rope broke and we all shot backwards, collapsing in a heap on top of Ned.

When Ga Biggie cut down another poplar growing on the bank, we spent an hour bringing it down into the river with a rope attached to his motor boat. At one point a cleat broke and Peter, who was holding the rope tight, had his hand badly squeezed. I lost a pair of glasses in the river, which were never recovered.

Early in 1962, Pop was taken ill with shingles, from which he never fully recovered. Margo found it difficult, as his new housekeeper did not want her in the house and she had to stay in a hotel and sit with him between meals. At the end of her first two-day visit, he burst into tears and said, "There's nothing like having your own to look after you when you're ill". She decided then that she must visit him regularly as long as he needed her. The housekeeper relented to the point of giving her meals, and a friend who lived near gave her a bed. He was soon well on the way to partial recovery.

During the Easter holidays of 1962, I arranged to pick him up and bring him over to the hut for a day. On my arrival, he suggested that I should drive him in his car, which had been lying idle in the garage. As soon as we reached a narrow lane off the main road, he said, "Just let me see if I can still drive. It's perfectly safe, there's no traffic about". I knew that he was not safe, having lost the sight of one eye, but I gave in. At the first bend we met a farm lorry and he drove into a grassy bank to avoid it. No harm was done and he had learned his lesson.

The day at the hut was the happiest and most peaceful we had ever had with him. He said to us, "You know, I was becoming a drug addict". We knew that he had been sending for the doctor at all hours for pain-killing injections. Now he could rejoice in his new-found health. This was the last time we saw him.

That August his son Ernest arranged a fortnight's shoot in Scotland, invited him for the first week and arranged for a chauffeur-driven car to take

him home. They stopped for a night in Stirling, where his grandson John met him on his way for the second week. Next morning Pop failed to turn up for breakfast and John found him dead in bed.

Dr William L. Reed

One of the occupants of 48 Pont Street was Will Reed, a Doctor of Music, who had composed a considerable amount of music for Moral Re-Armament over the years.

It was Will who answered the door when I arrived to propose to Margo. He had been playing Grieg's Lyric Pieces to her to calm her nerves while they waited for me. He told me that I was to share a room with him, that Margo had supper ready for me and that he expected to hear something interesting when I came down. This overruled my desire to postpone proposing until the next day.

Norah and Maisie arranged an engagement party for us one weekend for those unable to come to our wedding. Will had composed for the occasion his *Suite for Viola and Piano, Op.41*. He and the leading viola of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Stanley Wootton, gave it its first performance. Entitled *The Top Flat*, its movements are named after its occupants: 1. Air (Maisie); 2. Serenade (Rea) – an American soprano singer; 3. Festivities (Margo). The lively third movement contains a somewhat solemn subsidiary theme which caused the audience to look at me.

Will agreed to be organist at our wedding. I asked him to play for me while waiting for the bride the triumphant *Choral Prelude on Now thank we all our God* by Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1879-1933), a piano version of which my piano teacher Norman Suckling used to play.

For our Ruby wedding in 1987 my sister-in-law Gunnvor, Oliver's widow, gave us a superb lunch party, at which Will played Grieg duets with Alan Morgan, Director of Music of Dulwich College. Will presented us with a cassette recording of *The Top Flat* by Joy Watson (viola) and John Lenehan (piano).

The BBC celebrated Will's 80th birthday in 1990 with a performance by the York Trio of his Trio Op.27. I managed to record it on the back of *The Top Flat*. By then, Will was living in Morden College, a retirement home close to Blackheath Common. Penelope Thwaites gave a piano recital in his honour in Blackheath Concert Hall.

Our neighbour John Cook had given us a copy he had made of Pissarro's painting of Dulwich College, to hang which we had no space. With his approval we gave it to Will, an Old Alleynian, as an 80th birthday present.

In June 1999 when Peter and Annie invited me to Massachusetts, I took with me the cassette of *The Top Flat* and played it one evening to an appreciative audience of friends who had loved Margo, including Dan Warner, Professor of Musical Composition at Amherst College.

In November 2000 Brian Kay, in his "Sunday Morning", included Will's Trio to celebrate his 90th birthday.

Alan, Barbara (née van Dyke) and Kitty Thornhill

I first met Alan at the Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, when his play *The Forgotten Factor* was being shown as part of the course. A former Chaplain of Hertford College, Oxford, author of many books and plays, a man of many gifts who had built friendships all over the world, he was to become one of our dearest friends.

The day after our engagement, Margo and I went to an evening civic service in St Peter's, Battersea, at which Alan was preaching. He had recently become engaged to Barbara van Dyke, a spirited American university graduate. That morning they had had their first row and Alan was so depressed that he could find nothing to preach about until Barbara persuaded him to liken their unhappy experience to the poverty of the first Christmas. We were so moved by what he said that we asked him to marry us.

With the blessing of both our families we were married in March 1947 in Heswall Parish Church by Alan. He spoke very simply about God's perfect timing, which did much to heal sore feelings about the past. He also said to us, "Expect nothing but what God chooses to give and life will be a glorious adventure".

For our honeymoon Margo's cousins, Dolly and Gladdy Hannay, lent us a cottage in Braemar. We were surprised one day to receive a phone call from Alan Thornhill. The Hannay sisters had offered him and Barbara the use of the cottage for their honeymoon and he wanted to know what it was like. We assured him that it was perfect, but warned him against going to church unless they were very well wrapped up. At the Easter morning service we had sat on our hands to keep them warm.

They were our first guests in our Durham home on their way back from their honeymoon. Alan described how, on the long train journey north, they had got out at every stop, started walking in different directions, then turned back and embraced each other as if they were long lost lovers.

Years later their daughter Susan and our elder son Andrew took part in a world tour with the musical *Anything to Declare?* Alan and Barbara returned from travelling with the show in Australia, concerned that some of the cast felt that their parents did not fully understand what they were doing. We invited them to stay with us in Ascot and together gave a lunch party for certain selected parents. We showed slides of the tour. Parents started to read aloud with pride passages from their children's letters. A new understanding was born.

For some years Alan and Barbara shared with his sister Kitty a house in Rotherfield which had been left to them by relatives. It was close to the church of which his father had been Vicar. We often stayed with them there and were amazed at the way Kitty and Barbara, totally different in character and equally dear to us, co-operated in the kitchen.

They were among those who had us to stay during the time already referred to when we had let our house and I was recovering from a proctectomy. During three relaxed and happy weeks, on a walk across Ashdown Forest, a retired Naval Commander and I played "Pooh Sticks" on A. A. Milne's bridge.

We were delighted to meet some of those about whom Alan later wrote in *Best of Friends*, including the three Muggeridges (1). We drove to Robertsbridge to visit Malcolm and Kitty. Alan introduced me to Malcolm's elder brother Douglas in his second-hand bookshop in Rotherfield. I was privileged to type some of Alan and Malcolm's play, *Sentenced to Life* (2), and later we were invited to the first night at the Westminster Theatre.

We had interesting talks with their gardener, Peter Warnet (3). He took the Thornhills and the Muggeridges to watch badgers one evening. He had built up a fine collection of colour slides of the wild life within a three-mile radius of his home, which he showed locally. The Thornhills persuaded him with difficulty to drive with them to London to show his slides to Collins, the publishers. Out of this emerged eventually a splendidly illustrated volume, *Three Mile Man* (4).

A very happy occasion was the wedding of Susan Thornhill to Rob Corcoran, to which as a family we were all invited. Margo and I were later privileged to spend a week in their home in Richmond, Virginia, where they were pioneering new moves in inter-racial relationships, which have since developed into the international movement "Hope in the Cities".

Shortly after the Thornhills arrived in Rotherfield, a vacancy occurred in the small neighbouring parish of Mark Cross. It was eventually agreed that Alan should take the services in the beautiful little Church without carrying any administrative responsibility for the parish. We greatly enjoyed the services there.

Generous parishioners with a large estate had what had once been a coach house converted into two separate maisonettes with a connecting door, one for Alan and Barbara, one for Kitty, thus enabling them to live in the parish.

After Alan's death, Barbara joined Susan and Rob in Richmond, where she died of cancer. We were invited to a ceremony at which her ashes were interred in the Thornhill family grave in Rotherfield. Kitty now lives in a retirement home in Rotherfield, where she was brought up.

A few months after Margo's death, I was re-reading *Best of Friends*. I came to the final paragraphs feeling, as Alan had felt, that there was not much more left for me in this world:

"... Jesus ... said ..., 'are you not ready for the next step?' 'Yes, I am ready.' And then very clearly he said, 'You are ready but I want you to do various things first. There are more lessons to learn, discoveries to be made, people who need you.;

"And then he made his promise. 'You will have time to finish all that I have in mind for you – whether it be six days, six weeks, six months, or even six years. You will be given time and strength and the help of many. So now roll over and go to sleep. Rest in the certain knowledge that you are my friend.'"(5)

This helped me totally to accept my new calling as a widower.

(1) Alan Thornhill: *Best of Friends*, (Marshall Pickering, 1986), pp.10-27.

(2) Ibid, pp.17-20.

(3) Ibid, pp.183-190.

(4) Alan Thornhill: *Three Mile Man*, (Collins, 1980).

Surya Sena and Nelun Devi

Among the musicians staying at 48 Pont Street were a Sinhalese couple, Surya Sena and his wife Nelun Devi, who were recording Sinhalese folk music with His Master's Voice.

At the party to celebrate our engagement he sang to a Sinhalese tune a verse beginning "Bill and his Margo".

One Saturday evening, when I was up from Durham for the weekend, I invited him to walk back from the Westminster Theatre with Margo and me. She reacted; she felt, rightly, that our precious times alone together were all too rare. The next morning, Surya, who had sensed the atmosphere, asked me, "Would you have invited me if I had been white?" I had to admit that I would not. It was a valuable lesson in racial discrimination.

A friend brought them down to Sandhurst one evening to give a recital of their music to an appreciative audience including a number of Sri Lankan cadets.

On one occasion, Nelun took a three-day break from London to stay with us at White Cottage.

A friend who knew of my link with MRA asked me one day if I knew Surya Sena. He told me that he had been in hospital with him and that Surya had kept the whole ward cheerful with songs composed for the occasion.

Surya was secretary of the committee which invited Frank Buchman to Sri Lanka in 1952. He "told Buchman of the committee's plan to charge ... for seats at the plays. 'No, no,' Buchman had replied. 'There will be no charge anywhere in the theatre ... I've not come to Asia to get but to give.'

"'How on earth can we meet the expenses of two hundred people for ten days?' protested Surya.

"'The Lord will provide,' said Buchman. And in his autobiography, Surya Sena notes, 'Every cent of expense was met.'" (1) (2).

(1) Garth Lean: *Frank Buchman – A Life*, (Constable, 1985).

(2) Surya Sena: *Of Sri Lanka I Sing*, (Ranco, Colombo, 1978), pp.225-7.

The Hannay Family

We owe a lot to Dolly and Gladdy Hannay, first cousins of Nellie Bigland. It was they who took her in 1934 to Oxford, where she started on the pathway to a full life on which others of the family followed her.

In 1947 they generously allowed us to use Mountain Cottage, their home in Braemar, for our honeymoon, and arranged for their cleaning lady to look after us. Later that year they did the same for Alan and Barbara Thornhill and for our friends George and Pat Wood, an Aberdonian with an Australian bride.

One weekend in the early '50s, they invited Margo and me for a weekend with them in an Eastbourne hotel where they were wintering. This included a visit to the local theatre.

After Gladdy's death, Dolly invited Margo, Peter and me for a summer holiday in another Braemar cottage which she owned. While Margo spent time with her cousin, Peter and I had some splendid days climbing in the Cairngorms. On two occasions we were joined by a Sandhurst colleague, George Blakey, whose ambition it was to climb all the Munros (Scottish peaks over 3,000 ft). He had a mountain bike in the boot of his car to enable him to reach some of the more remote peaks which were not accessible by car.

Margo and I were at Caux when we heard of Dolly's death. The funeral was fixed for the afternoon of the day after our return. We arrived back in London in the evening, took back our car from a friend to whom we had lent it, and drove through the night to Scotland.

In the very early hours of the morning, desperately tired, we drove to Winton House and rang Hazel Hastings' bell. She responded warmly, provided us with beds for a short sleep and breakfast before driving on to Braemar, where we were welcomed by Dolly's niece, Tony Hannay, who had been one of Margo's bridesmaids.

The funeral took place in Perth. We found ourselves directly behind the hearse with a number of cars following us. The hearse led us all at great speed over the Devil's Elbow, but in Perth a traffic light turned red on me, the hearse disappeared and I led the rest of the convoy astray, arriving late at the cemetery.

Nellie Bigland's brother, Margo's Uncle "Buddy", endeared himself to me at our wedding. I arrived in very good time and was sitting alone, when he crossed the aisle to join me for a time.

His son, Tom Hannay, had been a little junior to me at The Leas and later joined the staff. He and his wife Do kindly allowed us to use their home as a base from which to take off for our honeymoon. Sadly, Tom died at an early age, but we have kept in touch with Do.

Nellie Bigland's sister, Margo's Aunt Marion, gave us together with some of our bridesmaids and groomsmen a lunch party in a restaurant on the even of our wedding.

It was not until we started visiting regularly Margo's widowed brother Tom Bigland in Willaston that we made close links with others of the Clan Hannay. Tom gave big parties for us to meet them. Of Uncle Buddy's two daughters, Isabel married Paul Williams, who had been my contemporary at Shrewsbury, Mary married John Garrod, with whom I had climbed. We stayed with Mary in Heswall for Tom's funeral.

The Williams' sons, Nico and Peter, both became good friends. Nico, a distinguished Old Salopian cricketer and golfer, married Jackie Peters, daughter of one of my former pupils at The Leas. They now live in the Biglands' old home, Greyfriars, rechristened Thistle House. Peter worked with Tom Bigland in the wine industry and was perhaps his closest friend in his last years.

Most of those I have mentioned were with us in December 1999 when we buried Margo's ashes at St Peter's, Heswall.

Among Margo's other cousins with whom I keep in touch are Edith Bowring, whom we visited on a number of occasions in Tunbridge Wells, and Di Dunn, whose husband, Air Marshall Sir Patrick ("Paddy") Dunn, gave the address at the Thanksgiving Service for Ernest Bigland. When he visited Sandhurst officially, the Commandant included me in the lunch party.

In gratitude for the many friendships which I owe to my mother-in-law, I take the liberty of wearing the Clan Hannay tie.

Charles Grey, MP

I first met "Charlie" Grey briefly in Paris in 1946 when, as MP for Durham, he was part of a delegation going to Caux.

On my return to Durham, I got in touch with him. Petrol was rationed. He had no car but, as an MP, he had coupons which he gave me in return for lifts. He invited me to join a party of friends one evening to go down the pit where he had himself worked as a miner. This was quite a different experience from my two previous visits to pits. What struck me most was the cheerful friendship with which Charlie was greeted everywhere.

Margo and I went to tea with him and his wife in their simple home one evening. We were deeply moved by the stories they told us of early struggles against poverty.

They were among the guests whom we invited to our farewell dinner with our landlady.

H. H. Hardy

During my last term in Durham, a colleague showed me a press notice about vacancies for Lecturers in Languages at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Application forms had first to be obtained and I reckoned I would be too late to meet the deadline. I therefore wrote a covering letter to the Director of Studies, whoever he might be, asking if my later application might be considered. I was delighted to get a letter back from H. H. Hardy, agreeing and asking if I were the Stallybrass who used to send him mountain photos at Christmas. He had been Headmaster successively of Cheltenham and of Shrewsbury and had once interviewed me for a possible post at the latter.

A mountaineer and former cross-country runner, "HH" was extremely fit and was refereeing rugger matches in his sixties.

Until 1939 there had been two establishments commissioning regular army officers, The Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, known as "The Shop", for officers of technical corps, and The Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for infantry and cavalry officers. During the war, the premises were used for officer Cadet Training Units, awarding Wartime Emergency Commissions only.

In January 1947, the two establishments merged into The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. There was a strong emphasis on academic studies and cadets were encouraged to aim for university places. The number of officers

and civilian lecturers was approximately equal and all were members of the Officers' Mess.

Integration was at first not entirely easy, although most of the lecturers had been wartime army officers. The Commandant, Major-General F. R. G. Matthews, and his Director of Studies set us an excellent example. HH, who had been the General's Headmaster at Cheltenham, would address his superior on duty as "Sir"; off duty it was the other way round.

Both had been well informed about Moral Re-Armament by such Old Cheltonians as Edward and Robin Evans, Ray Nelson and Ian Sciortino. They had also received at Sandhurst a delegation of Danish Army officers visiting Britain under MRA auspices.

During my first term at Sandhurst, HH and his wife accepted an invitation to see *The Forgotten Factor* at the Westminster Theatre, which they greatly appreciated.

It was HH who encouraged me to start climbing again after a gap of seven years and, under his Presidency, to found with others a Mountaineering and Exploration Club. Being a member of the Climbers' Club, I was able regularly to take parties of staff and cadets on leave to Helyg, the Club hut near Capel Curig.

At first all extramural activities had a serving officer in charge and, for a time, we were supervised by an officer whom we introduced to the mountains.

In 1949, after HH had retired, we invited him to give an evening lecture to the Club. Margo and I were happy to have him stay a night with us in White Cottage.

Sir Christian Bonington, CBE

During part of the time that I was in charge of the Sandhurst Club, I was assisted by Chris Bonington as Cadet Secretary.

Sadly, we were involved in a fatal accident. Chris had taken a party of cadets to Ben Nevis. Two cadets climbing on their own had previously descended safely from the summit by an easy snow gully. On this occasion, they started by mistake down a different gully. One, a beginner, fell the full length of a steep section, landed in soft snow, broke a wrist, but was able to make his way down to a hut for help. The more experienced climber, Martin

Credland, ended his fall on a ledge of the steep section. The next morning, when rescue attempts failed, he tried to climb out, but fell again, this time to his death.

Chris meanwhile had misjudged the length and difficulty of a hard climb and had spent a bitterly cold night with his party below a rather large and intimidating cornice. It was only in the light of day with no sign of a rescue party that he summoned the courage to burrow through it. He appeared on the scene too late to help.

The Assistant Commandant, Brigadier "Freddie" Graham, who was responsible for games and sports, held an inquiry. Two questions arose: had Chris been right to let that couple climb on their own and should cadets climbing on leave always be accompanied by a member of the staff? It was concluded that cadets should have freedom of movement and that neither Chris nor I were to blame in any way.

I was delighted to read an article in which Chris said about his time at Sandhurst just what I had felt, "... ideally we should have taken novices out, but we didn't. We were totally elitist and just used to go and do our own climbing; we actually discouraged all beginners!" (1).

I have never climbed with Chris, we have met only on rare occasions, and I have only once heard him lecture. When we were living in Cambridge in 1977, my dentist friend, Jim Dyce, who had had as his patient the Canadian newspaper magnate Lord Thomson of Fleet, introduced me to his grandson, David Thomson, who was then playing ice hockey for the University. I took him to hear Chris lecture and we chatted afterwards.

The tragedy of Chris's son Conrad, accidentally drowned, brought a new sense of closeness to Chris and to Wendy, whom I have never met. Carole Bigland, Margo's niece by marriage, lost a young daughter in similar circumstances. She felt to blame, the family blamed her and she felt an outcast. We took her with us to Germany for a week, during which she found fresh courage and new unity with the family.

I have always believed that the most formative moments in Chris's life came on the Great Abbai Expedition of 1968 on the Blue Nile, in particular the moment when he was nearly drowned (2), and the death by drowning of Corporal Ian Macleod (3) and that through these traumatic incidents he found the more human qualities of leadership which have distinguished him since

and which are so striking in the recent Channel 4 telephone series, *The Magic Mountain*.

Chris and I share the joys of a happy marriage and of two sons. He once wrote me, "Wendy and I, like you, have a really wonderful marriage and I certainly feel that each year was even better than the last".

Reading Jim Curran's biography has brought me even closer to Chris. The story of his reconciliation with Daniel on the summit of Kilimanjaro (4) reminded me of the part mountains played in healing a rift with our younger son Peter. When he was wrongly diagnosed as "epileptic" and the doctor discouraged certain activities, I encouraged Peter to lead me up a couple of Welsh rock climbs. Tryfan is my favourite mountain and the first one up which I took Andrew and him. He has decided that they will throw my ashes to the winds from the summit, one standing on Adam, the other on Eve.

In his latest letter, Chris tells me that with the full backing of Wendy, he took his son Daniel, his brother Gerald, and Gerald's son James to Nepal, where they all climbed a virgin 6,200 metre peak near Kanchenjunga.

To quote Reinhold Messner from his foreword to Jim Curran's book, "What fascinates me about Bonington ... His personality is not to be measured by comparison with others. It is the sum total of knowledge, suffering character". (5)

(1) "Desert Island Climbs with Chris Bonington", (Craggs, April/May 1981).

(2) Richard Snailham: *The Blue Nile Revealed*, (Chatto & Windus, 1970), pp.147-150.

(3) Ibid. pp.170-4.

(4) Jim Curran: *High Achiever – The Life and Climbs of Chris Bonington*, (Constable, 1999), p.190.

(5) Ibid. p.xiv.

Bill and Noreen Lough

The Department of Languages, about 16 strong, was a very happy one, thanks mainly to Bill Lough, the only Head of Department to stay 25 years from the start until it was closed down in 1972. Extremely intelligent, smooth-tempered and fair-minded, it was a joy to serve under him.

We had met briefly on Intelligence Corps courses both in Oxford and in Cambridge, but he had then gone on to serve in India.

At an early stage we visited him and his wife Noreen in their home in Frimley and became friends. In September 1948, when their son Jeffery was born, we had their daughter, Elizabeth, to stay with us for a fortnight in White Cottage. During a leave period in April 1949 we had all four of them to stay with us for a week. Margo was then invited to be godmother to Elizabeth and kept in close touch with her for the rest of her life.

Bill chose me to take English classes for overseas cadets, which led to friendships across the world that are still alive today. It was he who recommended me for the post of Director of Studies at the Ghana Military Academy.

My return from Ghana coincided with the introduction of a language laboratory. Bill realised how difficult I might find it, after the many varied and exciting responsibilities which I had undertaken, to return to classroom work. He asked me to take responsibility for managing the new laboratory, to which a second was shortly added, and to encourage all our colleagues to make full use of it. This involved at first writing suitable oral exercises, based on the German textbook in use at that time and recording them with the help of a visiting German. Later we introduced new textbooks planned for use in language laboratories.

Since most of our cadets were likely to serve in Germany, we ran beginners' courses in German aiming at the "Colloquial Examination", sponsored by the Ministry of Defence, which prepared them for exactly the sort of situations they might meet.

Eventually I was promoted to a post of special responsibility for audio-oral teaching, testing all overseas cadets on arrival and arranging English as a Foreign Language (EFL) for those who needed it.

In 1965, despite the controversy of which I have already written, Bill recommended me to be the first Lecturer to make an exchange visit with St-Cyr-Coëtquidan.

In the summer of 1971 I felt that the time had come to leave Sandhurst. Under Civil Service regulations, I would have to relinquish at the age of 60 my special post and revert to where I had started 24 years earlier. It was only after I had handed in my resignation to take effect at Christmas that we were

informed that the Department of Languages was to be closed. I had been spared much frustration and anxiety. Far from retiring, I was free to advance to new responsibilities. Bill and Noreen kindly invited the whole department to a farewell party and presentation in their Camberley home.

On our arrival in Germany in 1973, we discovered that Jeffery Lough, who had taught at the Märkisches Gymnasium in Schwelm, was staying there with one of the staff. He was our first supper guest.

Elizabeth Lough had married Paul Brennan, an officer in the Royal Army Education Corps. They were stationed at the time with their two daughters in Nienburg, where we spent a weekend with them in February 1974. We then had Elizabeth and the two girls to stay for four nights. A month later, they came again for three nights, this time with Bill, for whom we found accommodation in a nearby hotel. He and Noreen had moved to Steyning and he was teaching languages at Christ's Hospital, where their younger son, John, was a pupil. He and I had a good long walk and talk together in the surrounding countryside. One evening, Margo looked after the girls while I took Bill and Elizabeth to hear Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony in Wuppertal.

Over the years we paid occasional visits to Steyning to see Bill and Noreen in Steyning, neither of whom enjoyed good health.

We were delighted to receive Elizabeth at the Thanksgiving Service for Margo. Since Bill's death in 2000, Elizabeth keeps in close touch with me.

Hazel (née Squire) and Andy Hastings

While I was making new friends at Sandhurst, Margo was doing the same in Pont street. The Kerrs had taken in two new tenants, Hazel Squire, studying piano and 'cello, and Penelope Hills, studying flute and piano, at the Royal College of Music. They would often help Margo bath Andrew.

Hazel's father, Sir Giles Squire, had been British Ambassador in Kabul. She and her mother, Lady (Irene) Squire, were among our first guests at White Cottage. Irene made a valuable assault on the weeds in our overgrown garden.

Hazel became godmother to our younger son Peter and, in 1958, invited both boys to be pages at her wedding at Caux to Andy Hastings, a Scot who had served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy. We had hired kilts for the boys for what was a colourful occasion. The Hastings started their honeymoon in

Montreux and surprised us by inviting us to row with them the next afternoon along Lac Lemman to the Château de Chillon and back.

At Christmas 1960, when we were in Ghana, Frank Buchman invited Andy and Hazel to take the boys to Caux, where Peter celebrated his 11th birthday. On Christmas Eve they had dinner with two Somalis who were about to go to Sandhurst. Hazel wrote, "They were both tremendously impressed by the grasp the boys had of the ideological situation in Ghana. One of them said it proved to him it was not too complicated for anyone to understand what was going on in the world if boys of that age had such a clear conception ... The next morning in the meeting they both spoke of the supper the evening before. One said that he had been at Caux a year ago but he had been so filled with hate that when he got up to speak at one point he had had to leave the platform half-way through because it had choked him. He could not express how much the whole sharing of Christmas had meant to him".

One of them later wrote from Sandhurst to me, "I met your two brave, intelligent sons, young men of great future ... I thought about you and their mother a great deal because it is not an easy thing for parents to have such young children and go very far, but I remembered that God is taking care of them and you are doing a great important work".

The Hastings later had two sons, Alexander and Robert, and on one occasion we had them all to stay at Milcote Cottage.

After the death of Sir Giles, Irene Squire settled in Kingston Bagpuize, where we occasionally visited her on journeys to or from the North.

After Penelope's marriage to Sir David Ogilvy, on our many visits to them at Winton House, Pencaitland, we also saw the Hastings, at first in Winton House, where they had rented a flat, later in Edinburgh and in West Linton.

Andy has a great grasp of Scottish history and is an expert guide, very sensitive to how much his guests can absorb. I have happy memories of being shown by him round Edinburgh, Stirling and Winton House. On one occasion he and Hazel took us for a picnic on an island in the middle of the Lake of Menteith in the ruins of a priory where Mary Queen of Scots once stayed. We also visited with them Traquair House, home of the Maxwell Stuarts, once Jacobites, and said to be the oldest still inhabited house in Scotland.

Alexander qualified as a pilot and works for Edinburgh Air Charters, ferrying both passengers and freight. For his parents' Ruby Wedding he took them on a flight along the western coast from Mull to Skye, landing at Islay for lunch, and back via the Clyde islands and Loch Lomond.

Robert took a course at Stirling University on everything to do with book production (printing, binding, illustrating, etc.). For his finals he produced a little volume of his grandfather's experiences in Iran during the early years of World War II. After he settled in London, we visited him in his Battersea home and he sometimes came to see us.

For the funeral of David Ogilvy, we stayed with the Hastings in West Linton. We stayed with them again for the wedding of the Ogilvys' son and heir, Sir Francis. On that occasion both Alexander and Robert went out of their way to care for us two octogenarians.

In November 1998 Penelope Thwaites arranged a two-day "Grainger Event" in St John's, Smith Square. Hazel and Penelope came to it together and shared a room in our flat, a little over 50 years since we had first met them together.

We were all moved that, at very short notice, Andy and Hazel, Penelope and Francis, all came from Scotland to Margo's Thanksgiving Service. Robert joined us too.

The Ogilvy Family

After Hazel Squire had left the Royal College of Music, we arranged for Penelope Hills and their student orchestra to be invited officially to give a concert at Sandhurst, which took place in what had once been the Riding School. Attendance was made compulsory for all cadets. It was a foggy evening and our friends were somewhat late arriving. The conductor's splendid mop of hair contrasted strongly with the cadets' "short, back and sides". He bowed to the audience and a cheer went up as his locks fell forward, obscuring his face, and were then shaken back into position. Thanks to a good choice of programme and a lovely girl pianist, the evening was a great success.

Penelope came down on another occasion with a pianist and a violinist to give a delightful recital to an audience of music-lovers in a ground-floor ante-room at one end of the New Building. By the time it was over, only the main entrance at the end of a very long passage remained open. There was

little time to catch the last train, so the cadets opened a window and politely helped the girls in their long evening dresses to climb out to our car, parked just outside.

Penelope was a frequent visitor to White Cottage and, after touring as a flautist with the Carl Rosa Opera Company, stayed with us for a time in 1951. She was a great help to us all, especially on holidays at the Hut. In my book, *The Biglands of Cheshire*, there is a fine photograph, taken, I think, by Tony Bigland, of her in the dinghy with the two boys being pushed off by me, and the Hut in the background on the far bank.

On New Year's Eve 1966, we were all invited to London to Penelope's wedding to Sir David Ogilvy, Bt, of Winton House, Pencaitland. From then on, we were frequent visitors, first at Winton House and later in the more peaceful Winton Cottage, to which they moved.

Winton House, the ancestral home of Sir David Ogilvy, is a huge historic mansion, traditionally open to the public on a weekend in springtime when the numerous daffodils are flowering. There is a drawing room ideal for concerts.

The early years were difficult for Penelope. The kitchen was in the basement, the dining room on the ground floor. There was a communicating food lift but, without servants, if anything was forgotten that was needed for a meal, David would have a long trek down a spiral staircase and back. The house was built at the edge of a steep drop so that, whereas the kitchen itself in the front had only a glimpse of the sky above, the rooms at the back of the basement looked out over gardens. A decision was soon taken to convert two of these rooms into a new kitchen and dining room.

Andrew, who was their first visitor, spent much of his time scraping the walls of one of these rooms.

A particularly valuable visit was at Easter 1967, when Peter, aged 17, had just returned home after kicking over the traces. My conviction had been not to question him, but to wait for him to open up. We spent several days tramping the Lammermoors together in silence, waiting for the great moment, which took place after our return home.

Peter came with us on a number of occasions to help with the annual Open Day, when large parties would arrive in coaches, be taken on tours of the house, roam the gardens, have tea and buy daffodils.

There was much rejoicing when Francis, the son and heir, was born. It was a great joy to us to see him on many occasions over more than twenty years as he developed from a baby to a schoolboy at Trinity College, Glenalmond, where his grandfather had been a pupil, and on to the present, when he is a married Baronet running the family estate and with a son and heir to succeed him.

As a youngster, he had a very strong will. One cold morning, when Margo and I were going for a walk, he was told to put a coat on if he wanted to come with us, but refused, so we set off without him. Presently we looked round and discovered that he had firmly decided to follow some distance behind us without his coat.

At Easter 1977, when we were living in Cambridge, we took Francis Evans to visit the Ogilvys. The half-French Francis, whom we addressed as "Fronseesse" to distinguish him from the Scottish one, was several years older; we were delighted that they became firm friends.

Over the years Jenny Black, who helped with the housework, became a good friend and we would always visit her and her husband in a lodge by one of the gates. Another friend whom I visited regularly was Willie Hall. We had shovelled a large load of gravel into place for an Open Day.

There were happy occasions when David drove us into Edinburgh or over the Lammermoors and times with his brother and his wife and son. David suffered a long period of illness before his death in June 1992. After the funeral in Haddington, we met many old friends in the sunlit garden of Winton Cottage, and it was a joy to see Francis already taking his father's place as "The Laird".

On that occasion and for Francis's wedding in October 1996, we stayed with the Hastings in West Linton. Highlight of the occasion was a huge seated supper in a marquee on the lawn of Winton House, followed by dancing. At midnight Margo and I waltzed together for the last time before seeing the couple off to the sound of bagpipes.

In October 1998 we spent a week with Penelope in Winton Cottage. She and her Wind Quintet gave a recital to the inmates of the local nursing home. The most popular feature was two well-known tunes brilliantly arranged by Roy Thackray, her oboist friend who had come with his wife to our "Carson Road Art Venture" a couple of weeks previously.

Staying with us was Margie (née Carey-Evans) Barrett, widow of Michael Barrett, a Scot. They had lived for a time both in Winton House and in Winton Cottage. She had recently moved to a flat in Llandaff close to our friend Una Gray. A granddaughter of Lloyd George with roots in North Wales, she and Una had recently taken part in a meeting in Cardiff designed to promote unity between North and South Wales. She was about to join a Welsh delegation to Scotland to consider together issues of devolution and to consider what Wales has to give on the eve of the Welsh Assembly.

The highlight of our stay was a superb chamber recital in the drawing room of Winton House by the young and vigorous Con Animo Trio, Katherine Spencer (clarinet), Sam Heywood (piano) and Martin Storey ('cello). The evening was sensitively hosted by Sir Francis and his wife Dorothy, a charming person and gifted musician.

We found chairs in the back row, where we were able to appreciate to the full the glory of the drawing room with its decorated ceiling, friezes and coat of arms over the fireplace. Afterwards, Penelope introduced me to the musicians. I told them that in my youth I used to dream of listening to the Brahms Violin Concerto with an imaginary girl I loved and that this dream had been more than fulfilled listening to the Brahms Clarinet Trio in a glorious setting with the wife I had loved for 51 years.

Ruth (née Mathys) and Dr George Dallas

Ruth Mathys came to live with us in October 1949 and stayed with us for nearly two years. She quickly became the nearest we have had to a daughter.

Margo wrote about her in *The Touch of Magic*: "Ruth was a Swiss girl who had been brought up in institutions and foster homes. When she was 19, she came to England to help look after Andrew, who was not quite two, and to learn English.

"At first she and Andrew couldn't understand each other very well and weren't happy together. She would come down to breakfast looking unhappy and sometimes rather cross. He would put his arms round her legs, which was all he could reach, and say, 'Is oo happy, Woofie? Is oo weally happy?' She would say, 'Yes,' rather crossly. Then he would say, 'I does love oo, Woofie'.

"Afterwards she said that nobody had ever loved her like that before or cared if she was happy or not. She is now the wife of a doctor."

By the summer of 1950 Ruth had so completely won our trust that we left her together with a young Norwegian woman to look after the children while we went to Caux. We did the same in the summer of 1951; among those who stayed with her was Penelope Hills.

In September 1951 she left us to stay with a family in London, but paid us a visit in October with her sister, Heidi. She then spent time in Switzerland with Philippe and H  l  ne Mottu looking after their children. Later she went to America, where she helped look after children taking part in the filming of *The Crowning Experience*. She also spent some years at Caux, where she helped to reorganise the kitchens.

When the Westminster Theatre was enlarged, she and her Swiss friends Berti and Hildi Zeller contributed their experience to help establish new kitchens. On that occasion we spent a happy evening with the three of them.

When Andrew was acting in Montmartre in the play *Piti   pour Cl  mentine*, we met Ruth taking a *cordons bleu* course.

During our early years in Ascot, Ruth visited us several times. We took her to stay with the Thornhills in Rotherfield and Margo drove her to visit Maisie Fletcher in Ellergreen and the Ogilvys in Pencaitland.

In the summer of 1973, when we were with Andrew at Caux, Ruth received a proposal of marriage from Dr George Dallas, a Belfast specialist in chest disorders. As a boy of 16, he had spent three years in hospital with tuberculosis, had lost one lung and required regular medical supervision and treatment until his death. He had met the Oxford Group through his parents and had committed himself to live by its standards.

As a radical Presbyterian, he wrote a short play with a message he hoped might help to improve community relationships. When conflict developed between English and French Canadians in the Province of Qu  bec, Paul Campbell, a Canadian doctor, invited George with an Irish group representing different communities to visit the Province and to present George's play. In Montreal he had met Ruth, who was staying in the home of a Swiss psychiatrist, Professor Morf, and his wife, and had fallen in love with her.

Margo and Andrew were with Ruth at Caux when George arrived to confirm his proposal. In November Margo drove from Germany to Caux to help with wedding preparations. Peter and his first wife Helen joined us in

Germany for Christmas and we drove to Caux for the wedding on 29 December 1973.

In November 1974 Margo flew from Germany via London to Belfast to visit them in their home in Broomhill Park. For her it was a traumatic experience to be driven in the dark through streets with houses boarded up, seeing a bus on fire and our soldiers being attacked by violent gangs, to wait anxiously for two Protestant women, wondering what might have happened to them and then to hear that they had been trying to protect a Catholic priest under attack. Above all was the realisation of how difficult George found it to welcome any English person to his home. On the personal level he could accept her as his wife's friend, but on the political level she represented a race he had come to hate, those who, he felt, had pressurised his Scots ancestors to accept positions and land in Ireland in return for their services in suppressing the indigenous Catholics and had then deserted them.

When we moved to Dulwich in 1982, we discovered that our Parish Church, All Saints, had, through Leslie and Mary Fox, formed links with the Clonard Monastery in the Catholic Falls Road area of Belfast. An inter-faith Bible study was held there each week, in which George and Ruth took part.

In 1984 we both spent a week as their guests. It was a great joy for me, who had not seen Ruth for over ten years, to see how, speaking English only as her third language after German and French, she had become the gracious hostess of the Belfast Moral Re-Armament centre.

George, our sensitive host, had become a statesman in the troubled situation. Two months after our visit, Dr Martin Mansergh, who had been a special adviser on Northern Ireland to three Irish Prime Ministers, wrote in *The Irish Press* of 31 July 1984, "In some ways Dallas is the most radical Protestant voice in Northern Ireland today. In his presentation to the Forum he stated, 'It is futile to talk about reconciliation, at least without considering the price that needs to be paid for it, which in the case of Protestants, is giving up supremacy. Otherwise, for Protestants, reconciliation means betrayal and for Catholics it means giving in to Protestant supremacy. As far as Protestants are concerned nothing will work except a free, glad and willing acceptance of their Irishness'" (1).

On the first evening of our visit, George and Ruth had arranged a meeting in their home between a television producer from BBC2, who was making a documentary on *The Armalite and the Ballot Box* and several Catholics and

Protestants of various backgrounds. We were invited to sit in as silent observers. At the end of the evening the producer asked me to comment. I replied that my background – Anglican, public school, Conservative and Sandhurst – made me the natural enemy of many present, but that I wanted to do my best to bring a new spirit into the situation. Jim Lynn, leader of the Clonard Bible Study Group, at once shook my hand warmly, welcomed me as a friend and invited us to their next meeting. A year or two later we welcomed a group from Belfast to West Dulwich, where our vicar invited a priest from Clonard to preach at All Saints.

During our time in Belfast, we visited David and Ruth Hume in Bangor, County Down. David had at one time raised money to back our work in Ghana and Ruth's brother, Peter Hannon, had been a most helpful friend both in Ghana and in Nigeria. Their father, Archdeacon Gordon Hannon, had once been asked at Caux to break the sad news to a woman in the village that her husband had just been killed by a falling tree. He took me to interpret for him. I greatly admired his sensitivity. A few years later the Humes' daughter Frances and a school friend were in a community at Caux of which I was "Assistant Facilitator".

We also met Eric Turpin, with whom I had shared a room on an earlier visit to Belfast, and Dr Roddy Evans, from whose booklet on George I have quoted.

Following a serious motor accident, George's health deteriorated steadily. He was often in and out of hospital. He and Ruth were well supported by Eric Turpin and Roddy Evans. Eventually David and Ruth Hume helped them to move from Broomhill Park into sheltered accommodation in Bangor. George died shortly afterwards. In addition to her Irish friends, Berti Zeller from Switzerland and Ivan and Maisie Poulton from England went to support Ruth for a time. She has bravely decided to stay on in Ireland, while paying regular visits to her Swiss relatives and friends.

In April 1999, Ruth Dallas was attending a gathering at Tirley Garth to plan menus for the Caux summer conference. Hearing that it was her last chance to see Margo, she arranged to come to London by train and spend a night with Janet Mace. Andrew, who had flown over from Geneva at Peter's urgent request, arrived at Carson Road a few minutes before Janet and Ruth to enjoy a simple lunch prepared by Annie in the sunroom. This was just three days before Margo died.

Peter, who had spent the night with Margo, writes, "At three, Andrew and Ruth arrive with Annie. I'm overjoyed. I'm worn to the bone, but a sense of lightness pervades me. Andrew's here, we're in each other's arms. He talks to Mum briefly, and then we leave her with Ruth, one of her oldest and dearest friends. I'm also delighted to see her. It's been more than twenty years.

"Andrew, Annie and I walk out to Ruskin Park through the spring flowers and blossom. Andrew is now with us, this wonderful brother whom I love till it hurts. At home, there's a lull after all the stress and emotion of these days. Then Dad has the inspired idea to look at the old photos that Mum had recently organised into albums. Two of the albums are old black-and-whites, including Dad and Mum's parents and the early days of their marriage when Ruth came to live with us. Mum and Ruth look so beautiful, so full of life and fun. I remember, as children, how much we loved Ruth; it's wonderful that she's with us now. After supper, I drive Ruth to Janet Mace's house, where she's staying the night, and then go on to the hospital."

To my great joy, I joined Andrew at Caux that August just in time for a meal with him and Ruth before she left. We continue to keep in close touch by phone. I am delighted that she has decided to stay on in Ireland while keeping her links with Switzerland.

- (1) Dr Roddy Evans: *The Second Conversion of Dr George Dallas*, (Nicholson & Bass, Belfast, 1999), p.22.

Brigadier Donald and Anne Ross

Sandhurst was in my time divided into three Colleges of four Companies each. Old College occupied the Old Building; New and Victory Colleges shared the New Building until a third had been constructed. Old College Companies were named after pre-1914 battles: Blenheim, Dettingen, Waterloo and Inkerman; New College after 1914-18 battles: Marne, Ypres, Somme and Gaza; Victory after 1939-45 battles or campaigns: Alamein, Normandy, Rhine and Burma.

We lecturers were each attached to a Company as Tutors. I was particularly fortunate to be attached to Gaza Company, in which the teamwork between military and academic was excellent. We had the distinction of winning The Sovereign's Company competition (in events in which the whole Company or a whole intake took part), five terms running and were runners-up the sixth.

When the Queen's Coronation Medals were issued, 12, an average of one per company, were allotted to selected lecturers; three were awarded to those attached to Gaza Company.

At that time, camps were organised on a Company basis. The three Platoons of Gaza Company usually camped separately on one of Surrey's many commons sufficiently near to each other to be able to operate together if required.

We academics were encouraged to go to Company camps as observers. I was assigned to a Platoon commanded by Major Donald Ross, an outstanding Royal Engineers officer. At our first camp together I was behaving as a good civilian observer and took no action when I saw a cadet making a nonsense of something. I was surprised to be given a "rocket" by Donald, but took it as a compliment, realising that he was treating me as his second-in-command. He even put me in charge of a night patrol with the Company Sergeant-Major under me. On another occasion he left me to show another officer how to set a trip flare, an operation which he had taught me some months before and in which a clumsy move can lead to a premature explosion and damaged fingers – a far cry from John Howard's "bloody awful soldier"!

Donald and I together trained the Company cross-country team. I also trained the Gaza Company new intakes for the Junior Steeplechase, a team event over a comparatively short course with obstacles. At 39, I was fit enough to set the pace at the beginning of each term and to keep up with the middle of the pack when the cadets got fitter.

One day I returned home to find Andrew, aged about four, standing in the middle of the drawing room surrounded by books which he had pulled out of the shelves. He announced, "I'm Donald Ross and I'm in the Mess".

At one of our Sandhurst meets at Helyg I took Donald on his first rock climbs: the Milestone Buttress and the North Buttress of Tryfan. He was pleased that I made him climb down the Milestone on our way back.

Sadly, illness prevented us going to Donald's wedding in the Lake District, but when he was instructing at the Staff College, Margo had his wife Anne and their children to tea in the garden of Milcote Cottage.

Donald, who by then was a member of the Alpine Club, and I had an outstanding weekend in Ynys Ettws, the Climbers' Club hut below the Llanberis Pass, when we climbed the Flying Buttress of Dinas Cromlech and

the Horned Crag on Lliwedd. He invited me to dinner one evening in the Staff College Mess in Minley Manor.

Donald retired as a Brigadier and is a keen golfer. He and Anne now live in Hampshire and have six grandchildren.

General Sir Hugh C. Stockwell

General "Hughie" Stockwell, who succeeded General Matthews, was the most colourful of the ten Commandants under whom I served. To the despair of his Brigade of Guards Adjutant, who thought he was compromising the dignity of his rank, he loved to breeze around the grounds on a moped, answering formal salutes with a cheery wave. When he gave a party, he liked to be behind the bar himself serving drinks.

We first met at one of Donald Ross's camps, where he was surprised to find me taking a full part with a borrowed rifle in an exercise.

Back from a Caux summer conference in which two French Generals had played a key part, I ventured to report on it to the Commandant. At that time Professor Boswell ("Boz"), one of two pre-war members of the academic staff, gave a weekly voluntary lunchtime lecture to the staff on world affairs. The General arranged for me to take his place one week and to talk on Caux with colour slides. He then asked us to take the new Director of Studies to a meeting at 45 Berkeley Square to find out more on his behalf.

When he left to command 1 Corps in Germany, he made an offer to Bill Lough to receive one lecturer at a time for ten days at his HQ in Bielefeld and arrange a programme for him to brush up his German. I was the first to take advantage of this offer. I lived in the Officers' Mess and had at my disposal a young German to talk to while sightseeing or doing whatever else I wanted. I also spent an interesting weekend at an evangelical centre receiving young Christians on a visit from Communist East Germany.

General Stockwell's last assignment was to command the ill-fated assault on the Suez Canal.

T. S. J. Anderson

Stephen Anderson succeeded H. H. Hardy as Director of Studies. He had been a Brigadier in the Royal Army Education Corps. A former boxer, he regularly refereed boxing evenings. An Irishman, he had Irish friends committed to Moral Re-Armament, who visited him occasionally.

In 1959, Mr Anderson was invited to Ghana to advise on how best to set up the academic side of the proposed Ghana Military Academy. The decision was taken to appoint a temporary Director of Studies on loan from Sandhurst. I was the least qualified of the three candidates whom he chose to interview on his return; the other two refused on the grounds that it would interfere with their children's education. As our sons were at boarding school, as Margo's brother Ernest and his wife Mary kindly accepted to act as their official guardians and as Margo agreed to come with me, I was able to accept.

Two attempts were made to block my appointment, which I felt sure were occasioned by my association with MRA. Mr Anderson, who gave me much helpful advice over setting up a syllabus, informed me that an official in the War Office had complained that, as a Civil Servant, I had written to a Cabinet Minister on a political matter. I had in fact written to Mr Harold Watkinson (later Lord Watkinson), who was then Minister of Defence, to protest against the sale of fighter aircraft to Cuba at the time when Fidel Castro was still being acclaimed as a great agrarian reformer. Mr Anderson had defended me on the grounds that I had been writing as a private citizen to my own MP.

From a similar source came an objection that I had failed my medical test: I had been born with a perforated eardrum, which might cause trouble in a tropical climate. The facts that I had already been in the tropics and that I had served over five years in the Army without any objection being raised were ignored. Mr Anderson advised me to see at my own expense a Harley Street specialist, who certified that, in his opinion, the climate would have no effect on my ear.

When I returned from Ghana, Mr Anderson had left to become Director of Education for Shell. He invited me to his office in Shell House and arranged for me to examine young workers in German. Sadly, he died of cancer shortly afterwards.

Mrs Florence Bigland (Aunt Flo)

Shortly after we moved into White Cottage, Margo received a phone call asking her if she knew a Mrs Florence Bigland, who had just returned from

America. There she had met Frank Buchman and some of his friends in Los Angeles in a building called "The Club" and had arrived at 45 Berkeley Square with a huge bunch of flowers saying she wanted to join "The Club". She had heard of us in America and wanted to be put in touch.

She was the widow of Margo's great-uncle Ernest Bigland, a wealthy shipping magnate. Margo's father, who had been like a son to him and had looked after his investments, had expected to be his heir, so when his 70-year-old Uncle Ernest had married a woman over 30 years his junior, the family had shown her little friendship.

Shortly afterwards she invited us to lunch at Phyllis Court, Henley-on-Thames. We left Andrew in his carry-cot in the car park and asked the doorkeeper to keep an eye on him. Aunt Flo insisted on us bringing him in, although it was against the Club rules. Fortunately he not only behaved himself, but won everyone's hearts.

At Christmas 1948 she was living in a large house in Woking and invited a number of MRA friends to stay. We were invited together with Andrew for midday dinner, at which she appeared dressed in red with golden stars as "Mother Christmas".

The following Christmas Margo was in Frimley Hospital with Peter, who was three days old. Our Swiss "au pair", Ruth Mathys, and Margo's brother Tony took on together to look after Andrew and to cook the Christmas dinner, while I collected Aunt Flo from Woking. Ruth was puzzled as to what to do with the pudding, one of the many Christmas preparations which Margo had undertaken well in advance. It was wrapped in a cloth and, when Ruth asked Tony what to do with it, he replied "Wash it". His caustic comment when he found her washing the pudding under the cold tap threatened relations, but they made it up in time to serve up a first-class dinner, after which I took Aunt Flo to see Margo and Peter in hospital.

She was a big-hearted woman who loved entertaining. Frank Buchman regarded her as one of his best hostesses. She once told us that few of those who enjoyed her hospitality ever invited her into their homes. She became a welcome visitor and was especially fond of our boys. She won our hearts by the gratitude she expressed as she sat by a smoky log fire over a simple tea with home-made scones. We realised that for all her wealth she was a lonely woman.

A rift occurred when, in a phone call to Margo, she slanged her brother Ernest and Margo rudely cut her off. I persuaded Margo to come with me to call on her with a large bunch of flowers. Aunt Flo received her with a warm hug, saying over her shoulder to me, "You have got a little vixen of a wife".

One year she paid for a charter plane to take a delegation to the Caux summer conference, including a group of miners and their wives, making the joking proviso "as long as I don't have to share a room with any of them". She asked me to look after her. The day before the flight, she fell into a manhole and damaged her knee. Her doctor tried to prevent her going, but she courageously insisted. At Caux she spent a day or two in bed and later I pushed her round in a wheelchair. At dinner with Frank Buchman she would occasionally wear a tiara or orchids across her ample bosom. A man to whom I introduced myself as a Sandhurst lecturer looked puzzled. "I always thought," he said, "you were the private secretary of a Hungarian princess."

One morning, Tony Bigland, who was living in London, had a strong urge to call on her. She had been taken very ill; the doctor who was arranging for her to go to hospital was grateful to meet a relative. When we visited her in hospital, she told us, "You know, I died on the operating table and went all the way to Heaven, but St Peter told me, 'I'm sorry, Mrs Bigland, we haven't got a halo big enough for you, so you'll have to go back and wait'."

We had entered both our sons for Shrewsbury on the basis of faith and prayer. I had a strong conviction that Aunt Flo would help, but I resisted Margo's urging me to approach her direct.

Before we left for Ghana, Margo went to say goodbye to her. "I'm not leaving you anything in my will," she said. "I never asked you for anything," Margo replied. "Well, I'll leave you a little something," she went on, "but I don't want you to spend it on those boys of yours."

Shortly before we were due to return to Sandhurst and lose our boarding school allowance, Aunt Flo died, leaving us enough money to pay Andrew's Shrewsbury fees in advance and to buy Margo a first class Swiss wrist watch which she wore for the rest of her life.

The Kiaer Family

Among Tony Bigland's Cambridge friends whom he brought to White Cottage was Stanley Kiaer, whose widowed mother was one of Frank Buchman's most gracious hostesses at 45 Berkeley Square.

After working in a firm in the City, Stanley retired early to work full time with MRA. He was Secretary of the Oxford Group for many years.

He, his South African wife Ann, their daughter Jennifer, now married, and son Ian occupied a flat above the Westminster Theatre, where they entertained our Pakistani friend Malik and me to supper one evening.

I have a vivid mental picture of the Kiaer family all working together in the kitchen of the Kynaston family in Durham during the wedding celebrations of their daughter Celia to Geoffrey Burns.

In 1986, Stanley backed his friend Neville Cooper in founding the Institute of Business Ethics and has since been its Director. It was launched at the Mansion House and endorsed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Moderators of the Free Churches Council and of the Church of Scotland, the Chief Rabbi and the Imam of the London Central Mosque. It was established to clarify ethical issues in business, to propose positive solutions to problems and to establish common ground with people of goodwill of all faiths. It is supported today by over 50 leading companies and trusts.

After Ann had died from cancer, their son Ian, who had graduated with first class honours in Art, became a leading member of a group of young people campaigning for "making Britain a home".

After 1984, we had decided not to go to another summer conference in Caux, as we felt that the uncertainty of Margo's health problems imposed too great a strain on Eliane and Andrew.

In 1994, a number of Ian's friends invited us as "honorary grandparents" to back them in the opening session, an "Intergenerational Dialogue". As they would be responsible for our welfare, we accepted.

In 1995, they ran a session on "The Society of Tomorrow". A number of young people from Bosnia were present, including a soldier who had come straight from fighting against the Serbs and who spoke movingly at the final session.

In January 1996, Ian Kiaer, five others who had been at Caux, and five newcomers, met for a retreat in the Croydon home of Fiona and Jacqui Daukes. Margo and I were invited to their final tea party to celebrate the

birthday of Karlene Archer from Jamaica. Other countries represented were Cameroun, Germany, Lithuania and Nigeria.

In April, 12 of those connected with "Making Britain a Home" came to tea and supper with us. Alan Channer, who was due to leave for Cambodia the next day, had arranged it. Ian Kiaer and three of these friends had just returned from Berlin, where two German families had arranged an outstanding programme for them. They had not had time to prepare a joint report and spent well over two hours telling us about it all.

The chief speaker was a newcomer. For him it had been the first time in a situation of that sort. He saw it as a time of putting into action what he had learned through the retreat in January. We were struck by the sensitivity of the others, who listened patiently and gave him his head, from which, I am sure, he benefited. Ian contented himself with an occasional thoughtful summary.

1996 saw the 50th anniversary of the opening of Mountain House with the theme "Forging the Future, preparing for the 21st Century". Andrew writes, "The preparation days, on the theme of 'renewal of the spirit', were taken in hand by the 'making Britain a home' team of young professionals and others of their generation from across Europe and further afield, with a few older helpers, including my parents as honorary grandparents. We moved from a day on listening – with space for the practice as well as the theory, and 'heavy duty unclogging' – to a day on yearning, hope, fear and attachment, and finally a meditation on God's love for each one of us".

Magic days followed with the arrival of the Dalai Lama. He took part in an inter-religious panel which included Rev Heinrich Rusterholz, President of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Cardinal Franz König, former Archbishop of Vienna, and Rabbi Dr Marc Gopin, Professor of Religion and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University, Washington DC.

The next day the Dalai Lama gave the Jubilee Lecture to an audience of about 700 in the main hall and an overflow of 300 in the theatre. Andrew wrote, "The words struggle more feebly than usual to transmit something of the experience. The sight of a little boy wandering to the front of the super-packed hall to help himself to the Dalai Lama's sandal, the Buddhist leader's laugh and loving gestures, will remain in the memory when some of his words start to fail".

We owe a great debt of gratitude to Ian Kiaer, Alan Channer and their friends, who led us into action in our 80s and looked after us in three successive summers at Caux, during which Margo experienced the happiest and healthiest days of her last years.

Hugh and Bridget (née Peterson) Elliott

Hugh Elliott, a graduate of Hertford College, Oxford, spent many years in the Nigerian Civil Service, staying on after independence. He was a close friend both of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first Governor-General and later President of independent Nigeria, and of the Emir of Kano.

In 1951 a friend of Mother's, who was working with the British Council, phoned us on holiday in Heswall to ask us to befriend the first two Nigerian cadets to come to Sandhurst, who were taking a preliminary course at Eaton Hall. I arranged with the Adjutant to take them over to Heswall. Lawan and Maimalari of the Bornu tribe were outstanding young men. It was the first time that Peter, aged two, had met Africans. He looked up at one of them and said, "Why is your face so black?" "And why is your face so white?" came the reply, and we all laughed.

They were invited to go with us to the wedding in Croydon of Hugh Elliott to Bridget Peterson, a teacher of art and a fine artist, where they made a great impression on all concerned.

Ten years later, during a break between two terms at the Ghana Military Academy, we were invited to visit friends in Lagos. We drove on to Enugu to spend a few days with Hugh and Bridget, who were stationed there. We met a number of their fascinating Nigerian friends and saw some of the beauty spots that Bridget had painted.

Staying in the MRA centre in Lagos in 1980, we admired a number of her fine paintings.

After his retirement, they spent some time in Lagos and later set up home for a time in Asmara, Eritrea, where they did much to bring healing between that country and Ethiopia.

Bridget died at the age of 70 after a long illness. Hugh continued to do valuable reconciliation work in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Like myself, he is thriving as a nonagenarian.

The Conner Family

I first met Bill Conner during the war when, as a Sergeant in the 8th Hussars, he left with Tom Shillington for the Western Desert. Tom was killed at the battle of El Alamein. Bill commanded a tank in the battle and was later commissioned. His sense of commitment to the peoples of the Middle East lasted the rest of his life, fully backed by his wife Chérie. Out of their work developed the British-Arab University Association.

Margo had met Chérie Oram at Tirley Garth during the war. Daughter of a senior officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps, she was looking after her young brother Tom, who was the same age as, and a friend of, Margo's youngest brother Tony Bigland. Tom Oram later qualified as a doctor.

At White Cottage we had to stay with us successively the Conners' son Patrick and their daughter Judi as young children, while their parents were abroad.

While Peter was at Sussex University, Patrick was a fellow student and later Keeper of Fine Art of the Brighton Pavilion. They became friends for life. Patrick and his wife Edwina had a daughter Anna, whom Peter had to stay with him in Brighton when her parents were out for an evening.

On one occasion we took Prince Philip of Ethiopia to stay with Peter in Brighton and Patrick joined us for a walk on the Downs and lunch in a restaurant.

After Patrick's marriage broke up, we soon got to know Debora Lewis, his second wife. We greatly admired the way he preserved a basic friendship with Edwina.

We spent Christmas 1990 with Peter and Annie at the Hilton Park Hotel, Cuckfield. Patrick and Deb invited us to a Christmas lunch in Brighton. Sadly, Bill Conner was unwell and missed the occasion. Present were: Chérie, Judi and her husband Kevin Geary, both working on television programmes, Anna, Edwina with her new partner Nick Branwell, and Nick's mother and father a retired Army Major. It was an outstandingly happy occasion.

Nick is an expert gardener and on one occasion when he and Edwina visited us, he brought us a ceanothus, which flowers better each year.

We have several times celebrated Christmas with the Connors and Deb's parents, Clayton and Pat Lewis, in Herne Hill and once in Peter and Annie's temporary home in Princes Gate Mews.

Erica Conner, Bill's sister, had married Edward Evans, Patriarch of the Evans clan of Whitbourne, Herefordshire. She is now a widow, the senior of six Mrs Evans of Whitbourne. Through his Aunt Erica, Patrick and his family have become very much part of the clan.

We visited Bill and Chérie in their home in Chiswick a few weeks before he died and came away spiritually refreshed and strengthened.

When we were celebrating our Golden Wedding in 1997, Patrick and Deb joined us for a special supper in Carson Road, at which he presented us with this verse:

Margo and Bill are a splendid pair,
No one could call them "ordinaire".
They're full of verve, and tasty too –
That's why we call them "premier cru".

At a family session when Margo's life expectancy was at its lowest, we agreed to invite Patrick to give the memorial address. When she recovered, she apologised to him amid laughter for having failed to, I can hardly say, "live" up to our expectations.

Patrick was in Hong Kong when Margo died, but we were delighted that he managed to fly back from Canton in time for a May Day celebration planned in a totally different way. He, Deb and their two children, Harriet and Toby, were all with us at a tea party. I showed them later a photo in which Harriet but not Toby appeared. However, we could see his pants, which he had taken off and left on the grass.

On Christmas Day 1999, Peter, Annie and I joined the Connors in Herne Hill. Sadly, Deb was in bed with 'flu, but her now widowed mother Pat and brother Robert Lewis took on to cook and serve the lunch, freeing Patrick to look after the children and the guests. It was a joy to sit beside Chérie, to think back on a friendship of over 55 years and to see her enjoying to the full her two children and five grandchildren.

Jardines and Coopers

A former Indian administrator, Lionel Jardine is known all over the world for the role of "Mr Roland" which he played in the African film *Freedom*. We first got to know him and his wife Marjorie when we met for a time at Hays Mews with a group of professional people known as "The Heavies".

They hosted for a time MRA homes both in Wilton Crescent, Belgravia, and at 45 Berkeley Square, where they encouraged us to bring parties of overseas cadets. We got to know their son, John, who became an expert in renovating houses and settled with his wife and family in France.

We visited each other frequently when they were in their own home in Chobham. We gave a dinner party one evening for them and their friends of Indian days, Brigadier John Daniell, at that time a retired administrative officer at the Staff College, and his wife, Phyl. We were to meet them again over 30 years later as the parents of our Carson Road neighbour, Susan Robinson.

The Jardines eventually settled in a flat in Kensington next to their daughter Barbara, her husband, Neville Cooper, and their two daughters. Neville, backed by Stanley Kiaer, founded the Institute of Business Ethics and has been for many years Chairman of Friends of Westminster Productions.

He is also a member of the Magic Circle. A fellow member who was in hospital in the next bed to Margo was keen to show her some of his tricks. She went up in his estimation when he heard she was a friend of Neville. He even came back to visit her after he had been released.

We were privileged to spend a few precious peaceful minutes with Lionel a few hours before he died.

Marjorie was an extremely good and very fast driver, but was wise enough to know when to give it up. Barbara drove her to lunch with us one day and Susan Robinson came over to meet them. We were at a party to celebrate her 90th birthday and visited her in her last days in the same nursing home in Chelsea as our friend Norah Kerr.

Hendersons, Hallowes and Sykes

Among the "Heavies" with whom we met at Berkeley Square were Douglas and Erina Henderson. We also met them at Caux with their two sons, Michael and Gerald, who had spent the war evacuated to America.

Michael was trained in journalism by Peter Howard and became a prolific writer. He married Erica, elder daughter of Michael Hallowes, Headmaster of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford, and his wife, Ursula. They were close friends of ours for many years. Michael Hallowes and I worked closely for a time in a campaign to persuade members of the Church of England Synod to take up some particular cause.

In the '70s Michael Henderson took on the editorship of an MRA Newsletter. He and Erica hosted 26 Catherine Place. Andrew lived with them and worked with and was trained by Michael. With their daughter Juliet and other members of their household, they were visitors to Milcote Cottage on Christmas Day 1975 and several other occasions. We spent Christmas 1976 and New Year 1977 with them at Catherine Place.

On two occasions when the Hendersons left Catherine Place for a week or two, Margo and I helped as hosts, once with Chris and Anne Hartnell, once with David and Margot Young.

We had met Erina Henderson, a widow, at Caux, where she introduced us to her Catholic priest, Father Fox. We saw her on a number of occasions at Catherine Place, and she kindly invited us to stay with her in Tunbridge Wells at the time of Susan Thornhill's wedding to Rob Corcoran.

Over the years, Michael has written a series of books on reconciliation. The Dalai Lama wrote the foreword to *All Her Paths Are Peace*, which tells the story of 16 women around the world who have been pioneers in peace-making. His latest book (1) has been endorsed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. His work led to the adoption in 1998 of *Agenda for Reconciliation* as "an umbrella heading for much of MRA's international peace-building work in areas of conflict". He is a member of the Council of Management of MRA.

Michael and Erica have recently settled in North Devon after spending 20 years in Portland, Oregon, where he arranged television and radio interviews and contributed a regular column to the magazine *For a Change*, "A Different Accent".

Gerald Henderson married Judith Sykes and lived for a time at Tirley Garth. One evening they were showing a film to an officer in the Royal Engineers, Colonel Dick Bishop, and his wife, Audrey, who were stationed in the neighbourhood. At the end of the film they spotted a credit to Andrew Stallybrass. Andrew's best friends at prep school had been their son, Robin, and David Gye, son of another "Sapper" officer. They had spent their spare time building forts in a corner of the school grounds. Dick had been a Company Commander at Sandhurst at that time, and we had arranged to take Robin and David with us on a family holiday in the Hut on the Dee, which had been a great success. Gerald and Judy then arranged for us to renew our friendship with the Bishops at Tirley Garth. A few years later, Audrey, a widow, visited us in Carson Road.

Gerald and Judith have since established a thriving centre in Liverpool, playing a key part in *Hope in the Cities*, one of a number of programmes sponsored by MRA. Its work in Liverpool and other cities has focused on building trust-based relationships between those in authority and positions of power and those at the grass roots, especially in multi-racial environments. In Liverpool they have been supporting acts of repentance and initiatives for equal opportunities in jobs. This was a follow-up to the unanimous apology of the City Council as its final act of the millennium, for Liverpool's leading role over three centuries in the Atlantic slave trade.

A few days before we moved from White Cottage to Ascot, Doreen Sykes, Judith's mother, a talented artist, spent a day with us painting fine watercolours of two different aspects of the cottage. These Andrew had framed as a permanent reminder of his happy childhood days. They hang alongside paintings by Heaton Cooper and Bernard Eyre Walker in our dining room.

(1) Michael Henderson: *Forgiveness – Breaking the Chain of Hate*

The Pelham Burn Family

Major Ian Pelham Burn, a retired regular Royal Artillery officer, and his wife Pamela lived with their seven children in a large house and garden at Colgate near Horsham with a fine view over the Sussex countryside to the South Downs.

At the summer conference at Caux one year I was joined later by Margo. Over a meal with the Pelham Burns, Pamela wondered why I seemed to have

become less of a man since Margo's arrival. This led to a most profitable review of our relationship with each other.

We were invited to the weddings of two of their daughters, Elizabeth, a professional artist, married Francis Brown who, after doing National Service as an Army officer, taught for many years in schools in Singapore and Malaysia; he later wrote the history of one of them. We met them again after many years through Tony Sursham together with their son Richard.

In 1994, Pamela, the Browns and their daughter Juliet and several of her friends were at Caux together. Juliet was studying film and television with David Channer and did a joint television interview with Pamela and Margo. She has since qualified in the craft of boat-building.

The Browns live close to the Cathedral-Abbey of St Albans, where Elizabeth is responsible for arranging art exhibitions. Tony encouraged Francis to go to Tuesday meetings at the Westminster Theatre, for which they later took joint responsibility. Tony also brought them to Margo's "Art Ventures", to which they contributed greatly.

Mary Pelham Burn stayed with us at White Cottage while looking after Judi Conner, whose parents were abroad. We were at her wedding to Nigel Morshead, whose father, an Indian Army officer, had taken part in the 1921 and 1922 Everest expeditions. Nigel, a chartered accountant, was Treasurer of the Oxford Group. We have a common interest in West Africa. He came to back us at a historic tea party on the eve of my leaving for Ghana in 1960.

We met another daughter, Sarah, at the MRA centre in Paris when we were visiting Andrew there. She married Blair Cummock, an artist who specialises in designing book covers. They lived with their children at Tirley Garth for a time and have now settled in Scotland.

In the mid-90s we visited Pamela occasionally. Widowed some time previously, she was still living in the large house supported by her family. Her son John and his wife Lyn were living with her. A pilot with a commercial air firm, he does useful work in the garden.

In 1995 Pamela passed some thoughts to Margo, who read them at the opening of an inter-generational session at the Caux summer conference, "Give the LOVE you never gave because you knew not how. Be the COMFORT you were not because you didn't see the need. Give the JOY that you didn't allow time for, because you let duty take its place. Give the PEACE

you didn't give while self-will drove you on". Then she added, "There is no limit to the number of grandchildren that we can care for with God's help". She has twelve grandchildren.

In November 2000 I phoned Pamela. Sarah and another daughter were with her and she had a professional carer. She was well enough to receive neighbours on her 91st birthday.

Roderick and Sally MacLeod

We first met Rod through Margo's youngest brother, Tony Bigland. He was a frequent visitor at White Cottage. In December 1954 he underwent treatment for a slipped disc at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey, and afterwards came to us to recuperate and to spend Christmas. "Ga Biggie" had brought his grandsons a model railway set and he and Rod spent quite as much time as the boys playing with it.

Rod remembers going for a walk on the common, meeting tanks training and Peter being lifted into one of them and shown round.

On another occasion Rod and I spent a lot of time and energy relaying the stair carpet. One Saturday morning two men, who were digging a trench in the woods, approached us. One of them wanted to knock off early for a football match. It was illegal to do such work alone, so he paid Rod £5 to watch over his mate for the next hour.

We went to Rod and Sally Pawle's wedding in Ingatestone, Essex. Sally, who had trained as a musician and was teaching singing and piano, had inherited her late parents' large house with a huge estate. Margo and I were delighted to be invited to their wedding. Their next-door-neighbour, Peter Mavor, an officer in the Royal Engineers, I had known as a Sandhurst cadet and a member of the Mountaineering and Exploration Club. His wife was Rod's cousin. Later, the Mavors were closely involved with Margo's cousin, Gwyn Grogan.

In January 1978, when we were living with Robin and Francis Evans in Cambridge, Rod and Sally came to lunch and tea with us together with their twin daughters Diana and Helen and son Torquil.

After that, we seldom saw their children, but met usually at concerts in Essex or in Dulwich. Sally used to sing in the Bach Choir, and on one memorable occasion they invited me to join them for one of the annual

performances in the Royal Festival Hall of the St Matthew Passion with a picnic lunch in the interval.

Rod worked for many years as a heating engineer. He has had a heart by-pass, but is remarkably fit and works hard in the garden. Their children are all now out in the world and they have one grandson.

On a recent visit, they took me round the magnificent Ingatestone Hall and its fine gardens, the home of the Catholic Petre family. I was reminded constantly of the Cliffords of Chudleigh and of their home, Ugbrooke.

Four Generations of Riddells

During our time at White Cottage, Bob and Muriel Riddell with their two young sons, Peter and David, came to stay with us for a short holiday.

I had first met Bob and his mother, Helen Riddell, a great old lady with a fund of humour and common sense, at the Bucklands' in Battersea. Bob was a Warrant Officer in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps working in the War Office. He lent me his bicycle, which I rode to work each day in our top floor offices in Peter Robinson's in Oxford Street. Margo had known Muriel when they were working with Frank Buchman, one as a cook, the other as a telephonist.

When Andrew was working in London, he and Peter Riddell were both living in Catherine Place. Peter was then studying for a BA at Durham University together with Geoffrey Burns and qualifying as ARCM in 'cello and piano. We have happy memories of listening to him playing Beethoven piano sonatas. He had at that time a fine young South African friend, Sam Pono, who visited us in Ascot and played his saxophone with our musical tenants.

Shortly after we moved to Carson Road, it was decided to limit the weekly Wednesday morning meetings at the Westminster Theatre to those working full time with MRA. The Riddells and others decided to meet every Tuesday morning. I accepted readily an invitation to help Bob and Muriel to run them. While some thought of us as the "left-overs", others believed that, freed from responsibility for the organisation of the movement, we had a unique opportunity for life changing. Callers at the Theatre wanting to know more were encouraged to come to our meetings. One member of Alcoholics Anonymous, hearing that they had been an offshoot of the Oxford Group, joined our meetings and brought other members.

At a Sunday meeting in the Westminster Theatre at that time I was delighted to be asked to lead a small discussion group together with Peter Riddell.

Sadly, both Bob and Muriel died, he in 1996, she in 1997. They had become staunch members of the St Joseph's Catholic Church, Shooters Hill. Their funerals brought together family and friends in a remarkable way, including their four grandchildren. One of the regular congregation, Eamon Quigley, was a good friend of mine. Working as Security Officer at the Westminster Theatre, he had been a Warrant Officer in the Royal Artillery.

I had already stopped going to Tuesday meetings for two reasons: I felt that I had become too central and was blocking the way for others to take leadership; both Margo, suffering from many health problems and with very limited strength, and I were becoming increasingly involved with our neighbours in Carson Road, she through her painting, I through our Neighbourhood Watch.

Tony Sursham invited Francis Brown from St Albans to join him in leading the Tuesday meetings, which have continued to thrive. They, together with Francis's wife Elizabeth, have been those who have helped us most in our painting ventures.

For some years Peter Riddell has been closely involved in "Agenda for Reconciliation" in the Middle East and has recently been elected to the General Management Committee of the Oxford Group.

At a gathering in Oxford a few years ago, Margo and I were delighted to find ourselves at a tea with Peter and Susan Riddell and their two children, Grace and Francis, the fourth generation of Riddells whom I have counted as my good friends.

The Hore-Ruthven Family

Colonel the Hon. Malise Hore-Ruthven, whose brother was Governor-General of Australia, had commanded a battalion of the Black Watch on the Western Front. His wife, the Hon. Angela Manners had, against family opposition, trained as a nurse and, with Churchill's backing, had raised and taken out to France a women's ambulance unit. Captured by the Germans, they behaved so badly and caused so much trouble that their captors were only too glad to release them.

We had the good fortune to accompany them to Caux one year, sharing the driving in their car. Near Albert, Malise pointed out to us the scene of a battle in which he had taken part. Typically British, he in a cloth cap, she in a large hat, they insisted on stopping for afternoon tea each day and were horrified that the only milk available was tinned. Stopping for petrol, Malise called for my help, "The wretched boy doesn't understand English".

Malise accepted my offer to help him with his memoirs. I arranged to take him to the Staff College Library, where a list of his fellow-students roused memories.

I would read up the war record of the Black Watch in the Sandhurst Library and borrow plans of battles. Armed with these and a tape recorder, I would spend happy afternoons with Malise in their home in Ashley Gardens. Being recorded did not bother him. I would question him and he would reminisce happily. At home I would edit what he had recorded. On one tape I was delighted to hear his daughter Nancy asking, "Are you a kipper man, Bill?" I hope his son James will one day have the memoirs published.

Nancy, who died comparatively young in a motor accident, was an actress and playwright. A play about an officer had a scene set in Sandhurst. To check its authenticity we invited Nancy to meet Colonel Denis O'Flaherty, a very colourful Sandhurst College Commander, and read the play to him. He was deeply moved by it. Andrew later took part in a performance of it at Caux.

At the wedding in London of their daughter Sally to Jim Baynard-Smith, whom we had known as Frank Buchman's personal assistant, we were happy to get to know his parents. We have had many happy times with them and their two sons in their home in Oxford.

We invited Malise and Angy to Ascot when the Headmaster of Eton, Chenevix-Trent, where James had been at school, was to preach at Sandhurst. We were much amused by Angy's concern for her husband. After supper she dozed off while Malise and I were talking, surfaced with a start and asked, "Has he been asleep? He's getting very elderly, you know".

Five minutes before the time I had said we should leave for Chapel, Angy appeared, saying, "I know he's going to be late". Malise appeared on the dot and we waited a minute or two for Angy to collect things she had forgotten.

As the sermon started, Malise did doze off. As we were leaving, he announced very audibly, "Funny sort of service – no sermon!"

My friendship with Malise meant a lot to me, perhaps because I was able to do for him what I could never do for my own father, who died when I was six.

James and his wife, Dron Craig, stayed with us in Ascot for a time and met some of my colleagues. Dron and I sometimes meet proof-reading the magazine *For a Change*. I was able to suggest a suitable route and provide maps for their son Sandy, now an environmental specialist, to cycle to Caux.

The Boobyers

Brian Boobyer was an international rugby player and an Oxford Double Blue for rugby and cricket. I first met him at Sandhurst, when he was opening the batting with his South African friend Murray Hofmeyr for Oxford University against the Army. Brian and I had fellowship together in my office.

When he was playing against Hampshire at Basingstoke, I brought him on a Sunday to White Cottage. He passed on to our boys something of his enthusiasm for birds and plants.

He married Juliet, artist daughter of Lord Rennell of Rodd. When we were *in loco parentis* to Francis Evans at Radley, the Boobyers invited us to their home in Oxford, where he could play with their sons.

We once heard Philip as a student of Russian give an excellent talk on Russian literature at Caux. He is now Lecturer in Russian at Kent University. Mark is a housemaster at Wellington College.

Brian uses his talents to the full, both as a writer and as a lay preacher. His address at the Remembrance Service for Bunny Austin was reported in *The Daily Telegraph*.

He and Juliet now live in her family home, The Rodd, in Powys.

The Bond Family

In the early '50s, Major Reginald Bond of the Royal Army Education Corps was a student at the Staff College. He, his wife Jessie, a general practitioner, and their four children, Elizabeth, Jane, John and Heather, were living in Sandhurst village. On at least one occasion Andrew and Peter stayed with

them while Margo and I spent weekends away. In varying numbers over the years, they stayed with us at White Cottage, at Milcote Cottage and at the Bigland Hut on the Dee.

Reg was later posted to Cyprus. While there, his mother, who lived in Somerset, was taken ill and eventually died. We met him at Stansted Airport and had him to stay with us for a night on his way.

While he was working at the RAEC Depot in Eltham Palace, Jane, who had become a professional violinist in an orchestra, married a colleague, Michael Beeston, viola player in the Edinburgh Quartet. The wedding, to which we were invited, took place in the Woolwich Military Chapel with the reception in Eltham Palace.

When I officially took on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language at Sandhurst, I attended a short course at Eltham Palace and was invited by Reg to a Dinner Night in the Officers' Mess.

In 1962 Reg, who had passed the Army Interpretership Exam in Russian, and Jessie were working in Berlin with the British Commander-in-Chief's Mission to the Soviet Forces of Occupation in Germany (BRIXMIS). Their story has been told by Tony Geraghty.

"For forty years of Cold War in Europe a team of British Intelligence agents – from the three armed services, the SAS, and the Foreign Office – working under diplomatic cover as 'liaison' officers, ranged like pirates through East Germany, in uniform and unarmed. Their target: the massive military strength assembled on German soil by the Soviets for a potential invasion of the west. These few men gathered a mass of military intelligence information; their efforts met with a violent Soviet response." (1)

The Bonds were involved in an incident in which Corporal Douglas Day, RAF, was shot and severely wounded by East German border guards. Ordered by Lt-Colonel Ian Wellsted, he was driving a duty officer in Mission Car. He was taken to an East German civilian hospital.

"By 9 am Wellsted was at the hospital accompanied by his colleague Lieutenant-Colonel R. J. Bond (a translator from the Royal Army Education Corps) and Bond's wife, who was the British Families' Medical Officer in Berlin. Attempts to evacuate Day by ambulance or helicopter were rebuffed by the Soviets acting, they said, on 'medical advice' ...

"Back at the hospital, a sort of siege was now beginning. Dr (Mrs) Bond remained at Day's bedside as permission was given for his removal to a British hospital and then withdrawn ostensibly to assist Day's survival. A conference involving the hospital director, the German surgeon in charge of Day's case, a British army doctor (Captain Dyer RAMC, senior surgeon, British Military Hospital, Berlin), Dr Bond and Lieutenant-Colonel Bond was actually held around the casualty's bed. Also present, but just out of sight, was a squad of Stasi secret police." (2)

"Day recovered from his wounds, in spite of having lost a kidney. He finally retired from the RAF as respected Warrant Officer on Christmas Day 1991, after thirty-five years' service." (3)

As a full Colonel, Reg served on a committee planning the future of Sandhurst, which led to the closure of the Department of Languages. With the development of audio-visual aids and language laboratories, it seemed more sensible to send officers on crash courses, as required, rather than spend time on languages as cadets.

After retiring from the Army, Reg worked in adult education in Papua New Guinea and the north of Australia. The onset of cancer forced him to leave and he and Jessie returned to the Orkney Isles, where she had grown up. Reg died after eight eventful years of retirement.

Like Andrew, John Bond decided to work full time with MRA in London. They toured the world together with the MRA musical *Anything to Declare?* He and Andrew lived for a time at 26 Catherine Place with Michael and Erica Henderson hosting.

John married Nada Middleton, an Australian secretary. They now live with their family in Hughes, a suburb of Canberra. John is joint Editor with Andrew Lancaster of the MRA World Bulletin. He is Secretary of the National Sorry Day Committee, which organised a nation-wide apology to Aboriginal Australians for cruel past policies and has now developed into the Journey of Healing.

The Beestons suffered a tragedy when Jane was killed in a motor accident. The Bonds' eldest daughter Elizabeth flew back from Tasmania to help. While we were staying with the Hastings in West Linton, she drove her mother to mourn with us.

(1) Tony Geraghty: (HarperCollins, 1997), Dustcover

(2) Ibid, pp.125-6.

(3) Ibid, p.131.

Major-General Sir David and Lady Katharine (née Beresford) Dawnay

General Stockwell's successor as Sandhurst Commandant was General Dawnay. An Irishman, he had at one time during the war commanded the North Irish Horse. He had married a cousin, Lady Katharine Beresford of Waterford.

Her brother, Lord Hugh Beresford, had in 1940, when his ship was stationed in Liverpool, given Margo real friendship at a very difficult time in her life. Shortly afterwards, he had lost his life when *HMS Kelly*, in which he was serving under Lord Louis Mountbatten, was sunk in the Mediterranean.

On their arrival, Margo wrote to Lady K to tell her of her link with her brother and received a letter back saying that the family had disapproved of his association with MRA.

Lady K then invited us to go with her to London to a lecture sponsored by a religious organisation in which she was interested. She herself found it so boring that she apologised for taking us and promised to come to one of our meetings. We took them both to a big meeting in the Westminster Central Hall, which they both found interesting.

We then invited them to dinner one evening to meet Commander John Joughin, who had served with Lord Hugh and who told stories about him which moved Lady K deeply.

An annual Sandhurst event was the compulsory after-dinner Kermit Roosevelt Lecture, given by a visiting American General. Lady K, who was an early riser, riding every morning before breakfast, asked Margo to sit behind her and prod her if she saw her nodding off.

We kept in touch after the General went on to command a local Territorial Division. When the very successful musical *The Vanishing Island* was running at the Westminster Theatre, we invited the Dawnays. She had been kicked in the face by a horse and only he was able to come. A few weeks later, however, we invited her to a dinner at 45 Berkeley Square before the play and arranged a bed for her in the back of our estate car for her to sleep on the drive back.

We lost touch with the Dawnays until, in 1965, we moved from White Cottage to Milcote Cottage, Ascot. The Milcote estate, of which Milcote Cottage had been the coach-house, had belonged to Sir Hugh Dawnay, at one time ADC to Lord Roberts of Kandahar; the latter had owned Englemere, the big house across the road. The Field-Marshal had had the bitter task in the opening weeks of World War I of breaking the news to Lady Susan Dawnay that her husband had been killed. (1)

Sir David, the eldest of their four sons, had just been appointed Clerk of the Course at Ascot and was living in Royal Enclosure Lodge. The Dawnays were frequent visitors to the old coach-house. They often brought us plants, and he would provide us with tickets for our many visitors to watch polo from the stands on Smith's Lawn, close to members of the Royal family. He himself had been an international player and we would often see him umpiring matches.

It was a wonderful privilege to entertain at Milcote Cottage on the same day the Dawnays to lunch and the leaders of the refuse collectors and their wives to evening coffee.

One evening the Dawnays invited us to dinner and we found ourselves the only guests. After dinner they switched on the 9.00 News on radio and both went to sleep but surfaced while we were wondering what action to take.

Margo invited Lady K to meet Doë Howard who, like Margo, had been greatly helped by her brother Hugh and, as Doris Metaxa, had won the Women's Doubles at Wimbledon. The General, who was a great tennis lover, asked if he might come too and, over lunch, reminisced with her over famous matches in which she had played. Afterwards, Lady K took Doë and Margo to Royal Enclosure Lodge, talked about Hugh's service with Mountbatten and showed them the watch which had been found on his body and which she occasionally wore.

Late one summer evening, Lady K phoned to ask if she and the General could come to lunch next day. Margo had taken friends away in our car and I was taking the train to Camberley each day with a walk of a mile at each end. Fortunately, I was free that day at 10.15. I did some quick shopping in Camberley on the way to the train, prepared a cold lunch on a trolley and tried to remember all the little details Margo would have thought of for her guests. By the time they arrived, I was relaxed and at peace. The General, as usual, wanted the latest news of mutual friends at Sandhurst. It was our last meeting;

he died a few weeks later. Lady K visited us again two or three times. She died aged 91.

In 1997 my friend Deric Skey recommended me to read *With Churchills to War*, the history of 48th Battalion Royal Tank Regiment, in which he had served. In it I found photographs of Brigadier David Dawnay, their Brigade Commander at one time. After reading the book, I sent it to the Dawnays' eldest son, Hugh. Retiring from the Army as a Major, he followed in his father's footsteps as a polo player, founding an international Polo School in Waterford and writing a book, *Polo Vision*, which has sold all over the polo world. His Argentinian wife has organised programmes for Chernobyl children in Belarussia. Their younger son was in the polo team which won the Cowdray Gold Cup, the British Open, in 1996.

(1) David James: *Lord Roberts*, (Hollis & Carter, 1954), p.478.

The Dennison Family

One day at Caux Andrew and his friend Stuart Dennison, who had travelled together in *Anything to Declare?*, arranged for their parents to meet. As we talked over a meal, it struck us that Les, a retired plumber, and his wife Vera were just the right couple to meet the Dawnays, so we invited them to Ascot for a weekend. Lady Katharine seemed hesitant to accept an invitation to Sunday evening supper, until Margo remembered that *The Forsyte Saga* was then on television, so arranged that we watch together before supper. After supper the two wives chatted on the sofa, while the General heard with great interest how Les had operated as a Communist, moving from job to job and planning strikes and disruption wherever he went and was now equally revolutionary as a Christian.

The next morning I took Les to lunch in the Sandhurst Officers' Mess and introduced him to a number of my friends. As a former anti-Royalist, he was happy to find himself standing close to a member of the Royal family.

We later visited the Dennisons in their home in Coventry and were taken to the moving war memorial in the shattered Cathedral.

In retirement, the plumber has become the writer of vivid articles. "VJ Day '95" is a moving account of his war experiences and of his victory over bitterness. On a visit to his son Stuart, then working in the film industry in New Zealand, he sent me a most amusing "Life begins at 80", to which I turn if ever I am tempted to feel depressed.

Les is a member of a "British veterans organisation, the Burma Campaign Fellowship Group, which was founded specifically to build bridges between former enemies of World War II". In an article in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* of 12 December 1998, under the headline, "Time to call a truce on lasting bitterness", he wrote:

"I write as an 83-year-old ex-serviceman who served in the Far East, was defeated and taken prisoner in Singapore, helped clear up the dead and debris with a handcart in Singapore, had a spell in Changi prison, then back up country to Thailand, then marched 200 miles through swamp and jungle to Soukuria, the death camp. After completing our stint of 15 kilometres of railroad and one of the bridges over the River Kwai, 400 survivors out of 1,600 moved on into Burma.

"Yes, I still have nightmares and even imagine the sweet sickly stench of the dead waiting to be burnt on a pyre, rain permitting. But with the passing of 55 years, there has been growth, learning, maturity, caring for wife, family and friends.

"In 1962 I reluctantly attended an international conference. Reluctantly, because I learnt that there was a Japanese delegation attending. One of the Japanese who spoke before the 800 international delegates, General Sugita, who attended the surrender of Singapore, bowing low said, 'I know what happened during the campaign. I can never expect you to forget what happened'. Then, bowing once more, he said, 'I am sorry. Please forgive me and my nation'.

"It was then that the healing of bitterness and hatred began. Since then I have experienced the care and friendship of many Japanese who have shown sincere remorse and apologies ... I find the many unforgettable memories can be lived with in the deep healing peace that I nurtured out of one's basic change of attitude." (1)

- (1) Michael Henderson: *Forgiveness – Breaking the Chain of Hate* (Book Partners, Oregon, 1999), pp.113-114.

Channers, Nowells and Dodds

One Sunday morning in 1956 we had a visit at White Cottage from Major General George Channer. He had served in World War I in Palestine and had

been a prisoner of war of the Turks. He had used his captivity to learn Turkish and now had with him his Turkish friend General Halil Kut.

The Sandhurst Commandant, Major General "Pooh" Hobbs, asked me to bring them to meet him at Government House. Our visitors had seen a performance of the musical *The Vanishing Island*, which was running at the Westminster Theatre. General Hobbs was so impressed by General Kut's account of the play that he went to see it for himself.

We were grateful for George Channer's honest admission that his career in the Indian Army had suffered through allowing MRA friends to persuade him to take actions that were unsuitable for a General. I needed at that time to face a similar lesson at Sandhurst and was finding it hard to learn.

The two Channer sons served as officers in India in World War II, Richard ("Dick") with the Royal Artillery in the Burma campaign, David with the Bombay Sappers and Miners.

Dick, who was wounded at the battle of Imphal and was awarded the Military Cross, belongs, like our friend Les Dennison, to the Burma Campaign Fellowship Group. In May 1998 Dick was one of those who waved Japanese flags to welcome Emperor Akihito on the Mall. "After the procession had passed, one of the protesting servicemen whipped Channer's flag from his hand. Channer's gesture did not go unnoticed. Later that day Independent Television News interviewed him when he waved the Japanese flag outside Westminster Abbey as the Emperor laid a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier". (1)

Shortly after the war ended, Tony Bigland made a hundred mile journey to visit David Channer in Kirkee, Poona. Later David visited Tony in Colaba, where they witnessed the ceremonial departure from India Gate of Mountbatten and the first British regiments. Dick has built many friendships in India and his visits there have been almost an annual event.

Dick married Chris Nowell, whose parents, John and Margaret Nowell, had been good friends to Margo's mother and had come to our wedding. John ran a tannery in Runcorn, which became a model of industrial relations. In the '50s, when the shoe leather trade suffered severe difficulties, John Nowell founded the Leather Institute to promote the use of leather in other ways, especially for clothes.

When in 1955, Mother and I were travelling from Euston to Lancaster to see my brother Stephen for the last time, we shared a compartment with Margaret Nowell, who included us in solving the crossword puzzle she was working on.

Their son Hugh Nowell and his American wife, Carolyn Crary, are our good friends. Hugh ran Grosvenor Books for some years. After the publication of Garth Lean's excellent biography of Frank Buchman, Hugh, Michael Hutchinson, Francis Smith and I worked together to write a pamphlet entitled "Notes for Study", "to encourage those who have already appreciated its broad sweep to seek out in it for themselves, either in groups or as individuals, the basic truths of Buchman's life and teaching". I have in front of me a copy in which the blank pages at the end are full of notes and references which Margo made. I am challenged to make a fresh study myself.

We first got to know Dick, Chris and their daughter Alison well at Caux one year when they were taking part in a play. Chris, a talented actress and dancer, has taken part in many plays and films. Alison was at school in Camberley; we had a visit in Ascot from mother and daughter together with the great American singer, Muriel Smith.

Alison married Ken Dodds, a good friend of Andrew's through the musical *Anything to Declare?* Ken is a video producer and one summer when he was filming at Caux, we had a happy lunch with the whole family. When I was away from home, Ken came to take Margo to a showing of the film in their home.

David Channer married Kirstin Rasmussen of a distinguished Danish family. He has directed a number of outstanding films, including *For the Love of Tomorrow*, based on the life of the great French patriot Madame Irène Laure. Andrew has occasionally worked closely with him.

In 1971 David, Kirstin and their son Alan stayed with us in Ascot to celebrate my 60th birthday and to meet the military historian Antony Brett-James. We drove the Channers to Virginia Water where Alan, a keen ornithologist, enjoyed watching birds diving.

David and Kirstin visited our Pakistani friend General Malik a few years before we did. When we visited him in 1980, they drove us to Heathrow and met us there on our return. He had had his film on Irène Laure dubbed into

Urdu as a present for the Maliks. At the General's request, Margo and Eliane introduced it in the Officers' Mess to the wives, who greatly appreciated it.

Alan obtained a Doctorate in Science at Reading University and spent a fascinating year on a thinly populated Asian island.

In the '90s David and Alan together made a valuable contribution towards conflict resolution in Cambodia, including making a 20-minute documentary in Khmer, *The Serene Smile*, which was shown widely all over the country. Alan has also directed a documentary on the life of Colonel Alan Knight in Kenya.

In the mid '90s Alan and Ian Kiaer together with a group of young professionals ran intergenerational sessions at Caux and invited us as "honorary grandparents" three summers running to back them.

On our last visit together to Caux in 1996, Margo and I had a meal out on the terrace with Alan, his wife Mary and their daughter Leela, the fourth generation of Channer friends.

- (1) Michael Henderson: *Forgiveness – Breaking the Chain of Hate*, (Book Partners, Oregon, 1999), pp.111-113.

Major-General R. W. ("Tiger") Urquhart

In the late 1950s the film *Freedom* was released. The first full-length colour film to be written and acted by Africans, it depicts the struggle for independence of an imaginary African country and the establishment of unity between all the parties concerned on the basis of forgiveness and reconciliation. It struck me as being just what we needed at Sandhurst to help both staff and cadets to communicate effectively and build real relationships with our overseas cadets, many of whom would become leaders of their countries.

I approached General Urquhart, who had succeeded General Hobbs as commandant. He arranged a showing for the staff to consider including it in the official syllabus. He was advised against this, but asked for an open showing for all. The publicity was undertaken by a team of four cadets: a Pakistani Muslim, a British Anglican, a Ghanaian Roman Catholic and a Nepalese Buddhist.

Lt-Colonel W. A. C. ("Bill") Collingwood, one of the three College Commanders, asked if he might introduce it. He had previously come with us to see a group of German miners perform their play, *Hoffnung*. In his introduction, he said that to him the film represented the eternal battle between good and evil.

The day after the showing, I was present at a meeting to assess certain cadets' officer qualities. An officer praised one cadet for making sure that some visiting schoolboys for whom he was responsible went to see the film *Freedom*.

Lt-Colonel H. R. A. (Tony) and Sue Streather

The Sandhurst Mountaineering and Exploration Club was run for a time by Tony Streather. He was one of the last British officers to be commissioned in the Indian Army. Between 1945 and 1950 he served with the 6th Rajputana Rifles, the Zhob Militia and the Chitral Scouts. At partition in 1947 he was ADC to the Governor of the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

He owes his career as a mountaineer to a period of study of Pashtu in Peshawar. As an expert in this language, he was invited to join a Norwegian expedition to Tirich Mir in the Hindu Kush. "Thus he joined his first real mountaineering expedition with no more in the way of personal preparation or equipment than a golfing jacket, and so climbed to the top of the mountain dressed in much the same way as had English gentlemen in the pioneering days of the sport 50 years earlier". (1)

Returning to the UK, he was commissioned in the Gloucestershire Regiment and served for a time in Korea.

After attending a mountain warfare course in Norway, he was invited to be transport officer of the 1953 American expedition to K2, the world's second highest mountain. After the death of one of the party in appalling conditions, Tony's leadership qualities were fully appreciated.

In 1955 he was one of four on the British expedition to Kangchenjunga to reach the summit for the first time. Such was his reputation when he arrived as a Company Instructor at Sandhurst in 1956.

He was granted leave to lead the 1957 Oxford University expedition to Haramosh, which ended in tragedy. Tony presents the heroic story, which is

told in *The Last Blue Mountain* (2), each term as part of the Sandhurst course on leadership.

We used to visit Tony and his wife Sue in their Army bungalow when the garden was full of equipment for the expedition and later when he was recovering from frostbite.

Tony and their eldest son spent a Christmas with us at White Cottage while Sue was in hospital for the birth of their second child.

Tony invited me to join him and others in founding the Army Mountaineering Association, of which he is now President. He has also been President of the Alpine Club. He invited me to the Club Dinner one year when Lord Mountbatten was the Guest of Honour.

Outstanding events in Tony's later career were with a peace-keeping force in Cyprus in 1962, when he was appointed MBE, and as leader of the Army Everest expedition in 1976, in which two men reached the summit, when he was appointed OBE.

Retiring in 1981, Tony returned to Sandhurst for ten years as Sports and Estates Officer. On visits to Sandhurst after I had retired, I would meet him for lunch in the Officers' Mess.

In 1987, Tony became Chairman of World Challenge, "an 18-month scheme to enable teams of students to create, fund, plan and lead a challenging expedition from their schools, incorporating project-based and adventurous objectives, to remote parts of the developing world, with professional back-up". In eleven years the scheme has enabled 283 British schools to make expeditions to Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Honduras, India, Java, Jordan, Kalimantan, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Rajasthan, South Africa, Sulawesi, Tanzania, Thailand, Tibet, Uganda, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

This has involved Tony in a number of visits to Nepal and Pakistan, where he planned expeditions with General Malik and was invited to lecture on leadership at the Pakistan Military Academy. When Malik visited London in 1998, Tony came up by train from Wiltshire to meet him over lunch.

Celebrations of our Golden Wedding in 1997 went on for several weeks in different parts of the country. I had written to Tony and Sue Streather, who

now live in the delightful village of Hindon in Wiltshire, inviting them to join us for a pub lunch, but Sue insisted on giving us all a super champagne lunch; it was the first time we had all been together since Sandhurst days.

In April 1998, while staying with Margaret Green in Wells, we invited the Streathers to join us and Robin for a very happy pub lunch. Both Robin and Margo died a year later.

(1) For this quotation and much of the information on Tony's career, I am indebted to an article by a Sandhurst friend, Tony Heathcote, in *The Wish Stream – Journal of The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst*, Autumn 1991.

(2) Ralph Barker: *The Last Blue Mountain*, (Mountaineers, 1959).

Lt-General Ghulam Muhammad Malik

In March 1960, I flew to Ghana, leaving Margo to see the boys through their Easter holidays, to finalise the letting of White Cottage and to follow me out.

On the day before my departure, we gave a tea party to which we invited Major Charles Barwah, who was the one Ghanaian officer at the Staff College, all 14 Ghanaian cadets, cadets from Nigeria, Tanzania, Nepal and Pakistan, and some friends from London to meet them. Of the Ghanaian cadets, two later became Head of State, one Chief of Army Staff, one Commander of a United Nations Peacekeeping Force in the Middle East. The one Tanzanian became Chief of Staff of all three Armed Services and later Ambassador to Nigeria. The one Pakistani was Company Junior Under Officer G. M. Malik.

Malik had been to the previous Summer Conference at Caux. A few months later he became the first overseas cadet to pass out top in the Sandhurst Order of Merit out of an intake of 180 and received the Queen's Medal from Mr Harold Macmillan, then Prime Minister, who was taking The Sovereign's Parade. Malik made a point of inviting as his guests to the parade two Indian friends.

A member of the Academy hockey team, Malik had contributed a great deal in many ways to Sandhurst, while observing strictly the tenets of his Muslim faith. He was a frequent visitor to our home.

In 1965 in the war against India, he received an award for gallantry and was seriously wounded; he would have lost his life, had not the Battalion Sergeant-Major succeeded in drawing a doctor's attention to his urgent need.

In 1968 he visited us again as a Major when he came to attend the Staff College at Camberley. Margo helped him choose clothes for his bride-to-be.

In 1989 he invited us to visit him in Kakul near Abbotabad at the Pakistan Military Academy, of which as Major-General he was then Commandant. As Margo as suffering from undiagnosed pains, I refused at first to consider accepting, but she bravely said she was determined to go even if it was the last thing she did. I asked if we might bring Andrew and Eliane with us as our aides, to which the General readily agreed, having known Andrew as a small boy.

For Margo and me it was our only visit to an Asian country. Andrew and Eliane had often been to India, but she found it difficult as a feminist to accept Muslim customs concerning women.

At Islamabad Airport we were received in the VIP lounge by the General and his staff and whisked rapidly through customs. Margo so far forgot the country's traditions as to fling her arms around his neck as though he were her long lost son.

We stayed in a beautiful guest house, normally reserved for the President and the Chief of Staff, with British born Captain Baber Khan to look after us and act as interpreter with two servants and a cook. We arrived at the end of Ramadan and for a couple of days underwent the embarrassment of being well fed while our hosts were fasting.

Then came the Eid festival and Margo was invited to give away the prizes at children's sports in the morning. She could already feel a pain starting but, with Eliane's support, she bravely went through with it before retiring to bed. As in everything connected with our welfare, the General himself, accompanied by several senior officers, supervised the injection which his extremely embarrassed Medical Officer gave her. In Pakistan, as in Britain, Margo's pains seemed to cement friendship. By the evening she had recovered sufficiently to go to dinner with the General, his wife, his son (a Senior Under Officer who later won the Sword of Honour), and his three daughters.

Margo later received rather more effective treatment from a young Medical Officer who had been trained in Europe and was surprised to be told

by Malik that he was considering sacking him; he had had a number of complaints about him from the wives. Margo asked him to wait until she could consult her own GP. Dr Penny told her that he had effectively dealt with complaints about male doctors from Muslim women by ensuring that they were always accompanied by a female nurse. She wrote about this to Malik and saved the young man's career.

At one supper party, Eliane asked the General what lay behind our 30-year friendship. He was very thoughtful, then said, "Well, I remember coming down to breakfast at White Cottage and Margo would say, 'Has anyone any clothes that need washing?' Whereupon Begum Malik, who seldom spoke in her husband's presence, said, 'Yes, I have always been very jealous of you, Margo, because Malik is always telling me how much harder you work than I do'".

Of the many official visits we made, the most exciting was a two-night stay in Peshawar as guests of HQ Frontier Corps and a drive over the Khyber Pass. At Michni Fort on the top of the Pass, overlooking Afghanistan and the distant Hindu Kush mountains, the Colonel commanding the Khyber Rifles gave us, with the help of a sand-table model of the terrain, a brilliant lecture on the history of the Pass from the time of Alexander the Great to the recent withdrawal of Soviet troops from the frontier. Sandwiched between carriers full of armed guards, who took up defensive positions at every stop, we descended the far side of the Pass to Torkham. There the double-barred gate was opened for us to walk a few yards into Afghanistan and greet the Mujahideen guarding the frontier. We lunched in the beautiful Officers' Mess of the Khyber Rifles and were shown the suite where the Princess Royal had recently stayed.

We had personal interviews with the Governor of the North West Frontier Province, who briefed us on Pakistan's support of the Afghans opposing Soviet occupation, and with the Minister of State for Defence. He gave us a vivid picture of the trial of troops skirmishing with the Indians 8,000 metres up on the Siachen Glacier – 40 casualties in three months all from weather conditions, frostbite and avalanches – and of the cost of providing them with the latest Alpine equipment, purchased from Western manufacturers. We also met a number of senior officers, with some of whom we reminisced about Sandhurst. We were taken for two picnics in the hills above Kakul with distant views of the Karakorams.

Andrew and Eliane usually travelled with the Major responsible for organising our programme. Margo and I were privileged to travel with the General and greatly appreciated the opportunity of hearing how, in every situation, he encouraged the forces under his command to build into the local community.

At one point the car stalled on a steep hill; as a result of cuts in the Defence budget, the General's car was a small Nissan with a 1,000 cc engine. Without a moment's hesitation he got out and started to push, joined by me; he cheerfully acknowledged the villagers' smiles at seeing a General in uniform pushing his car with its flag and stars. Our destination was a signals station at the top of the hill, where our hosts were very embarrassed to see Sergeant Dildar, the General's driver, open the car door for a lone European lady to emerge; the General and I arrived on foot a few minutes later.

Andrew and I were asked to address the 350 cadets of the Senior Division and a number of the staff on "Understanding Human Nature". It was at a time when worldwide relations between Muslims and Christians were severely strained as a result of the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* and we invited the Director of Religious Education to meet us on the previous evening to ensure that nothing we said might prove offensive to our hosts. An account of the occasion later appeared in the PMA Journal (see Appendix F).

A copy of a video film, specially dubbed in Urdu by professionals from the BBC, had been handed to us by its Director, David Channer, as a present for the Maliks, whose hospitality he and his wife had enjoyed a few years previously. *For the Love of Tomorrow* tells the story of Madame Irène Laure, whose work in building a new relationship between France and Germany was praised both by Prime Minister Robert Schuman and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Malik arranged for Margo and Eliane to introduce a showing of it at a meeting for the Ladies Club in the Officers' Mess. Begum Malik said that the Urdu was better than in any other film she had seen; the wife of the Deputy Commandant commented on its significance for the relationship between Pakistan and India.

We had to buy an extra bag to carry home our many presents: four presentation plates, a tribal chief's embroidered coat and supposedly poisoned dagger, a handsome two-volume bilingual edition of *The Holy Qu'ran* and a volume of photographs of our visit, bound in wood with the PMA crest carved on the cover.

We had made many friends, among them Sergeant Dildar, who hugged me warmly when we left. The hospitality we had received was almost overwhelming; we could not have been better looked after. We saw no traces of the sort of extremism that seems to have overtaken Iran and Iraq. We will always remember Pakistan as a country deeply motivated by her Muslim faith, a faith shared with the Afghan Mujahideen whom she has done so much to help. As Christians, we long to see a comparable motivation in Europe.

Malik was promoted to Lt-General in command of 10 Corps in Chaklala, responsible for the campaign on the Siachen Glacier. Like other officers, he was recruited on retirement by the government into a key industry. He became Managing Director of the Mari Gas Co Ltd in Islamabad and was invited in June 1998 to an international conference arranged by British Gas in Loughborough. He insisted on bringing two younger colleagues with him for training.

I arranged to meet him for lunch in London and invited Tony Streather to join us. Tony had lectured on leadership at the PMA and had arranged Karakoram expeditions for schoolboys through Malik. We drove back to Carson Road afterwards so that he could see Margo.

With a few mostly retired Army friends, Malik has set up a welfare trust to build day care medical centres for the poor. At the millennium, they had established their first medical centre in Rawalpindi and were treating 150 to 175 patients daily without charging anything. They were endeavouring to acquire land for the construction of a permanent building. Malik's son has taken the Staff Course at Quetta and is a Major, commanding a Company at the PMA. His two younger daughters have qualified as doctors and one of them is now a Captain in the Medical Corps.

Ernest and Mary (née Dalzell) Bigland

Ernest Bigland was 18 months younger than Margo. On the night he died, Margo wrote of him, "My own first recollections are of a fair, curly-haired, blue-eyed little boy, not so very different from the one we all knew over the years. No one else really existed for me until he fell in love with Mary, my old schoolmate and best friend ... at 22 he married her. I remember walking down the aisle behind them at their wedding and thinking there had never been a marriage built on surer foundations. No matter what has come and gone since those beginnings, nothing has ever been able to quench the light, the love and the deep compassion in those blue eyes and generous heart".

Between 1933 and the outbreak of war, Ernest and his brother Tom rowed for Royal Chester at Henley in the finals of the Silver Goblets three times and in the Wyfold finals twice.

Throughout the war he served in the Royal Artillery, commanding his Regiment in the campaign in Europe. He ended as a Lt-Colonel in the Control Commission for Germany and was awarded the MBE.

Ernest had left St Edward's School, Oxford, early to take up during "the slump" the post of junior clerk in the Guardian Assurance in Liverpool and rose to be their General Manager. When he moved in 1950 from the Liverpool to the London office, he and Mary settled at first in Woking.

One day, Peter Howard, who had been lunching with Ernest in the City, mischievously reported the following conversation, "How do you get on with your brother-in-law Bill?" "We have very little in common; we find very little to talk about." "What do you like talking about?" (After some thought) "Stocks and shares". "Right! I'll encourage Bill to do just that." Very shortly afterwards a relative died leaving me his executor and responsible for administering investments for two other relatives. A man nominated as joint trustee had also died, leaving me very conscious of my lack of expertise. Ernest kindly accepted to take his place and from then on we talked stocks and shares together. He then appointed me an agent of the Guardian Royal Exchange, but I did very little about it.

Our friendship was strengthened in 1960, when Ernest and Mary undertook to be guardians of Andrew and Peter while we were in Ghana. By then they had their own garden shed in which they kept their possessions and this was moved to Woking.

In 1974, my second year in Germany, I turned to Ernest for help. We English teachers could keep our British car insurance for a year, but had to take out German insurance if we stayed longer. Ernest arranged for me to be an agent for the corresponding Germany company, Albingia. With the help of a German agent, I was able to arrange the complicated business of car insurance for a number of my British colleagues. Before we left, we were given a sumptuous lunch in the HQ building of Albingia in Cologne, which had at one time been the Gestapo HQ.

From Woking Ernest and Mary moved to Lucas Green Manor, a lovely Elizabethan country house near Bisley which had once been a monastery.

They had a large garden, the proceeds of which they generously shared with their friends, including ourselves. It was always a joy to walk round the garden and fields at all times of the year or to sit by the big log fire in their little sitting room and chat. They also gave large parties which could overflow into the refectory and barn.

In October 1984, as a former Albingia agent, I was delighted to be invited to the German Embassy in London when Ernest was presented with the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic as a tribute to his furthering of Anglo-German relations.

In December 1984 we heard that Ernest was suffering from leukaemia. Shortly afterwards, he and Mary were discovered at Lucas Green Manor, both desperately ill with pneumonia. Ernest was taken to Guildford Hospital, where Margo and I were by his side when he died. Mary was taken to Brompton Hospital, where she recovered physically, but her mind had started to disintegrate. She now lives with her son, John, permanently in the care of a nurse.

Margo, Peter and I were all at the Memorial Service at St Michael's, Cornhill, at which a cousin by marriage, Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn, in his address said, "His gardener ... wrote that he was more than an employer, he was a friend, who never left the hard and dirty jobs to him, but got down to it and shared them. He spoke truth from the heart when he described him as a person who would never do an unkind or unjust act to anyone". We knew that Ernest used to take him fishing.

When Margo and I visited Ernest's grave, we discovered that his gardener had planted and was tending flowers around it.

Stephen and Joy Miles

On my arrival at Accra Airport in March 1960, I was met by Stephen Miles, then First Secretary in the British High Commission. He had served as an observer in the Fleet Air Arm in World War II. We had first met at 45 Berkeley Square in performances of the revue *Battle Together for Britain*, in which he took part and I was a sceneshifter. He had later married Joy Theaker, daughter of Godfrey Theaker, one of my fellow sceneshifters.

During my first few weeks, Stephen and Joy took me one Sunday with their two small daughters to the beach at Winneba.

Sadly, what little spare time I had from my work at the GMA I tended to dissipate by agreeing too readily to give showings of the film *Freedom* for all who requested them. We drifted apart from Stephen and Joy, who could have helped us with their wealth of experience to a wider view of the situation in the country.

After Margo's return home and my over-hasty resignation, I once again enjoyed a relaxed Sunday on a beach with the Miles family. By then, it was too late to put right the wrong steps I had taken.

After the 1966 coup against Nkrumah, a new government was established under Lt-General J. A. Ankrah, whom we had known as a highly respected battalion commander. One of his first acts was to restore relations with Britain, which had been broken off by Nkrumah over the issue of Rhodesia.

Stephen Miles who, at that time, was head of the West Africa Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was promptly sent out to Accra for six weeks as Acting High Commissioner. As he drove to his office on the first day in the official Daimler with the Union Jack flying, people in the streets waved and cheered.

Stephen's last postings were as High Commissioner in Zambia and in Bangladesh.

On 29 October 1988 Andrew, Eliane and I went to a service in St Margaret's, Westminster, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launching of Moral Re-Armament. Next to me was Stephen Miles, whom I had not seen for several years. The occasion helped me to appreciate more fully the friendship which he and Joy had shown me.

Major General Henry T. Alexander

On my very first evening in Ghana I went to dinner with General Alexander and his wife Maribel. He had been appointed Chief of Defence Staff two months previously and, as such, held cabinet rank and was in constant touch with the Prime Minister, Kwame Nkrumah. He had a greater understanding of the ideological battle for the country than any other expatriate and, unlike some other British officers, he always included Ghanaians in his parties. From the start, he made it clear to us all that our days in Ghana were numbered and that we needed to give our very best to help the Ghanaians take over from us.

At the dinner party were Sir Robert Jackson, who was financial adviser to Nkrumah and whose wife, Barbara Ward, was at that time lecturing at Harvard University, and Mr A. L. Adu, Secretary to the Prime Minister, who was described by Basil Davidson as "one of Ghana's most experienced administrators" (1). I had the privilege of sitting next to Mrs Adu, who had been educated at Achimota College. Mrs Alexander expressed surprise at the way we had got on together.

Shortly after Margo's arrival we showed the film *Freedom*, first to General Alexander and his family, then to my colleagues, to a number of senior officers and to all the cadets. Regimental Sergeant-Major Addico arranged a showing for the soldiers in the camp. We were amused to hear that he had introduced it, totally mistakenly, as having been made by Ghanaians to show Nigeria the way to independence.

At the General's request, I organised each year a tour with an inter-service team to inform secondary schools about career prospects in the armed services. The first year Commodore George Forman (Chief of Naval Staff) and his wife Maggie drove in a staff car with the White Ensign flying. Major Val Dicker (Director of Army Education) and Squadron-Leader Katre (Indian Assistant Chief of Air Staff) occupied another staff car. Margo and I drove in the Morris Minor Traveller, which I had bought as being said to be the only small car sturdy enough to stand up to the rough laterite roads.

The first year we confined our visits to three schools in Cape Coast, one in Takoradi, two in Kumasi and one in Tamale. The 240-mile drive from Kumasi to Tamale took us first through thick forest, then up a steep scarp to the flat scrub country of the north with mile after mile of dead straight road, broken only by a crossing of the River Volta on a primitive ferry.

The following year General Alexander asked me to arrange visits to as many secondary schools as possible. In five separate weeks we went to 30 schools, many of them new, all over the country; one week along the coast to the west; one in and around Kumasi, to the west of Kumasi as far as the Ivory Coast frontier and in Tamale; one in the Volta region; and two for schools which could be reached from Accra in a day. By that time, it was possible to have a Ghanaian in the party, representing either the Army or the Air Force.

30 June 1960 saw two events of significance for Africa: Ghana became a republic and the Congo gained its independence from Belgium, later being renamed Zaire. President Nkrumah kept in close touch with President

Lumumba. General Alexander occasionally asked me on a Sunday morning to translate the correspondence between Kwame and "Mon cher Patrice".

When civil war broke out, among the first to join the UN peacekeeping force was a contingent from Ghana. When this was decided, the GMA was undergoing training in the hills of the Volta region and Margo and I were staying in a rest house nearby. A phone call from General Alexander summoned me back to Accra for consultations.

In Accra, the possibility of forming a special wing of the GMA for the training of Congolese cadets was discussed. It was agreed instruction would have to be in French and President Nkrumah asked Prime Minister Diefenbaker of Canada to send some bilingual officers to undertake it. The plan was dropped, but Canadian officers arrived a year later at the right moment to take over from British officers who were "in the dog house". There was no feeling against Canadians, who were considered to have suffered under British imperialism.

The senior Ghanaian officer in the Congo arranged to send two Congolese sergeants to Teshie to have the level of their academic qualifications tested. They were welcomed at Accra Airport by our British Adjutant; I was at the camp to greet them and introduce them to French-speaking cadets who acted as their hosts for the night. Next morning, after testing them, I took them to see the Commandant, Lt-Colonel Tom Slessor, who chatted with them, using me as interpreter. Before they left, they expressed their amazement and appreciation at the way they had been treated by white officers, something that would have been unthinkable in the Congo. In a letter of thanks, one of them told me that he had met Moral Re-Armament in the Congo and thought it must also be operating at the GMA.

The Ghana contingent "contrived, in spite of all the difficulties, to emerge ... with public and international credit" (2). Colonel A. A. Afrifa, who as a subaltern went to the Congo immediately after being commissioned from Sandhurst and who later became Head of State, has described the difficulties, "Our politicians at home ... had placed us under the command of the UN, and at the same time taken active and sinister sides in the whole Congo affair ... Kwame Nkrumah had placed us in a terrible dilemma through an unbridled political adventure. He appointed and directed a stream of stupid ambassadors like A. Y. K. Djin ... who did everything to obstruct the work of the UN in the Congo by their direct involvement and interference on the side of

Lumumba. 43 Ghanaians lost their lives at Port Franqui as a result of this woeful and disastrous policy" (3).

General Alexander visited the Ghanaian contingent and came under fire while rescuing Djin from the Congolese; he describes him as follows, "For a successful ambassador, he had several defects ... which were not likely to assist him in giving good advice to President Nkrumah, who himself could have no conceptions of what was actually happening in the Congo. His main weaknesses appeared to me to be, firstly, he was anti-white – which coloured all his recommendations and activities – and secondly, he was so virulently anti-Belgian that it was impossible for him to see the rights and wrongs of an argument; thirdly, he did not speak French, which made it difficult for him to give direct advice to Lumumba and other Congolese politicians and, lastly, he quite failed to understand that troops placed under United Nations command cannot take orders from their parent country" (4).

Margo and I received a visit from two friends who were running the MRA centre in Lagos, Peter Hannon from Ireland and Kjeld and Inge Jørgensen from Denmark. They queried the wisdom of our activities with the film *Freedom* in view of the political situation in the country. General Alexander warned me that attempts were being made to have me repatriated. To my shame, I disregarded their advice and bashed on regardless.

General Alexander later wrote, "The most unpleasant part of life in Ghana was the feeling of fear and mistrust which existed. Very few Ghanaians were prepared to speak to you honestly, largely because they feared for their own positions. Nor was it possible ever to know exactly whom you could trust; this made everyone very guarded in conversation and the feeling always persisted that anything you said could be misinterpreted by Nkrumah" (5).

Guineans were played a sinister role in Ghana. During the Congo crisis the senior Guinean General with the UN forces paid a visit to Accra and was invited to lunch by General Alexander, who asked me to act as interpreter. I had an uncomfortable time hammering out the current Communist party line as propounded in French by the chief guest. Meanwhile, a good-looking young diplomat from the Guinean Embassy made himself charming to the ladies.

This incident had a sequel. Margo and I were on our way back from a week's local leave. We had driven through Togo and Dahomey (now Benin)

to Nigeria, where we had visited friends in Lagos, Ibadan and Enugu. We had just crossed the border from Togo back into Ghana when a taxi overtook us and flagged us down. Before we realised what was happening, two Africans had organised themselves and their luggage into the back of our Morris Traveller. The senior of the two wore dark glasses and looked very sinister; the other was a pleasant-looking young man. It took time to establish that French was our only common language. They blocked my questions and were clearly embarrassed when I suddenly recognised the younger man as the diplomat I had met at the Alexanders'. At the Volta ferry they organised us ruthlessly and efficiently to the front of the queue. They then spotted a chauffeur-driven Mercedes without passengers and quickly transferred into it. We were left pondering what diplomats were doing hitch-hiking across frontiers. The news shortly afterwards that President Olympio of Togo had been assassinated gave us further food for thought.

Shortly before he went to Moscow, President Nkrumah arranged at short notice to address the senior cadets. He asked that the visit should be informal and that nothing should be laid on. He was accompanied by Tawia Adamafio, Minister for Presidential Affairs, a Moscow-trained Marxist who, some months previously, had been in the Military Hospital recovering from a motor accident. General Alexander had visited him regularly and had later brought him as a guest to a dinner in the Cadets' Mess.

After addressing the cadets, the President asked me to take him round the academic classes. My colleague, Brian Hilton, was lecturing on British geography to a class, some of whom would be going to Sandhurst. On the blackboard were the words "Industrial Revolution". I could see reactions on Adamafio's face.

Some days later a conference was held in the Cabinet Room of Flagstaff House to consider our academic syllabus. General Alexander, Val Dicker (Director of Army Education), his assistant and I sat facing Nkrumah and Adamafio. After an amicable discussion, we agreed to "de-Europeanise" our current affairs course by inviting University staff to start it by giving lectures on African history. The President also raised what I knew was one of his wishes, that every cadet should learn French so as to be able to converse freely with visitors from the neighbouring francophone countries – Ivory Coast, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) and Togo. I explained that lack of time on the 18-month course and the need to include English made it impossible to teach French as an obligatory subject, but that I was already teaching it as a special subject of the cadets' choice.

Throughout the discussion I gained the impression that the President was not the dictator he was sometimes presented to be, but that he was open to listen to others' ideas. He greatly respected the advice of European advisers such as General Alexander and Geoffrey Bing.

An Irish former Labour MP at Westminster and Attorney-General of Ghana, Bing had been kept on as a special adviser and had been responsible for drafting the Constitution, under which the President could legally detain political adversaries without trial. General Alexander believed that the President's decisions depended largely on whether he or Bing had been the last to see him. He also believed that if wrong decisions were taken while the President was abroad, he could persuade him to reverse them on his return. This proved his undoing.

In the summer of 1961 the president spent several weeks in the Soviet Union. While he was there, a secret order came through to set up a selection board to choose 400 young men to go to Moscow for training as officers in the three fighting services. The board was to consist of Ghanaian officers only and the candidates were to be told only that their training would be "overseas", which the majority assumed to mean Britain. We had just held a selection board for our fourth intake, hoping to bring the total number of cadets in the GMA up to 200, but had failed to find a sufficient number of the required standard. The new selection board accepted not only candidates whom we had failed, but even former cadets whom we had sent away as unsatisfactory, sometimes with enormous chips on their shoulders and dire threats that a relative in the Cabinet would deal with the "notorious imperialists" who had "discriminated" against them. We were told that many of those selected withdrew or quietly disappeared when they heard they were to go to Moscow.

On his return from Moscow, the president dismissed General Alexander at 48 hours' notice, not even allowing him to hand over to his Ghanaian successor. Despite the political climate, almost every officer of the Ghana Army stationed in the vicinity of Accra was at the airport to see him off. He shook hands with every single one. There were tears in many eyes.

Shortly after his return to Britain, General Alexander accepted to be interviewed by a young journalist who had served under him as a National Service officer and was working on a recently launched magazine, on the understanding that anything he said would be off the record. He had been betrayed; he became the main feature of an issue and certain undiplomatic remarks which he had made led to his retirement.

I drove down twice to Ilminster in Somerset to lunch with the General and his wife, the first time with John Amata, a Nigerian star of the film *Freedom*, who had met him in the Congo, the second time with Margo. It was sad to see a brilliant man whose career had been wrecked by a single act of indiscretion. He died not long afterwards.

- (1) Basil Davidson: *Black Star*, (Allen Lane, 1973), p.218.
- (2) W. F. Gutteridge: *Military Regimes in Africa*, (Methuen, 1975), p.66.
- (3) A. A. Afrifa: *The Ghana Coup 24th February 1966*, (Frank Cass, 1966), p.66.
- (4) Henry T. Alexander, *African Tightrope*, (Pall Mall Press, 1965), p.34.
- (5) Ibid, p.108.

Lt-Colonel Tom and Jean Slessor

Lt-Colonel Tom Slessor of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was the first Commandant of the Military Academy and Training School (MATS), the successor to the Royal West African Frontier Force Training School in Whistler Barracks, Teshie, a few miles west of Accra. The Ghana Military Academy (GMA) was one of four wings of the school.

I first met him and his wife Jean at Sandhurst, where he was briefed by Stephen Anderson, our Director of Studies, shortly before leaving for Ghana.

Major Keith Shapland of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, Officer Commanding the GMA, and I worked well together and we could not have had a more sympathetic "boss" than Colonel Tom. Evenings in Tom and Jean's bungalow with Scottish dancing were very happy occasions.

Colonel Tom was particularly supportive of the Adventure Training Club, for which I was responsible, and arranged to provide transport and everything else we needed for our various expeditions.

On the eve of a cadet selection board, chaired by Colonel Tom, one of the candidates, a Sergeant in the Education Wing of MATS, presented us with two live turkeys, one of which he asked me to pass on to the Colonel. Such "dashes" were traditional in Ghana. So as not to hurt his feelings, I accepted them temporarily. Next morning "Glib" and "Glob", as we christened them, woke us early and probably the neighbours too with their din. After consulting

Colonel Tom, I summoned the Sergeant to my office and explained tactfully that our traditions prevented us from accepting such gifts. That evening his daughter came to take them back.

The Congo crisis imposed a special strain on expatriate wives whose husbands were involved. Some of the young Teshie wives started dancing classes for the cadets and told Margo about it. When she heard that the cadets were talking about marrying British wives, it was clear that there was an unhealthy element in this inter-racial dancing. Margo persuaded Jean Slessor to put a stop to it. Margo met with considerable opposition, but the most hostile of the wives later became her close friend.

After 18 months both Tom and I handed over to Ghanaian successors and returned to Britain. Margo and I happened to be staying with her father in Heswall, when Tom and Jean arrived back in Liverpool by ship. We met them and drove them to their train to Scotland.

While staying with the Ogilvys in Pencaitland, we drove over to Stirling, where Tom was in charge of the Regimental Museum in Stirling Castle. Tom showed us round, Jean, who was running an antique shop, joined us and we took them out to lunch.

Captain Ivor and Yoshie Watts

My staff at the GMA, inherited from the Regular Officers Special Training School (ROSTS), consisted at first of three Captains of the Royal Army Education Corps and a Lieutenant of the Ghana Army Education Service.

Of my three Captains, Peter Whitaker captained the Ghana Army cricket team and Brian Hilton came with me on two major expeditions of the Adventure Training Club. Ivor Watts, the senior Captain, happened to be on leave in Reading shortly before I was due to fly out. He came over to lunch with me in the Sandhurst Officers' Mess and gave me advice "from the horse's mouth". I was unfavourably impressed by his critical attitude towards the military training staff and told him straight that I would not tolerate such divisiveness on my staff. He accepted my reproof and became my most loyal and reliable colleague, taking my place most efficiently during my absences on selection boards and recruiting tours.

Ivor had studied Japanese, had been posted to Japan and had married a Japanese wife. Yoshie was brilliant with flower decorations and passed on her expertise to other wives. They had two young daughters.

One day when she was driving alone, she unknowingly clashed with the Presidential cortege. Seeing two motor cyclists coming towards her at speed, she said to herself, "What rude men!" It was only at the last moment that she pulled in to the side and let the President speed on his way. One of the outriders stayed to remonstrate with her, but seeing a tiny little Japanese lady, he waved her on.

Ivor joined me in an Adventure Training Club ascent of Ofadjeto, Ghana's highest mountain. He told me years later that on that day he had given up smoking and had never smoked since.

After retiring from the Army, Ivor worked with the British Council. We visited them over the years in two different homes in the Thames Valley, in Purley and in Whitchurch.

Brigadier David and Theodora Asare

We first knew David Asare as a Sandhurst cadet and the holder for a number of years of the Sandhurst record for the triple jump. He was the first Ghanaian instructor to be appointed to the GMA. He and his wife Theodora occupied the bungalow next to ours. They invited Margo to be godmother to their eldest son. The baptism took place in the Anglican Cathedral in Accra.

Later he was posted to Tamale as Adjutant of a Battalion. While I was working on a selection board in Kumasi, Margo bravely set off with the boys on the 240-mile drive to Tamale and stayed two nights with them.

In December 1964, Theodora and their three young sons stayed for a week with us in Ascot. Margo had a lively time showing them round Windsor Castle.

David clung to his African habit of arriving unannounced in the hope of finding his friends at home. On one occasion we returned from an evening in London to find a scrap of paper pushed through the door to say that he had come from London hoping in vain to see us. Teaching a German class at the end of one morning, I suddenly became aware of a black face peering at me through the window of my hall of study. David had managed to track me down. A normally strict Mess Superintendent allowed me, as a special concession, to take him unannounced into the Mess for lunch.

In 1980, twenty years after our time in Ghana, we were invited back by three of our Ghana Army friends. We stayed with David and Theodora. He had resigned as Chief of Army Staff in 1972 rather than serve in a military government. After a time of considerable hardship, he had built up in the port of Tema the one and only fishery and cold storage plant in the country. We lunched with him one morning in the staff canteen. Managed by a team of ex-Army officers, the 200 employees were thriving under a judicious mixture of military discipline and generous social welfare. Theodora took us to her flourishing nursery school with 40 three-year-olds and 40 four-year-olds.

David had recently been appointed Paramount Chief of Gomoa State, an extensive agricultural area to the west of Accra. On the 20th anniversary of Republic Day, a national holiday, he drove us out to his home village and showed us the clinic under construction which the villagers had started with his help and which the government had since undertaken to complete. He told us that when, in another village, the well had dried up, he had personally led a digging party, which had reached water in four hours, and had then installed a pump from one of his fishing vessels

In the early '90s, Margo's niece by marriage, Carole Seymour-Jones, travelled to Ghana to undertake research for the book she had been commissioned to write: *Journey of Faith – The History of the YWCA 1945-1994*. Margo arranged for her to stay with David and Theodora. While with them, she heard that Margo's attempt to get her an interview with the First Lady, Nana Rawlings, had succeeded.

The Rev. Lt-Colonel Kofi and Sophie Asare

Protestant Sunday services at Teshie were at first taken by visiting civilians. Our first regular Chaplain at MATS, Kofi Asare, not related to David, came to us from the Congo and based his sermons on his personal experiences of Moral Re-Armament there. One Sunday we held a big church parade, attended by the Minister of Defence, the Chief of Defence Staff and a number of senior staff officers. Colonel Tom Slessor, uneasy as to how Asare would go down with the visitors, had invited another Chaplain, Johnny Kwaku-Kyereboah, to preach. He too talked of his experiences in the Congo. Both these men rose to be Chaplain-General.

When Frank Buchman died in 1961, we invited Kofi to take a private memorial service in our bungalow.

Shortly after our return home, Sophie Asare stayed with us for a few days at White Cottage.

In 1967, Kofi was sent on a theological course in Birmingham, where he joined us at a performance of the MRA musical *Anything to Declare?* In which Andrew was taking part. Posted for a time to Western Command, he took the Chaplain-General to Tirley Garth.

In 1977 the Asares' daughter, Vicky Kye, a nurse in the NHS, joined us for Christmas in Robin Evans' home. In 1978 Robin spent a night with the Asares in Accra.

On our brief visit to Accra in 1980 Kofi met us at the airport and acted as our chauffeur. He had retired as Chaplain-General to the Armed Forces and was working for the Blue Cross. He arranged for us to meet the Chiefs of Staff of all three services. At the Staff College I reminded the Commandant that we had once shared a rubber dinghy on the River Volta. He replied, "It was my first time in a boat and I've never been in one since".

We were entertained one evening in the Air Force Officers' Mess by some 25 of our former cadets, now senior officers, who presented us with a beautiful carved ebony head. The Chief of Air Staff, who had taken me to visit his family 20 years previously, acting as their spokesman, said that Ghana might have been a different country if they had lived out what we had tried to teach them.

Kofi died a few years ago, but I am still in regular touch by post with Sophie and Vicky.

Lt-General Arnold Quainoo

In October 1960, Arnold Quainoo came to the GMA as an Officer Cadet of Intake 2 from St Augustine's College in Cape Coast, which we visited twice on recruiting tours. He was one of four cadets selected at the end of their first term to finish his training at the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun. Before they left, the Indian High Commissioner in Accra invited me to take them to tea with him.

When I read that Quainoo was commanding the international African peacekeeping force in Liberia, I wrote to encourage him and we started to correspond.

In June 1998 we received a letter from him, now a retired Lieutenant-General. He enclosed a brochure of the Centre for Conflict Resolution which he had established in Accra. He wrote, "My services in the Congo and Lebanon, especially my service in Liberia, have convinced as to the futility of trying to resolve political or communal conflicts by force. I am now therefore the Executive Director of the Centre I have established as a non-governmental organisation. Of course the deepest motivation and inspiration had been the MRA literature and film 'AFRICA HAS THE ANSWER' of our GMA days ... I am really working for this Centre to grow and flourish one day into a West African Peace Academy. Africa needs more Peace Institutions, not more Military Academies and War Colleges". In August 1998 he attended a conference in Toronto on "How to reduce availability of light weapons in West Africa".

In July 1999 he wrote, "Some cadets of Intake 1 and 2 contributed to order a special mass at the Catholic Church for peaceful repose of the soul of Margo. We are all very sorry to hear of the sad news. But we are comforted by the fact that 'Great Souls Never Die'".

Rear-Admiral Kevin Dzang

Another cadet in Intake 2, Kevin Dzang, a fine cross-country runner, came from the Government Secondary School in Tamale, which we also visited twice. He was one of five cadets who did so well in their first term that they were selected for the Ghana Navy and sent to Dartmouth for further training.

Peter and I were their guests at Dartmouth for the passing-out parade at which they were commissioned.

In 1977, having retired as a Rear-Admiral, he was High Commissioner in Canberra; he and his wife visited our friends Andrew and Margaret Lancaster in their home.

In October 1982 he visited us in West Dulwich on his way back to Ghana in retirement.

Mama

In our military quarter we were expected to employ two servants and a gardener. The latter divided his time between different quarters. Our garden contained coconuts, mangoes, pawpaws, bananas and many kinds of flowering shrubs. Frogs croaked loudly enough at times to make conversation

difficult and lizards of many colours scuttled across the stoep and up and down the walls.

Our senior servant, Mama, was, like many of his fellow workers, an immigrant Nigerian. Most of them were totally loyal and reliable. One British wife told us that, as she was searching for her purse, her servant said, "Sir-Mudder's money is in her second-best hiding place today".

When we gave a Christmas party for our other rank and civilian staff and their families, we laid out the food and the family silver on the stoep. Mama was uneasy about the silver, but nothing was lost. The food, however, disappeared almost immediately, though little was consumed on the spot. Margo saw one mother telling her daughter to take off her knickers and fill them with food.

A domestic tragedy taught us something about the ways of the country. Mama came to us in great distress over the illness of his baby daughter. Margo went with him to see her and, from her experience as a children's nurse, knew at once that she was dying. She died soon after they reached the hospital of "total neglect and dehydration". She discovered that Mama's wife had been 12 when she had had her first child and had had three by the time she was 15. Both she and Mama's mother, who had been taking care of the child, had been paralysed by ignorance and fear. It was apparently regarded as normal for even an elderly man to take a mere child and mould her to his taste.

On our recruiting tours to schools, Mama sometimes came to look after us, if we were staying in rest-houses without restaurants. One evening, Margo and I climbed a hill in the Volta region and arrived back after dark to find a terrified Mama, convinced that "the little people" had caught us. Such fear of the hills was common.

Commenting on the fact that a certain officer, whose way of life was old style colonialist, was burgled more than once, Mama said, "We all know who our real friends are".

When I left, I trusted Mama fully to undertake all the packing of our possessions. I was happy that the couple taking over our quarter, who were good friends of ours, were glad to employ him.

John and Nancy Tsiboe

Shortly after my arrival in Ghana, I met John Tsiboe who, with his wife Nancy, had been to Caux. I had staying with me two young men who were closing down the MRA centre in Accra, which was no longer serving a useful purpose. John welcomed me as the new MRA man from Britain and I had to make it clear to him that I was in Ghana not to represent MRA, but as Director of Studies of the GMA.

Of the two daily papers published in Accra, *The Ghanaian Times* was the official organ of the Convention People's Party (CPP) and gave us a nauseating and vitriolic daily dose of anti-imperialist hatred.

In strong contrast to *The Ghanaian Times* was *The Ashanti Pioneer*, published in Kumasi, which John had owned and edited for many years. A committed Christian, he had an independent mind and was not afraid to express views of which the Government disapproved.

After our first meeting we only met again once. When I was on a selection board in Kumasi, John and Nancy invited Margo and me to tea. We had a fascinating example of Soviet influence. Our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a Ghanaian in a red shirt bringing the Soviet Cultural Attaché from Accra. We discovered later that the Ghanaian was a former employee whom John had sacked for constantly propagating Communist views. The Attaché brought greetings and a warm invitation from friends in Moscow. He demonstrated his interest in local culture and in Christianity by producing an Ashanti gold nugget and by quoting Russian proverbs with a Christian content. He then invited them to a function that evening.

After he had gone, our hosts accused us Brits of not having their best interests at heart and praised the Soviets for their care. It took them some time to realise that they had been taken in. They decided to refuse the Attaché's invitation and accepted one from us.

John was eventually forced to close his paper down.

Tolon Na

Our most steadfast supporter and friend in Ghana was the Tolon Na, one of the big chiefs of the Muslim north. He himself once told of a meeting with Buchman, "It was one of the morning meetings at Caux. Frank was there, and someone spoke about stealing and what it cost the nation. Then turning to me, Frank quietly asked, 'When did you last steal?'"

"This struck me like a depth charge. My heart leapt into my mouth. I retired to my room and prayed to Allah to take me into His loving care, repenting of all the evils I had done since childhood. As I lay there by myself, I felt God was still waiting for a reply to Frank's question. It was the greatest challenge that I had ever faced in my life. I thought and thought. At last relief came when I decided to write down the number of times (as far as I could remember) that I had stolen since my infancy. I made a note to return all the textbooks that I had brought home from the schools in which I had taught; I also noted all the persons to whom I owed apologies for wrongs I had done them. I decided to live Frank's way of life." (1)

He had once been Leader of the Opposition to Nkrumah in Parliament. At Caux he had lost his personal bitterness, had apologised to him on his return and had been persuaded to join the Convention People's Party (CPP), which Nkrumah made the only legal party. He was now Deputy Speaker in Parliament.

We first met him on our first recruiting tour to Tamale. While the team was visiting the Government Secondary School, Margo drove Maggie Forman, wife of the Chief of Naval Staff, out to Tolon over 17 miles of rough laterite track to pay their respects to him.

The next day Margo and I drove out together to Tolon. After passing through a series of circular huts, which formed stables for his horses, we found the Tolon Na seated on a throne, surrounded by family and visitors on mats on the ground. We were given chairs and exchanged presents. We set off on the 437 miles back to Teshie with 54 guinea-fowl eggs and two live guinea-fowl, for which we occasionally stopped to provide water.

When Frank Buchman's Japanese friends were staying with us, we invited the Tolon Na to a Japanese meal, which they cooked for him.

When Margo and the boys were staying with the Asares in Tamale, they drove out to Tolon two days running to take part in a big Muslin festival.

The last time we saw the Tolon Na was when we drove him out from London to spend a day with us in Ascot.

(1) Gabriel Marcel: *Fresh Hope for the World*, p.134.

Nana Kwakyi Arhin XVII

Shortly after our arrival in Ghana, we met Richard, an ambitious young schoolmaster from Winneba, who had been to Caux. He started to come to our bungalow bringing some of the influential men with whom he was in touch and ask us to show them *Freedom*.

He took me one day to visit a chief, Nana Kwakyi Arhin XVII, a close friend and agricultural adviser of Kojo Botsio. The latter was Nkrumah's right-hand man at that time and was successively Minister of Economy and of Foreign Affairs. General Alexander had invited him to a GMA guest night, at which I had sat next to him. He had studied at Brasenose College, Oxford, and had known my cousin "Sonners".

Lunch with the Nana was my first experience of a Ghanaian meal. We started by washing the fingers of our right hands in a bowl which was passed round. We then clawed bits of chicken from a bowl in the middle of the table and chunks of cenki, made from corn and rolled into a ball like suet, which we dipped into palm oil. The pepper was so hot that I streamed, not only from every pore of my face and head, but from my eyes and nose as well. To add to my discomfort, my handkerchief was in my right-hand trouser pocket and, my right hand being covered in oil, I made desperate but unsuccessful attempts to reach it with my left, while our hosts roared with laughter.

Richard was invited to take the Nana to Caux. Opposition to this came from three political advisers, whom we christened "The Three Rogues", a name which they themselves heard about and accepted with delight. On the day the two left for Caux, they came to lunch with us, accompanied by the "Chief Rogue", who had been trying to persuade them to accept a free trip to East Germany instead. After lunch, three "Mammy lorries" and a small fleet of taxis arrived and disgorged most of his village, about 100 people of all ages, including four drummers, a horn blower and two bearers, one carrying the Nana's huge umbrella, which was twirled over him, the other a golden pole topped by a golden emblem. Tom and Jean Slessor joined us and helped to serve the multitude with sandwiches and squash. Over tea, the Nana cut a cake made by Margo and decorated with the Ghana flag and candles in the national colours – red, yellow and green. The "Chief Rogue" presented the air tickets, saying that they had been paid for out of the sacrificial giving of many. We then took off for the airport, where the other two "Rogues" and photographers and reporters had come to see them off. *The Ghanaian Times* reported their departure on the front page.

Our friends were given a great welcome at Caux and were taken to the towns of St Gallen and Bischofszell, where the local papers reported with photographs the visit of the "King of Ghana". On the day that Ghana was declared a Republic, the Nana raised his nation's flag and chaired and addressed the assembly.

Shortly after their departure, we were visited by a poultry farmer whom Richard had brought to our bungalow earlier. On that occasion he had been so drunk that he had gone to sleep in a chair. Richard had been very stern with him, and he had now returned to apologise with a handsome gift of chicken and eggs. He informed us that the "Chief Rogue"'s son had died after a motorcycle accident and offered to escort us to the mourning. Traditionally, the close relatives stay in the house for a week receiving visitors, who weep and sit quietly with them for a time.

The "Chief Rogue" had received a letter from the Nana, and we read him one in which the Nana told us how, on the advice of his friends, he had taken a bottle of gin with him, but had decided to give up drinking after seeing the film *The Crowning Experience*. The "Chief Rogue" then told the assembled company in Fanti about our work. The atmosphere encouraged three of those present to talk of their bitterness against white people and of the need to find healing.

When Richard and the Nana returned from Caux, we were invited to go with them to show *Freedom* in Mr Botsio's home in Apam. There were about 50 people present including the Headmaster and some of the staff of Apam Secondary School. One of the teachers, Subbia Kistasamy, we later got to know in London. It was a lively performance, the audience booing the appearances of the colonial "Mr Roland" and cheering the revolutionary "Mutanda" when he was rude to him. At the end, Mr Botsio sprang to his feet and, addressing the audience in Fanti, told them that the film expressed the ideas that Ghana needed. He then went into conclave with the Nana and his other advisers, while his wife entertained us to tea on the moonlit stoep. The other women formed a circle round us and sang an improvised song expressing gratitude for our visit.

Some time later, when the boys were with us on holiday, we were invited to stay with another of the "Three Rogues", a wealthy cocoa farmer in a grand "storey-house" in the bush. The villagers crowded in the open window frames to watch us eat an excellent curry, which the boys found overpoweringly hot. As there was no electricity, we were unable to show a film but, together with

the Nana, we were invited to address the whole village assembled in the moonlight outside.

Andrew, then aged 12, asked to speak and, standing on a chair and translated into Fanti by our host, told of his shock at finding in one of the castles directly above the slave dungeons a chapel where, as he put it, "My people, the white people, pretended to worship their God". He apologised for the past and committed himself so to live that such things would never happen again. The head man then told how the last time white men came to the village, he and his friends had fled into the bush, and he promised to write it all down in a book. This incident has been quoted by Brian Frost in his book on *The Politics of Peace* (1).

Very early the next morning we were roused in our upstairs bedroom by the villagers processing round the house and serenading us.

On one of our visits to the Nana, his chief wife showed Margo all round the compound. She was introduced to five other wives, each in her separate quarter; they took it in turns to look after the Nana. They commiserated with Margo having to cope with me on her own.

Meanwhile, political pressure was rising. One morning when I was at work, Nana Kwakyi Arhin called on Margo. Addressing her in Fanti and using Richard as his interpreter to give the proceedings an official air, he threatened us with deportation. It took Margo many years to recover from the trauma of fear, resentment and mistrust which this incident left on her.

Some months later we visited him in his village with a personal letter from Frank Buchman. He took us into his study, sent all his staff out, locked the door, apologised to me for the way he had treated Margo in my absence and dictated a reply, in which he said, "To my dear Dr Buchman, Peter Howard and the whole assembly. That in my returning from Caux I think I was crossed by some devils or by Satan. But Satan cannot rule the world. Satan cannot rule me ... So all the assembly can pray for me and I will never leave them. God's time is best".

Towards the end of the boys' second summer in Ghana, we visited the Nana as a family to say goodbye. After the usual drumming and dancing, the Nana himself taught the boys a rhythm on the drums.

Twenty years later, on Republic Day, 30 June 1980, we were being driven through Gomoa State by David Asare when Margo suddenly said,

"Didn't our old friend Nana Kwakyi Arhin live somewhere near here?" David then told us that he was his right-hand man and chief agricultural adviser and at once took us to visit him.

We found him, 20 years to the day since he had represented Ghana at the Caux conference, a very old man, sitting outside his house. He welcomed us very formally, then suddenly recognised us and leapt around, pumping our arms and uttering little squeals of joy. He then led us into the courtyard and arranged for some traditional drumming and dancing. He was delighted when I tapped out on the drums the rhythm which he had taught our sons all those years ago.

Two days later he drove into Accra to bring us a present, a carved wooden Ghanaian "proverb" of a tortoise, a snail and a gun, meaning that if man lived like the tortoise or the snail, he would have no need of a gun. The Nana added "to me it symbolises Moral Re-Armament".

(1) Brian Frost: *The Politics of Peace*, (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1991), p.149.

Mrs Kojo Botsio

Mrs Botsio, wife of the Foreign Minister, became a very good friend to Margo. She invited her as an observer to the first Conference of African Women and Women of African Descent, held at Legon University. The only other Europeans were four women from East Germany, who had arrived uninvited, but had prevailed on the kindness of an influential Ghanaian to get them in. They made friends with two Americans, who brought much bitterness into the conference.

On the first morning Margo found herself sitting next to a woman who turned out to be Chair of the conference, but had been excluded from the platform as she was wearing European dress. At Margo's suggestion she arranged an evening showing of *Freedom*.

At that time we had no projector. Margo arranged with Regimental Sergeant-Major Addico to borrow the MATS projector together with a soldier to operate it. At the end of the evening he refused the "dash" she offered him, saying that it had been a privilege to operate for her.

The next morning the Americans apologised for their attitude and the East Germans left.

Ben Bentum

One evening Richard arrived with a party of six in a car flying the flag of a District Commissioner, who was bringing a present of a young chimpanzee to Dr Nkrumah. It took a great fancy to Margo, who alone could stop it screaming and settle it down for the night. She thought that the ugly cord attached to it was unsuitable for a President, so she sewed it reins of white ribbon.

The party returned for a second night and reported that the President had been delighted with his present and had christened it "Babu", meaning "old man". Over supper that evening we were six around the table plus the bodyguard and driver eating in the kitchen, when two more friends of the District Commissioner arrived. These were Ben Bentum, General Secretary of the Agricultural Workers Union, and his Regional Secretary. Margo rose to the occasion with her usual efficiency and charm, and within minutes they too were enjoying a meal on the sofa. We were told later that they had been most surprised to be served like that by "capitalist imperialists".

Ben and his friend came again a few days later, bringing a gift of fresh fish, discussed agricultural and fishery problems and asked to see the film *Freedom*. They then arranged for it to be shown at a meeting of their National Executive and their wives, the first film to be shown in the newly opened Hall of Trade Unions in Accra.

This was followed by a showing for the Cape Coast branch of the Union. Andrew and Peter were with us. Ben and the Cape Coast Secretary had booked hotel rooms for us three floors up with a balcony overlooking the town and had arranged European "chop", including cabbage and rice pudding. As our projector had broken down, they had obtained a mobile cinema van from the Ghana Information Services and had had news of the showing on the local radio. They took us to pay a formal call on the local chief, Nana Mbrah V, who agreed to chair the occasion with our sons in their Ghanaian clothes sitting either side of him.

Next morning, after an excellent European breakfast, I asked for our bill and was told that our friends had already paid it. They showed us round Elmina Castle and then took us to visit the wife of one of them, who presented us with eggs and home-made biscuits. We left deeply moved by all the hospitality we had received.

Ben later told us of the pressure he was under to accept a free visit to a country behind the Iron Curtain; he was driving a Volkswagen at the time. When we next met at a cocktail party, he was driving a large Mercedes and avoided us; we drew our own conclusions.

After the coup against Nkrumah, he was appointed Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress. We met again when he was working in the Secretariat of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, and he brought his family up to Caux.

Major-General Nathan Aferi

A colourful Moral Re-Armament group including the three Colwell Brothers, radio stars from California, who wrote their own songs, had been invited to the Congolese independence celebrations and were asked to show *Freedom* and to talk to the various units of the Ghana Army serving with the UN force, most of which were by this time commanded by Ghanaians.

One Battalion Commander, Lt-Colonel (later Major-General) Nathan Aferi, found again in the Congo the faith he had had as a schoolboy. His Battalion had been given the task of guarding the national radio station in Leopoldville (today Kinshasa) and denying its use to dissident elements.

One night he had the strong conviction to make his men dig defensive positions. His British second-in-command argued that it was quite unnecessary, that it was late at night and stupid to inflict such a task on his men. The Colonel said firmly, "This is an order". Early next morning, Lumumba, the ex-Prime Minister and leader of a group regarded by the UN as dissident, arrived with a contingent of troops and demanded to be allowed to broadcast to the nation. The Colonel replied that his orders were to admit only those with UN passes. Lumumba then threatened to attack. The Colonel pointed to his men, who were by then safely dug in, and Lumumba, whose troops were exposed in trucks, withdrew.

Colonel Aferi brought back tapes of a song written by the Colwell Brothers for Ghana, which was frequently played on Ghana Radio, and of another song dedicated to him and his Battalion. He told us of the bitterness caused by the massacre of 43 Ghanaian soldiers by Congolese at Port Franqui and how he had called off a planned reprisal raid when a Sergeant had said to him, "Sir, this raid is not in the spirit of that film *Freedom*".

He tried in vain to persuade me to return to Ghana for another 18 months after leave, but I was firmly convinced that the time had come for me to hand over.

Back in Britain, we met Aferi again, when he was taking a course for senior officers. He came with us to the Westminster Theatre one evening and spoke afterwards at a meeting at 45 Berkeley Square about his experiences in the Congo.

Kofi Karkari

We found a staunch and fearless friend in Kofi Karkari, Welfare Officer of the Ghana Railways and Harbours and a grandson of the Asantehene of 1867-74, who was defeated by Sir Garnet Wolseley. After seeing *Freedom* in our bungalow, he arranged a showing for railway staff in a sort of open-air waiting room of Accra Station within full view of and only a stone's throw from the town's main thoroughfare. The station staff, briefed to arrive early, got the seats. On either side of them were crowds of people standing. Beyond them on one side were people sitting on the roofs of their cars, while on the other side parts of the film were seen by the driver and fireman of the occasional locomotive that chugged in, although the performance was timed to take place between trains.

He then arranged a number of showings for his port workers at the new harbour of Tema, which was then being built. We projected a huge picture onto the white wall of a house and the spectators brought their own chairs out from their houses.

One weekend he asked us to show the film at the railway stations of Nkawkaw and Koforidua. For our accommodation in Nkawkaw he sent up from Accra a railway coach, furnished in red plush, with sitting room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and a servant to cook for us. It might well have been used for a royal visit, perhaps for that of HRH Princess Alice. I achieved at the age of 50 a boyhood ambition when I was allowed to drive the locomotive into its shed for the night. Margo told the crew that her father had driven a locomotive during the general strike of 1926.

The climax of his showings was to be at their headquarters in Takoradi on a national holiday when top railway and harbour managers from all over the contry gathered for a football competition. He drafted a letter which his General Manager agreed to sign and send to all concerned. We took with us

a British Army officer who had missed a showing of the film in his mess the previous evening. The audience consisted only of about 30 young men who had come to play table tennis. The officer was gripped by the film and sufficiently aware of its significance to understand that some people would go to great lengths to prevent it being shown.

We later discovered that the General Manager's personal secretary, a Cypriot married to a British businessman, had withheld her boss's letter, had herself invited all concerned to a cocktail party in her home and had spread a rumour that the film was being shown by Communists and enemies of the Government. The next week she travelled at the firm's expense to Accra and took Karkari out to lunch. She warned him to be careful and offered him a scholarship to East Germany.

A week later he was summoned to a meeting attended by a man whom he described as one of the most dangerous Communists in the country and was accused in vague terms of aiding and abetting imperialists. He asked for specific charges, but none came. He was then threatened with detention. Afterwards the secretary asked after his large family and offered to provide for them for the next 40 years. When he asked, "Who will pay – you, the firm or the Government?" she replied, "The Government". We had long known that white women were playing a big part in the subversion of Africa.

Sent on a training course for welfare officers in Accra, Karkari was elected to represent the students. During the first week, he brought his Marxist-trained Director to see *Freedom* in our bungalow. Together they arranged a showing for the whole course and Karkari invited Colonel Nathan Aferi to introduce it.

An invitation from Dr Buchman to do the last part of his course, practical training in the field, under the auspices of Moral Re-Armament in Europe, was approved by the Director, but his official application was turned down by a Government committee. Karkari then appealed to the man acting as Head of State while Nkrumah was in Moscow; he approved it, but it was finally turned down after Nkrumah's return. Another showing of *Freedom* arranged by Karkari at that time was stopped in the middle by irate Government officials.

In April 1971 Kofi visited us in Ascot, staying for a time with friends in London and visiting Tirley Garth. Soon afterwards, he died while we were trying to arrange for him to have a prostate operation in Britain.

Phanuel Nyaku and Frank Bernasko

I was the only civilian member of the MATS Officers' Mess, which we shared with a Field Squadron of the Ghana Engineers. There had been talk of a civilian academic staff at the GMA similar to that at Sandhurst, but they would have formed an extremely small and perhaps somewhat isolated element in the Officers' Mess. It seemed better to commission into the Ghana Army Education Service the two university graduates whom I recruited, Phanuel Nyaku and Frank Bernasko. They were granted immediate commissions as Lieutenants and were given sword drill by the Brigade of Guards Sergeant-Major. I was told later that they had performed at a camp quite as well as the RAEC Captains.

Margo and I arranged wedding receptions both for Phanuel and for Frank. They had been married by tribal tradition, but decided to have church weddings, which were attended by their children. This gave their wives greater security as, under tribal tradition, they could be discarded unceremoniously and sent back to their parents. We knew several men who had married uneducated girls and, trying to keep up with European ideas, had left them for educated ones.

It was agreed from the start that Phanuel, the senior of the two men, would be my successor. He was therefore sent to the UK to spend some time at Sandhurst and at the Royal Army Education Corps Centre at Beaconsfield.

Shortly after the President's return from Moscow it was announced that no expatriate officer might continue to hold an executive post in the Ghana Army. Colonel Tom Slessor was already due to be replaced as Commandant of MATS by a Ghanaian, but the position of Major John Stone, who had taken over from Keith Shapland the command of the GMA, was now threatened.

Phanuel Nyaku had just returned from the UK and was on leave. He was due to take over from me temporarily while I went home on three months' leave. He arrived in my office in great distress, having been promoted overnight from Lieutenant to Major and ordered to take over the GMA from John Stone. Almost all his training had been academic, he had no idea of how to organise infantry training and he fully realised the folly of the order. Fortunately, a new establishment had already been agreed, under which John Stone was to be "General Staff Officer Grade 2 Training" – an administrative rather than an executive post.

My own position was becoming increasingly awkward. We had with difficulty obtained agreement to lengthen our 18-month course to two years (in line with Sandhurst) and I had spent many hours working out a new syllabus and timetables for the coming term.

We were then told that Intake 2, who were just completing their largely academic second term, were to miss their military final term and be commissioned alongside Intake 1. Far from being extended, the course was to be cut to one year. The amount of academic study would clearly be minimal and there seemed little justification for retaining an expatriate Director of Studies. It seemed to me only common sense to resign, hand over to Phaniel and return to Sandhurst.

Phaniel eventually became Director of Army Education. After leaving the Army he and his wife opened a school for young children. We had a happy meeting with him again in 1980 at the reception give us in the Air Force Officers' Mess.

Dr J. B. Danquah

Towards the end of our time in Ghana, we were fortunate to build a close personal friendship with Ghana's most outstanding statesman of the time, Dr J. B. Danquah. A lawyer of international repute, he had been leader of the independence movement, had been responsible for inviting Nkrumah to return to Ghana and had stood unsuccessfully against him for the Presidency. He had withdrawn from politics and was concentrating in his legal profession on defending men accused of political offences.

He responded especially to a gramophone record of "The Crowning Experience" which we played him and was considering accepting an invitation to Caux.

On a visit to John Tsiboe the Soviet Cultural Attaché mentioned calling on Dr Danquah. On our next visit to him we told him of this meeting. Delighted, he showed us some handsome leather-bound illustrated volumes on African history, culture and art, published in Moscow in English and given him by his friend. It was an interesting indication of the lengths to which the Soviets would go to win friends.

The news that he had been arrested and was being detained without trial was for me the last straw. I resigned my post and started to hand over. I have always deeply regretted that I made my decision on the basis of emotion and

without making at least some effort to consult Margo. From every point of view it was the right time to resign, but a totally wrong way of doing it.

We lost touch for over five years with almost all our Ghanaian friends; they felt it unsafe to write. The one exception was Dr Danquah, who was released from detention in June 1962 and wrote, "The day of my release the house ... was flooded to a depth of nearly two feet and all the access roads were made impossible, but people came in large numbers and for two weeks I sat for whole days and whole nights receiving friends and sympathisers ... This country has become a Hitlerite Ghana and can't help but put up with it till God's own time for a change".

A few months later he was detained again and died in prison. Margo went to a memorial service in St Martin-in-the-Fields, attended by legal men from all over the world who had come to pay tribute to a truly great man.

Jim and Dilly Dyce

Dr James Dyce is an internationally famous dentist. As a Major in the Royal Army Dental Corps during World War II he produced a film on "The life-saving treatment of battle casualties of the face on the battle field". He established a successful practice in Harley Street, to which we sent our sons for treatment. He was for years President of the Friends of the Westminster Theatre.

He married Sarah Cordelia ("Dilly") Cookson. A brilliant school teacher, she became the much loved governess to Peter and Doë Howard's children. Speaking at the Thanksgiving Service for her life, Anne Wolrige Gordon, one of her charges, said, "The infinite generosity of the Harley Street practice, Jim and Dilly's home for many years, where many patients were treated free of charge, will not be forgotten by the recipients, some of whom ended up running their countries in distant parts of the world".

While we were in Ghana, Dilly joined Norah Kerr in visiting our sons at school, and during holidays she and Jim entertained them in London and introduced them to some of their fascinating friends.

When Margo returned from Ghana in September 1961, Jim and Dilly invited her to stay in Harley Street, and I joined them on my return for several weeks.

After we moved to Ascot, Dilly occasionally joined Margo on day visits to the *cordon bleu* school in Binfield, run on the lines of Constance Spry.

During our year in Cambridge with Robin Evans, Jim and Dilly were living in Lavenham, where he had a small practice. He was at that time a Research Scholar at King's College and sometimes invited us to meet friends over lunch at the University club.

They retired to Gretton Court, a residential home in Girton. We visited them on our many stays with Tony Sursham in Godmanchester. After Dilly's death we continued to visit Jim and to encourage him over his books on stress, of which the most outstanding is *Hippocrates for Today* (1).

- (1) Dr James Dyce: *Hippocrates for Today – A New Dimension to our Calling – A Study of Basic Values*, (Stress Publications, 1995).

Lt-General Sir George and Lady Gordon-Lennox

The morning before my departure for Ghana I had a final interview with the new Sandhurst Commandant, Major-General Gordon-Lennox. Realising that he had not entertained us in Government House, he invited us to lunch that very morning. For Margo, who had been weeping copiously over the death of our boxer, Schnoffel, and with the big farewell tea party in the afternoon which I have already described, it was very difficult, but she rose to the occasion.

It was a day when Sandhurst was host to teams for various games and sports from the RAF College Cranwell. Our Commandant's other guests at lunch were the Commandant of Cranwell and his wife. Margo, sitting on the General's left, told him about Schnoffel. He replied, 'I've just had to have my dog put down, so I know just how you feel'. They then both blew their noses.

While we were in Ghana, the General arranged for a present of books for the GMA Library to be delivered personally by a British Member of Parliament, an event which was duly photographed in the Library by the press.

On my return from Ghana, I reported back at Sandhurst to Bill Lough, Head of the Language Department, and to General Gordon-Lennox and was given leave until after Christmas. The General drew me out fully about the situation in Ghana, where our Queen was preparing to pay a stat visit. He felt what I told him was so important that he picked up the phone to ask if the Chief of the General Staff would grant me an interview. This did not happen,

but the process of "debriefing" which I had experienced gave me a sense of freedom in having got off my chest much that I was carrying in my heart.

I could have benefited by a similar debriefing on the spiritual side, but the Westminster Theatre was just opening with two plays by Peter Howard, *The Hurricane* and *The Ladder*, and my Moral Re-Armament friends were too deeply occupied in trying to fill the theatre to want to listen to what I had been through. I felt keenly my failure to get sufficiently close to Nkrumah to influence his disastrous policies, but instead of seeing clearly that this failure had been caused by "bashing on regardless" with showings of *Freedom*, I carried on in much the same way, pushing all my friends to come to the Westminster Theatre, or to see MRA films in our home, regardless of whether it was the right next step for them.

I started with an invitation to General and Mrs Gordon-Lennox. The evening was a great success, starting with dinner at Clive House, 45 Berkeley Square. She remembered going to balls there as a girl and expressed great appreciation of the way the house had been preserved and the quality of the food and drink. Dr Paul Campbell, who had been Frank Buchman's personal physician, told her of his convictions. Over coffee, the General recognised a bookcase as the one which he, as a boy, had helped his Eton housemaster, Arthur Bell, to instal in his study.

As we took our seats, the General said, "This is my favourite theatre and Muriel Smith is my favourite actress". At a reception after the play, they heard Colonel Nathan Aferi speak of his experiences in the Congo. They left at midnight after a great evening.

A visit was expected at Clive House from General Ho Ying-chin, former Prime Minister of China who, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army, had accepted the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II. He was faced with considerable hostility from left-wing elements who favoured Communist China against Taiwan. I responded favourably to the suggestion of asking General Gordon-Lennox to receive him at Sandhurst. He at once named a day for me to take the Chinese General to tea with him in Government House.

On the morning of our intended visit, Gordon-Lennox phoned to say that he could not receive our visitor, but that he was coming up to London and would call at Clive House after lunch. While apologising, his attitude was totally hostile and he left after a few minutes. It seems very probable that he had met Tom Driberg, the KGB agent, who was Moral Re-Armament's

bitterest opponent and who wielded considerable political influence at that time.

Back at Sandhurst, Bill Lough warned me of the Commandant's hostility and urged me to lie low for a time. To my shame, I ignored his advice and continued to "bash on regardless".

I have already mentioned in writing about Peter Howard what happened a year later. I was summoned from the middle of teaching a German class to appear before the Commandant, who said that I must either dissociate myself from "the ruthless organisation of Moral Re-Armament" or leave Sandhurst. He gave me a week to decide. There was to be nothing in writing.

A week later, I appeared before him again, armed with a brief statement of my position, which Peter had helped me to write and which the General refused to accept. At Peter's suggestion, I sent it to him by registered post and lay low for the rest of the term knowing that I could not be sacked without an official investigation.

At the end of the term, Gordon-Lennox left to become Director of Army Training, having made it clear to me that Sandhurst would still be under his jurisdiction. It was left to his successor to sort things out.

For several years Margo and I saw Sir George and Lady Gordon-Lennox at social occasions and gave them a wide berth. Meanwhile a friend of mine who was fully committed to Moral Re-Armament and who served on a high-powered committee with Gordon-Lennox, told me that the General was constantly trying to draw him out about MRA.

After officially retiring from Sandhurst, I was invited back for a time to work as Assistant Librarian. One morning Lt-General Sir George appeared unexpected in the Library. I was standing with a colleague. In case he had forgotten me, I gave my name and said, "I have always been grateful to you, Sir, for the way you backed us when we were in Ghana". The words came from my heart. Having briefly turned back from my calling under pressure, I could empathise with his weakness. I had fully accepted my share of the blame for what had happened and actually felt a debt of gratitude to him for the part he had played in helping me to turn over a new leaf.

General Sir John and Lady (Margaret) Mogg

After the threat of dismissal from Sandhurst I waited several months for the next move, which came in the form of an interview at the War Office. I was asked to give my version of what had transpired between the Commandant and myself and was told that there was a considerable discrepancy between our accounts. I would eventually receive a directive.

This came in the form of a letter which was read aloud to me by the new Commandant, Major-General Mogg, in the presence of a new Director of Studies, who had replaced my friend Stephen Anderson. The letter laid down terms to which I weakly agreed.

After talking to Margo and spending a restless night, in which I compared my surrender to Peter's denial of Christ, I asked the distinctly unfriendly Director of Studies for another interview. General Mogg could not understand why I was unwilling to accept an order from my superiors. I asked if he had read the statement which I had sent to his predecessor by registered post. There followed a vain search for what, as I expected, had been destroyed. The interview ended with a request for a copy of my statement and of my reply to the War Office. I decided not to reply to a document which I had not even been allowed to see myself and the subject was never again mentioned.

Despite all that had happened, no objection was raised when Bill Lough chose me as the first lecturer to do a four week exchange with the Ecole Militaire Spéciale St-Cyr-Coëtquidan.

On my return to Sandhurst, General Mogg invited Margo and me, much to our surprise, to drinks one evening alone with him and his wife. "I've had a terrible report about your husband," he said to Margo; "Just listen!" In great trepidation she heard him read the English translation of a letter from General de Boissieu, "Allow me to tell you how delighted we were with his stay amongst us. A pleasant man, his presence was particularly appreciated by all the Officers who had the pleasure to work or live with him. His cheerful personality, his complete competence immediately won him the sympathy of the Cadets and he was able in a short time to cause them to make extraordinary progress, particularly in oral expression. I have in addition heard that his two lectures to the Infantry School of Saint-Maixent intensely interested his audience. I hope that the practice of exchanging lecturers will continue next year for the great good of the ties which exist between our two Schools".

The Commandant then told us that his next posting was to command 1 Corps in Germany and asked me to teach him and his wife German. For some

months he, his wife, his ADC, his Corporal/Driver and sometimes one of his sons would come to the language laboratory at 8.30 am. We had plenty of fun. The General and his ADC would gang up against his wife and accuse her of "sucking up to Teacher". A week after the lessons started, we had our first official visit from German officers from the Staff College. I drafted a short speech of "Welcome", consisting of three very simple German sentences, which the General took the trouble to learn by heart and which made a great impression on the visitors. If we met when cadets were around to hear him, he would greet me with a loud "Guten Tag, Herr Willi!"

Some months after he had left, he sent me from Germany a 1 Corps press Summary, dated 12 January 1966, stating, "'Guten Morgen, wie geht es Ihnen?'" was the greeting with which the new Commander of 1 (BR) Corps, Lt-Gen Sir John Mogg, welcomed the Bielefeld journalists on Monday morning on the drill square of Ripon Barracks ... It was the first time yesterday that a British general deviated from general custom by talking 'benevolently' in almost accent-free German with the Bielefeld press. He promised, 'come back in eight weeks and you will be surprised how well I have learned to speak German'. He revealed that his mother had taught him German". He started his covering letter, "Lieber Herr Willi! I don't know whether I ought to start 'Liebe Mutti!'".

In the spring of 1966 we had a family holiday in France and Germany, which included two nights in Bielefeld. We went to the morning service in 1 Corps Chapel and lunched with the Moggs. Margaret demonstrated that she was using her German by phoning neighbours in German to invite them to tea with us.

General Sir John retired after a very distinguished career. He and Margaret live in Watlington, not far from Oxford. He suffers a lot of pain in his back from parachuting; she is losing her sight and can no longer read. But they insisted on numerous occasions on giving Margo and me lunch.

General Alain and Madame (née de Gaulle) de Boissieu

On my first morning in Coëtquidan I was interviewed by the Commandant, General Alain de Boissieu, son-in-law of President de Gaulle. On the basis of my appreciation of de Gaulle and his of Churchill, we formed a real friendship.

At Coëtquidan the academic departments were headed by serving officers; the "Profs" were young, recently qualified teachers doing their national service as such rather than in the ranks. They were not members of the Officers' Mess and were often despised by the cadets. On my first morning, I addressed a question in English to a young man in the back row who, I had failed to notice, was dressed differently from the others. He replied in French that he was not one of the class. I then realised that he was an officer sent to prevent the cadets from "taking the mickey" out of the new "Prof". His services were dispensed with.

In the spring of 1966 we had a family holiday in France and Germany. I had written to Major John Salazar, the British Liaison Officer at St-Cyr-Coëtquidan, to ask if I might show my family round the camp. He had shown my letter to General de Boissieu, who had said we might stay in the "Hôtellerie" and eat in the Officers' Mess. The "Hôtellerie" was a bungalow for visitors in which I had stayed on my exchange visit. It was presided over by a great character, Madame Partout, who was very proud of her beautifully polished parquet floors. John Salazar had briefed me on my arrival that the way to reach her heart was to tread on two cloths left just inside the door and to skate round the room, keeping the floor free from mud and polishing it at the same time. Despite very wet and muddy weather, I had succeeded so well that Margo and I were promoted to a fully carpeted room normally reserved for Generals. The boys, who had a room like my old one, duly learned to skate and scored full marks with Madame Partout. "Très soignés, Monsieur, très soignés!" was her comment. On our last evening she invited us to sample her home-distilled "prunelle", which she described as quite harmless. The boys each took a huge gulp and nearly choked, much to her amusement.

We were invited to a family lunch with the General, his wife and their adopted daughter. Madame de Boissieu and Margo found a common link in that they had been to neighbouring boarding schools in Shropshire, which had played each other at games.

On the way to Coëtquidan we had visited American museums at Sainte-Mère-Eglise, scene of one of the airborne landings on D-Day, and on Utah Beach, where I had landed in the autumn of 1944, also the remains of the Mulberry Harbour at Arromanches and the Bayeux Tapestry. The boys followed the Latin script on the tapestry without the use of a headphone translation.

That summer, "WEMCAM", the West European Military Academies Athletics Meeting, was held at Sandhurst and we were hosts to the French from St-Cyr-Coëtquidan and the Ecole Polytechnique, the Belgians from Brussels and the Dutch from Breda. I was asked to act as ADC to General de Boissieu. The day before the meeting, I travelled up to the French Embassy in a staff car to collect him and his wife and bring them down to Ascot, where they were to stay in the Berystede Hotel. They came to tea with us at Milcote Cottage and presented us with a beautiful Breton set of tablecloth and serviettes.

That evening, Margo and I were invited by our Commandant, General Peter Hunt, whose wife was ill in hospital and died shortly afterwards, to join him and his daughter in entertaining the visiting Generals and their wives. After drinks at the Berystede, we drove very slowly in a convoy of staff cars, holding up the Friday evening rush-hour traffic, across the Great Park to Windsor, past the Castle, then on through Henley to Sonning, where we had an excellent dinner at the "French Horn". A menu signed by all those present reminds us of the occasion. On the return journey, the Staff Officer in charge of the convoy distinguished himself by leading us all to the front door of a convent school instead of the Berystede.

The Saturday saw the Athletics Meeting followed by a banquet in the Officers' Mess for the men and a dinner party for the ladies. Never have I had the privilege of driving with a lovelier lady or one more beautifully dressed than was Madame de Boissieu that evening. The next morning, Margo and I saw them off from Northolt Airport.

That autumn I received a personal invitation from General de Boissieu to accompany a party of officers and cadets to St-Cyr-Coëtquidan for a military exercise. I found myself allotted my own staff car, greatly to my surprise and to that of some of my more senior military colleagues, who were reduced to begging lifts from me. I returned home with a fine silk scarf with emblems of St-Cyr, a gift to Margo from the General.

Danielle Maillefer

During my time at St-Cyr-Coëtquidan in 1965, I spent a weekend in Boulogne-sur-Seine at the de Watteville's home. There was a film show in a studio in the Champs Elysées. I was introduced to a very attractive young Swiss woman, Danielle Maillefer, and asked to drive her there. Parking in the

Champs Elysées on a Saturday evening is notoriously difficult, but we found a space directly opposite the studio, an auspicious start to our friendship.

It was a year or two later that I first met her younger sister Eliane, who was to become our daughter-in-law.

Danielle had trained as a photographer and worked for some years with MRA making documentary films and setting up close to the Reception in Mountain House a studio where casual visitors could be shown a film of Caux in French, German or English.

She then worked for a time with the Geneva police and was responsible for security at the historic meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev. After a time as secretary in a key situation in the administration of Geneva, she worked for King Michael of Romania in Versoix, where she occupied the ground floor of a house with a fine garden suitable for barbecues.

For some years she has been working with UNICEF in Zagreb, Kinshasa and Libreville, capital of the former French colony of Gabon.

When Margo died, she had only just taken up her new post in charge of a section in Libreville but, taking the Friday off, she flew over on the Thursday night to be with us for the services on May Day. Monday being a holiday, she flew back that night and was back in her office on the Tuesday morning. We were all deeply moved by her effort.

Danielle has provided us with a fine set of photos of the weekend.

Andrew and Eliane spent Christmas and New Year 1999-2000 with her in Libreville, meeting many interesting friends.

Willie Jones

Both our sons were fortunate to have as their English teacher at Shrewsbury Willie Jones, who inspired them with a love of English literature which has largely determined their careers. As a long distance runner, he was a keen participant in the Royal Shrewsbury School Hunt.

When he came to spend a weekend with us, we took him to watch an athletics match against the Milcarians, a club for all three fighting services, to which he happened to belong from his National Service days. They were short

of a runner for the two mile race; Willie nobly volunteered, though badly out of training, and came in a good last, applauded by all.

Since becoming Professor of English at Hokkaido University, he has sent us a wide selection of his writings, starting with *Down to Earth*, a fascinating booklet in which he explains the British to his Japanese students with notes in Japanese by Nobukatsu Takahashi. This was followed by a series of autobiographies, some in verse, in the first of which, *One and All*, he describes his experiences as a National Service Army Officer.

In March 1992, Willie spent 24 crowded hours with us, in which he lunched at the Westminster Theatre with Geoffrey Craig, who has lived for many years in Japan, had tea with Martin Reid and a discussion on Pissarro's paintings, visited the Dulwich Gallery and received a phone call from Peter.

He is now an Emeritus Professor at Sapporo University and has a Japanese adopted son.

Antony Brett-James

Whilst I was in Ghana, a Department of War Studies and International Affairs had been established. One of the newly appointed lecturers, who rose to head the Department, was Antony Brett-James. His father, a Mill Hill schoolmaster, had taught Peter Howard, who greatly admired him. Antony himself was a keen cricketer.

He had served in the war as a Signals Officer with the 5th Indian Division, as he tells in his first book, *Report My Signals*. He was Mentioned in Despatches in the Burma Campaign (Imphal).

Antony was an expert on the Duke of Wellington's campaigns and worked for a time as an editor with Chatto & Windus, of which C. Day-Lewis was then a director.

He invited me one day to read a part in a cassette programme which he was making. It marked the beginning of a long friendship.

Having read *Report My Signals*, I invited him to the Westminster Theatre to see a play by a delegation of Hindu and Christian leaders "from the South Indian state of Kerala, which had just experienced a period of Communist rule – the first state anywhere to become Communist by the ballot box. Earlier that year, faced with a threat to impose Communist indoctrination in the

schools, the Christian and Hindu communities had united sufficiently to oust the government" (1). At the end of the play Antony caused a surprise by greeting members of the cast in their own language.

At a party to celebrate my 60th birthday he presented me with *A History of the British Army*, edited by two colleagues and to which he and eight other colleagues had contributed chapters. Others of his books which I particularly enjoyed are *General Graham – Lord Lynedoch* and *1812 – Eyewitness Accounts of Napoleon's Defeat in Russia*, in which Bill Lough helped with translations from Russian.

Antony had befriended the actress Jill Balcon, widow of C. Day-Lewis, and her son and daughter. They were planning to marry when he was struck down by an unusual form of paralysis. Together with our son Peter, we visited him in Stoke Mandeville Hospital shortly before he died.

I was privileged to attend his funeral, arranged by Jill from their home in Steep, Hampshire.

(1) Garth Lean: *Frank Buchman – A Life*, (Constable, 1985), pp.510-511.

Christopher and Jill Donnelly

Chris Donnelly, a Lecturer in Russian, was the youngest member of the Department of Languages. He and his wife became our good friends. I was responsible for testing Overseas Cadets on arrival to see whether they required extra English. Bill Lough asked him to report to me to help with this. "Why did he choose me with my Manchester accent?" he asked. I explained that I only wanted him to collect the cadets from their previous assignment and direct them to our Department. Presently I heard what sounded like a Sergeant-Major marching a squad, "Left, right, left, right ..." into the Department and was delighted to see Chris, his academic gown flapping in the wind.

After I had left Sandhurst, a Scottish friend told me that his son and a friend were both considering the Army as a career. I offered to take them to see Sandhurst. They had distinguished themselves in an Aberdeen school by winning a debate on nuclear warfare against strong CND opposition. As cadets in the CCF, they had borrowed a NATO film from a local RAF station

to back their arguments. At their half-term weekend they travelled to and from London on an overnight bus and stayed two nights with us.

I asked Chris to host us. The Department of Languages had been closed and he had been transferred to the Soviet Studies Research Centre, of which he later became Director. He arranged for the boys to attend a lecture on the Soviet forces and for a colleague to take us to lunch in the Officers' Mess. He made them feel as if they were the most important element in his day, though he had to leave us to brief senior civil servants on recent Soviet developments.

I was given a warm welcome back by former colleagues and by a Mess Steward. The boys saw the Army as a career in which one forms lifelong friendships. One of them has since been commissioned.

Chris was later appointed Sovietologist in Residence in the Office of the Secretary-General of NATO in Brussels.

Sir John and Lady (Susanne) Keegan

One of the Senior Lecturers in War Studies, John Keegan, lived with his wife and family in a quarter not far from the Department of Languages. They kept a donkey, whose braying struck us as a language we had never studied.

I greatly enjoyed an evening in their quarter and meeting John's father.

After I had left Sandhurst, the son of a friend of mine was doing a school project on the *Waffen SS* and asked if I could help. Knowing that John had written on the subject, I phoned him for advice. He very kindly invited me to take the boy to lunch with him in the Officers' Mess and helped him to find in the Central Library suitable books which he could take out against my signature.

John left Sandhurst in 1986 after 26 years to become Defence Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* and was appointed Defence Editor in 1989. He was selected to give the 1998 Reith Lectures and was awarded a Knighthood in the New Year Honours for 2000.

In March 2000 I greatly enjoyed hearing John lecture at the Royal Geographical Society. My son Andrew and I are avid readers of his numerous fascinating books.

Describing John's investiture by the Queen at Buckingham Palace, a colleague wrote, "Although prevented by a childhood illness from serving in the Armed Forces, he has revolutionised the way in which writers cover wars, battles and all aspects of combat, both modern and ancient.

"One of his acclaimed books, *The Face of Battle*, analysed famous events from the often gory view of the foot soldier, taking into account such details as weather, equipment and rations. It was a style of writing that brought military history alive to readers who found traditional style uninteresting" (1).

Margo, who felt the magic of the occasion at Buckingham Palace when her brother Tom was awarded the DSO by King George VI, would have been enchanted, as I was, by what John himself wrote under the heading "Honours have a place in the heart of the nation":

"Americans make the mistake of thinking that honours are for the important. They are not. They are for quite ordinary people, who outnumber the important at investitures by 100 to one ...

"... Family groups ... can be spotted in the West End all afternoon. At Waterloo I met a soldier decorated for services in Kosovo. 'We saw you at the Palace,' they said. I could tell they had been at the Palace before they spoke. It wasn't the clothes. It was their expression, not so much of pride and happiness as of an enlargement of their lives.

"That's why the honours system works. Pools of pleasure spread outwards from every medal given, so that Bristol Zoo gardeners feel that ordinary jobs fit into some great national scheme of things" (2).

(1) Tim Butcher, Defence Correspondent, in *The Daily Telegraph*, May 4, 2000.

(2) John Keegan, "Notebook" in *The Daily Telegraph*, May 5, 2000.

Major Roger Chapman

I first knew Roger as a cadet in Gaza Company. A few years later he returned as a Captain in the Green Howards and Instructor in the Company. We invited him to the Bigland Hut on the Dee one summer when Andrew was not with us. Roger was preparing for the Staff College exam and wanted me to help him with essay writing.

He brought on the roof of his Mini two canoes, one a very professional fibreglass slalom boat, the other a leaky wood and canvas affair, which he unselfishly used himself. After he had given Peter a few lessons, they spent three days descending the Dee from Lake Bala to the Hut. Margo and I acted as support party, launching them, meeting them at previously selected spots for picnic meals and taking them back for the night.

Peter writes, "Our first crisis was caused by a retired Colonel who was fishing for trout. We decided to carry out boats round him (and through several barbed-wire fences). We went on to negotiate the first part of the Berwyn rapids with some success, although to the consternation and horror of some guests at a very posh hotel, who were seated on a terrace on the rocks high above us. After I had crashed into every rock in sight, I gracefully collapsed into a minor whirlpool. Roger meanwhile had expertly found his way through all the obstacles only to become waterlogged and sink beside me. Accepting that wisdom was the better part of valour, we carried our boats up to the road to find Mum and Dad peering over the bridge (at Llangollen) in a state of total despair as they scanned the water for broken paddles, floating gym shoes or drowned bodies".

Roger was later selected to lead the White Water Team in the Blue Nile Expedition under the leadership of a Sandhurst colleague, John Blashford-Snell, and chose this stretch of water to train his team. Their story is told by another Sandhurst colleague, Dick Snailham (1).

When I was teaching in Schwelm, Roger was an Instructor with the Germany Army. He spent a few days with us, during which he lectured to the Gymnasium on the Blue Nile Expedition.

After retiring from the Army as a Major and being awarded the MBE, he became Director of Plans for Operation Raleigh, once again under Blashford-Snell.

(1) Richard Snailham: *The Blue Nile Revealed*, (Chatto & Windus, 1970).

Geoffrey Grobecker, Desmond Swan and Frank Johnston

An outstanding Sandhurst Senior Chaplain, Geoffrey Grobecker started "Christian Brains Trust" in place of the usual Padre's Hours". Together with his Assistant Chaplain, Frank Johnston, he would invite Desmond Swan, the Roman Catholic Chaplain, one officer and myself as a lecturer to answer cadets' questions on the Christian faith. There was always at least one

question intended to divide us, but we remained united, even on an occasion when Pope Paul VI's Encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, on birth control had just been published.

At the last meeting of the "Brains Trust", we agreed that we could not say what effect we had had on the cadets, but that we ourselves had become friends for life.

Geoffrey and his wife Audrey held rather narrow views. A visit with us to the Westminster Theatre was an unusual experience. We were surprised to learn that he had previously been Chaplain to the Brigade of Guards. Margo asked her how they had got on. She replied that you do not have to try to be like them; they respect you as long as you are true to yourself.

On the morning that our son Peter first left home, I confided in Geoffrey in the mid-morning coffee break. Without a word he led me into the unoccupied billiard room where we knelt down and prayed together.

I was often invited to the annual training camps in the Eifel as an interpreter. On one occasion, an officer who had learned German with me as a cadet, offered to take my German classes in my absence.

In camp Frank Johnston and Desmond Swan shared a tent and a Land Rover and would often give me a lift. Desmond asked me to interpret for him on a visit to the local priest to arrange for a Mass for the cadets in his church. When the priest invited us both in for an evening, I asked if we might include Frank. We wondered if it was a new ecumenical experience for the German priest.

One morning, Tom Allen, Assistant Director of Studies, phoned Margo to ask if she could help his wife, Nin. She was suffering from a tumour, as yet undiagnosed. Margo found her in a state bordering on hysteria. With Nin's agreement, she phoned Geoffrey Grobecker, who asked them to meet him in the Chapel. As they knelt by the altar, Nin clung tensely to Margo. As Geoffrey prayed, she relaxed completely. The tumour turned out to be "benign".

Many years later, when the Allens were living in retirement in Nunney, Somerset, Nin phoned to say that Tom had died. Margo phoned Geoffrey, who was living in Salisbury. He at once drove to Nunney to comfort Nin.

Frank Johnston was for a time in charge of Bagshot Park, then the Training Centre of the Royal Army Chaplains Department, now the home of the Duke of Wessex and his wife. Frank invited us to tea and showed us round. He told us that he had started his ministry in the Republic of Ireland, but had later moved to Ulster. He had been deeply shocked when his parishioners had objected to his shopping in a Catholic shop. He later became Chaplain-General.

Retired from the Army, Desmond Swan took charge of the thriving St Margaret's Church in Twickenham. We continued to meet on many occasions until his death in the late '90s.

John and Joan Boothroyd

After we moved to Ascot, our nearest friends were John and Joan Boothroyd, who lived in a cottage just across the road from us. A Yorkshireman by birth, he had been Regimental Sergeant-Major chef in the area during the war and told colourful stories of his links with the Queen Mother. He would often present us with tasty dishes which he had cooked. A handyman and a keen gardener, he helped us in many different ways.

Their two sons were in the Police Force. One of them used to sing in the Metropolitan Choir, and on one occasion we were invited to join a coach party to one of their concerts.

John was working as Chef to Heathfield School and was very popular with the girls, whom he treated as if he were a rather strict grandfather.

During the two years we were in Germany, builders were at work converting the house into two flats. We arranged for one of the Boothroyds' sons to live with his wife and daughter rent-free as caretakers.

At one time I used regularly to take Joan Boothroyd shopping by car.

John Boothroyd died shortly after we moved to West Dulwich. We were able to drive down for his funeral. Joan then spent her remaining years with one of their sons.

Charles, Barbara (née Macmillan), Geoffrey and Delscey Burns

Charles Burns, a Scottish aristocrat, had been permanently disabled in a hunting accident. A close friend of Frank Buchman, he had spent the war at

Tirley Garth. Margo and I were among many who had benefited from his deep spiritual insight.

After the war, he had been recommended to move to a warmer climate. He had bought a small aircraft and had persuaded a retired RAF pilot, Group Captain Pat Foss, to fly him together with a friend who had suffered from German imprisonment to South Africa. The three men had the most extraordinary adventures on the way.

Barbara was the daughter of Ebenezer Macmillan, a Presbyterian Minister in Pretoria, who had responded warmly to the visit of six Oxford men in 1928 labelled "The Oxford Group". "'One had only to hear them' he told his congregation, 'to realise that they have got hold of something we have not got, or once had and lost. L. P. Jacks speaks of the lost radiance of the Christian religion – that is just what they have found.'"(1). In 1932 he and his wife had accompanied Buchman on a visit to Canada.

From Pretoria Barbara went to Switzerland to study French and visited Russia. She was recruited by Field-Marshal Smuts to edit a wartime paper for the South African forces. She was a tough character and distanced herself at first from the British visitors, but eventually succumbed to Charles Burns's charms and married him.

After his untimely death, Barbara came to Britain for the sake of the education of their daughter Delscey and their son Geoffrey, who was to follow his father to Eton. After some years in a house which had originally been bought by Charles in London, they settled in Ascot. We were happy to have Barbara staying with us while she was house-hunting.

Our interest in India had been aroused by Rajmohan Gandhi, a grandson of the Mahatma, who had come with two American Olympic oarsmen as our guests to a Sovereign's Parade. We decided to help raise money to support him in his work in India. With help from the Dawnays, who arranged for us to use the Silver Ring at the Race Course, we planned, together with Barbara and another friend, Elise Stephens, a dinner for about 100 friends in the neighbourhood. Each table was hosted by a couple committed to the project. A young Indian dentist acted as speaker and a good sum of money was raised.

Barbara arranged on several happy occasions for us to stay with Jean Burns, Charles's sister, in their ancestral home, Cowdenknowes, on the banks of the Leader Water in Berwickshire.

Geoffrey Burns was married in October 1980 to Celia Kynaston, whose parents had been friends of his uncle. They lived in County Durham and the wedding was held in the Galilee Chapel of Durham Cathedral, the reception in Geoffrey's old College at Durham University, St John's. It was vacation time and guests from a distance were accommodated for the night in the College. We drove there and back with Pat Foss, who had flown Charles to South Africa, and his wife Margaret. The bride and bridegroom, he in blazer and boater, took off from the College boathouse in a dinghy, rowing for a short distance down the River Weir to where their car had been parked. Geoffrey has since had a successful career in business in Glasgow.

Delscey joined us once for a conference in Oxford, after which we drove her to her rooms in York University, where she gave us tea; we then drove on to stay with her mother and aunt in Cowdenknoves. She taught English for some years at St George's School, Ascot. As a Bracknell District Councillor, I was able to take her to educational occasions which might interest her.

During our time as "nomads" after my prostate operation, we spent four days with Delscey Burns in her mother's house in South Ascot. We met a number of her friends and we went to tea with the friends to whom we had let Milcote Cottage.

Delscey was for some years an outstanding headmistress of St Mary's School, Calne. She is now greatly enjoying a new career as a psychotherapist in the Cotswolds.

Barbara wrote biographies of her husband Charles and of the last Tsarevitch of Imperial Russia, neither of which was officially published in English, but the latter was translated into Russian and published in Moscow just at a time when interest in the Imperial family was reviving. She was also able to give advice to HRH the Prince of Wales on a visit which he was about to make to Russia.

She died in September 2000, having spent her last years in Glasgow, her father's home town, near Geoffrey and Celia and played a big part in the lives of her three grandchildren.

(1) Garth Lean: *Frank Buchman – A Life*, (Constable, 1985), p.138.

Elise Stephens

Of all our many friends, the one to whom the title of "*grande dame*" could most suitably be applied was Elise Stephens. Unmarried daughter of an Anglican parson who had for a time been Chaplain to the Royal Family at Crathie Church near Balmoral, she was living, when we first met her, with her equally grand widowed mother in their fine Berkshire mansion in Shefford Woodlands. After her mother died, she invited us together with Peter, who was at home at the time, to make a huge bonfire in her garden and to burn ruthlessly all her unwanted furniture. Some of it we rescued, including a beautiful prayer chair which has adorned our various drawing rooms since.

She was an Ascot neighbour for a time in a luxurious flat in King's Ride House among a number of residents of similar standing, including our good friend "Bunny" Saunders, widow of a former battalion commander of the Cheshire Regiment, who used to come with us to Sandhurst and who invited us to polo on Smith's Lawn.

For a time she shared the flat with a distinguished unmarried friend. It was not a success. Margo would receive them one at a time, each complaining of the other's behaviour.

Invited to play croquet on their splendid lawn, Margo was paired off with a merry widower, who insisted on embracing her every time she made a particularly good stroke, aping what was then only just beginning to become normal behaviour on the football field.

Elise co-hosted with Barbara Burns and Margo the Indian party in the Silver Ring, which I have already described. In a gorgeous mauve dress, she amused us by telling all her guests what a wonderful party it was.

When Margo, Peter and I were invited by Dolly Hannay to spend a happy holiday in one of her cottages in Braemar, Elise decided to stay at a hotel in Ballater which she remembered from her father's time at Crathie. We spent one day driven by her in her luxurious car. On the narrow Lecht Road over the hills to Grantown-on-Spey, she asserted her right of way by blowing her horn and shaking her fist at oncoming cars. After lunching in Aviemore, we took the ski lift to the summit of Cairn Gorm. While Elise and Margo returned to the car and drove round to Mar Lodge to pick us up, Peter and I made our way there over Ben Macdui.

Elise was a restless soul. We visited her in a number of different places. She died in a nursing home in Tunbridge Wells.

Roy, Barbara and Hugh Mant

The Mants were our next-door-neighbours at Milcote Cottage. Roy was a retired colonial administrator, who had served for many years in Kaduna, Nigeria, and returned there on occasional visits. Barbara had stayed at home and devoted her life to breeding and showing Finnish Spitz. Their son Hugh was about the same age as Andrew and was at Oakham School.

Our relationship suffered considerably from the dogs, of which there were as many as a dozen at a time and which barked without restraint. Our complaints to the Crown Estate Office eventually led to their moving to a more suitable site.

We managed, however, to remain friends. Barbara occasionally invited us to meals, took in one of Andrew's friends when our house was full, and helped Margo with meals in the garden when we ran an antique sale. Roy took Peter and me to watch Chelsea play Nottingham Forest and to the 7-a-side Rugby competition at Twickenham. He represented us for a time on the Bracknell District Council. Hugh joined us for one holiday at the Hut, which included a day's climbing in Snowdonia.

J. O. ("Olly") Jones

Barbara Mant warned Margo against our refuse collectors. Margo reacted in her inimitable way by inviting them into the kitchen for coffee.

On one occasion we entertained the Dawnays from Royal Enclosure Lodge to lunch and the refuse collectors and their wives to coffee the same evening.

Their leader, Olly Jones, became a friend for life. He had once been a Welsh coal-miner and had served during the war as a Sergeant in the Royal Army Service Corps in Ghana.

When Ruth Mathys was staying with us, he invited her to spend a weekend with him and his wife. Ruth then arranged for them and another couple to visit her at Caux during a motoring holiday through Switzerland.

One week a refuse collector arrived in his car, saying, "Don't tell anybody! We're on strike, but I've come to collect your rubbish".

Olly used to collect the refuse for the lady who bred the Queen's corgis. He had a favourite corgi, who would come running to greet him when he called "Queenie!". One week he called, but the door remained closed. The next week, the lady told him, "The Queen was with me when you called last week and asked me, 'Who's that calling me?'"

He and his wife took us to dinner one evening in a restaurant in Bracknell. When she died very suddenly and unexpectedly one night, it was to us that he called for help. We later attended her funeral.

He married again and we would visit them in their home in Binfield. After moving to West Dulwich, we stayed for a few nights in the Berystede Hotel in South Ascot and included them among the friends whom we invited on different days to a meal.

Ian and Karin Parsons

Karin, a Swedish friend working at the Moral Re-Armament HQ in London, was surprised to receive by post from Australia a proposal of marriage from Ian, an Anglican parson, whom she hardly knew. She decided with her friends that, before coming to any decision, it would be best to receive him somewhere where they could meet in peace and get to know each other. We invited them both to stay with us.

Ian's father had encouraged him to use the opportunity to trace his family and had given him the name of two Wiltshire villages. We drove them both to Pitton and found in the churchyard a number of the family graves. We lunched in the Silver Plough Inn, where our waitress turned out to be Australian. We then drove on to Farley with its Georgian-styled church, where Ian's great-grandparents were married. The Vicar received us in the 18th century almshouse wrapped in a cloak as he was suffering from 'flu. From an office guarded by an iron gateway he produced the parish register, in which we found details of the wedding. The bride had signed with thumbprint; she was illiterate, a "serving girl", the bridegroom a farmer. In the margin we read, "This couple has just gone to Australia". He had "married beneath his station". We visited Salisbury and Stonehenge and drove on to Sussex for supper in Rotherfield with the Thornhills and a talk with Alan.

Ian had arrived suffering badly from a heavy cold and jetlag and not in the mood for romance. Sensing his need, Karin wisely returned to London to give him space. The day in the country and unhurried time with friends had

enabled him to adjust. A few days later, we saw him off to London with a bunch of red roses for his prospective fiancée.

A few years later, when he and Karin were living in Switzerland with their son, he officiated at Andrew and Eliane's wedding.

On visits to Britain, Ivan and Maisie Poulton, with whom they were staying, have brought them to visit us.

Academy Sergeant-Major "Phil" and Glenys Phillips

Though we had many Sandhurst friends, Margo had taken very little part in the official Wives' Club. She was very surprised to be invited by the Commandant's wife, Mrs Philip Tower, to become its Chairman. She had rashly filled in a form expressing strong views about the Club and Mrs Tower was clearly considering the need to move with the changing times. Margo had the privilege of getting to know and working with a remarkably fine woman, Glenys Phillips, wife of the Academy Sergeant-Major, a Welsh Guardsman. Together they brought fresh life to the Club.

I had known the Phillips earlier, when he was a Company Sergeant-Major. They had had a son at the Sandhurst Nursery School, of which I was then Hon. Secretary/Treasurer and at which Andrew was a pupil.

"Phil" went on to become Superintendent of the Queen's Guard at St James's Palace, where we visited them and were given a personal tour. Both husband and wife were together awarded the MVO. After his tragic death on Christmas Day 1991, we attended his memorial service in the Guards' Chapel, which was packed with senior officers paying him tribute.

While on a visit to our friend Una Gray in Llandaff, I phoned Glenys in her home in Penarth. She had just been struck by another tragedy. Her brother had died on holiday in Spain and she was alone at home awaiting the return of his body to arrange the funeral. When I suggested that it was not a good time to visit her, she begged us to come. Una drove us there. Glenys poured out her heart to us, and we reminisced about the past with a healthy mixture of laughter and tears, such as mourning should always be.

Since then, Una has kept in touch with Glenys, and we have usually managed to see her on our frequent visits.

Steve, Catherine (née Guisan) and Vivian Dickinson

During his travels with *Anything to Declare?*, Andrew made friends with an American Rhodes Scholar, Steve Dickinson from Roscoe, Montana, and invited him to stay with us. He set out from Paris with a cowboy hat, a guitar and very little money, but without any document about his destination and was stopped by Immigration at Dover. The official phoned Margo, but insisted on talking to me. I was teaching and couldn't be found for some time. Poor Steve was kept waiting several hours.

I invited Steve and Andrew to a cadet guest night at Sandhurst. Knowing that Steve would not have the essential dinner jacket, I chose from a number of volunteers in one of my classes the cadet who, I thought, most resembled Steve in build and borrowed from him one which fitted him perfectly. After the dinner we were invited together with the Company and College Commanders to the Gaza Company ante-room, where Steve and Andrew sang some of the numbers from *Anything to Declare?*. We also took Steve to meet an American officer, who was at the time attached to Gaza Company, and his family in their quarter.

A Birmingham surgeon, Steve Lester, who had performed free a much needed knee operation on Andrew, offered to do the same for Steve, who based with us before and after the operation. While he was recuperating in hospital, he received the news that his father had terminal cancer. He was able to return home to see him before he died.

At Christmas 1973, when we were all at Caux for the wedding of Ruth Mathys to George Dallas, Steve got engaged to Catherine Guisan, a journalist and daughter of a distinguished Swiss statesman. The excitement of the engagement left Steve totally exhausted and he, together with Andrew, came back to Wuppertal with us for a well-earned rest. Among the people they visited was Adolf Scheu, Socialist MP for Wuppertal, whom I was to get to know later.

At the Caux conference in the summer of 1974 we lent our car to Steve to take his widowed mother Vivian on a tour of Switzerland. Steve and Catherine's wedding in September was a very happy occasion. On our return to Wuppertal, we had Vivian to stay with us for three weeks, during which she was invited to stay with old friends of Steve.

Steve and Catherine have lived for many years with their two sons in St Paul, Minnesota. We have, however, been delighted to meet them again at Caux summer conferences.

It has been my privilege and pleasure to help translate into English a book by Catherine's mother, Hélène Guisan, *La tierce présence*. In May 2000 Andrew travelled to Moscow with her for the launching of her book in Russian.

Arthurs and de Mahés

Living close to us in Kings Ride, Ascot, was a cousin of Penelope Ogilvy, who introduced us to her. Val Arthur's husband John was a Guards Officer who, on retirement, became a manager of the Sunningdale Golf Club.

Val's parents, John and "Pops" de Mahé, had spent most of their lives farming in Kenya – it was important to remember to pronounce it with a long EE. When they retired to a delightful cottage with a walled garden in Sunningdale, we were invited to meet them. John, once a Cambridge tennis Blue, was a typical colonial English gentleman, who had inherited in his youth the French title of Prince de Mahé. "Mahé" is the Breton form of "Matthew"; a distant ancestor, returning from a crusade, is said to have been granted the title when he presented his King with a relic of St Matthew.

"Pops" was an excellent cook, they were a most entertaining couple, and meals and walks round their garden were a joy. After we moved to West Dulwich, they once drove up to visit us and gave us good advice on our garden. When David and Penelope Ogilvy were staying with us, we invited the de Mahés to join us for lunch at the Berestede Hotel in South Ascot.

After they had retired to a residential home overlooking the race course, we continued to visit them. On the very last occasion we found her a bedridden widow, but still her old cheerful self.

The Waldron Family

Our friendship with the Waldrons is a strange one in that we spend many years without meeting and then circumstances bring us closely together again. We first met Victor and Gladys at Caux and later invited them to a Sovereign's Parade.

Victor Echevarri is a great-grandson of Don Juan Ignacio Echevarri, a Basque grandee and prominent activist in the Carlist uprising, who acquired British nationality in 1821. Victor served as an officer in the RNVF and survived the torpedoing of the *Windsor Castle* in March 1943. He married Gladys, only daughter of Colonel Sir William Waldron, Conservative Mayor

of Fulham for many years. Sir William's only son had died in a school accident aged 19 and, on marrying, Victor took on the family name of Waldron. They were then all living together in a large house with stables and a practice race-course at Winkfield Row.

They once asked us to adopt their large white poodle, who had been chasing their horses. Tony Bigland was staying with us at the time and spent happy hours with the dog. Then Tony and we took off for Caux, leaving Ruth Mathys and a friend in charge of the boys. The dog then made his own way back to his old home, a distance of about 15 miles, and the Waldrons decided to keep him.

One summer evening in 1953 Margo and I were engaged in one of our periodic rows when Victor phoned to say that Gladys had died giving birth to a daughter. Our own troubles were at once forgotten and we spent many hours trying to comfort him. On two occasions we had him and his son William to stay with us at White Cottage.

Then some years passed. When we next met, Victor had married Lady Olivia Elsie June, daughter of the 5th Marquess of Headfort. They have two daughters. Olivia ran a health food shop in Windsor and became a good friend to Margo. Our two sons and William were all then at Papplewick School, Ascot.

In the autumn of 1971, the Waldrons invited us to dinner. I had just retired from Sandhurst. Asked about our plans, we replied that we had got no further than a vague desire for a winter holiday in the sun. They then told us that they had a villa in Sardinia and offered us the use of it together with the services of their agent, a delightful Irish woman who would see to all our needs.

We accepted with great gratitude and included our friends Terry and Demie Blair. It happened to be very shortly before our Silver Wedding.

On our return, the Blairs, who were then living in London, included us in a dinner party to thank the Waldrons.

Victor and Olivia are keen members of "World Runners", "a running club whose members use their running to focus attention and generate support for ending hunger and starvation in our world" (1). He is President of the UK branch.

In 1996 Minerva press published Victor's *The Wind at My Back*, "a compilation of articles, letters and reflections – memories of family and old friends, comrades-in-arms, past romances, the campaign against world hunger and the discovery of the 'American Way'".

Victor and Olivia now live in Meopham in a delightful cottage with a splendid garden and views of the Kent countryside in all directions. With a son in Brazil, daughters in New York, South Africa and Oxford, and six grandchildren to whom they are devoted, they are world travellers.

- (1) "World Runners" Diary for 1989, published by the Waldron Property Group and given me by Victor.

Terry and Demie (née Brown) Blair

On the day after we had accepted the Waldrons' offer of a holiday in Sardinia, the Blairs visited us. We had first met Demie Brown when she had been Tony Bigland's partner at a Trinity Hall May Ball. Terry had stayed with us at White Cottage for some weeks, convalescing after treatment for a slipped disc at Chertsey Hospital. He had taken us to visit his mother and had become very much one of the family.

They too were longing for a holiday in the sun, so we invited them to come with us. We drove together to Paris, put the car on an overnight train to Toulon and drove along the Riviera coast to Genoa, where we took a night boat to Porto Torres. We then drove across the north of the island to Palau on the north-east coast.

The villa stands half-way up a hill looking across to the island of La Maddalena and the bay where Nelson's fleet had been based before the battle of Trafalgar. All around are fantastically shaped white granite rocks. Although it was February, we breakfasted every day outside on a patio surrounded by mimosa.

The area consisted largely of villas owned by the "jet set", who only used them occasionally in the summer. Our Irish agent took us on her rounds and told us about their owners. Most of the buildings were impressive, but one had been devastated by about 60 cats, which she had to feed each day.

She also introduced us to the only two expatriates who had chosen to winter in Palau, both very colourful characters. Jori Smith was a 60-year-old Canadian artist who was recovering from a painful divorce and a hip operation

and ran about five miles every day to get fit. "Lady A" was an older, much married wealthy lady. She had been in Yugoslavia in World War II and had become a courier for the Chetnicks who, under Mihailovic, were resisting the German occupation. Arrested by the Germans, who had a photograph showing her armed, she had been treated with great courtesy, apparently because of her title and a rumour that she was related to Churchill. A lonely old lady, she confided in us, "If only we had had less money, my husband and I might have stuck together".

After seeing Lady A being extremely rude to Jori at a cocktail party, we laid on a special lunch for her, over which Terry said to her, "I think you and Jori are very much alike". This made her very indignant, but a few minutes after she had left, Jori looked in and told us, "Lady A has just been nice to me for the very first time". Over tea we talked about the deepest things on our hearts.

A few days later Jori told us that she had been getting up to watch the sun rise and had been learning to know herself as she really was. She was anxious about an English girl who had run away from home, was living fast and loose and the influence she might have on a young nephew who was coming to stay with her.

After our return she wrote that she had persuaded the girl to go back to her parents and that she had herself put right a long-standing quarrel with her sister. She had presented us with two sketches of Sardinia, which we love and have hanging in our home.

From the villa we could see in the distance a shapely peak. Our map showed a road leading close to its summit. We decided to explore it. As we were driving slowly up the mountain road, we were overtaken by an American Army truck. A sergeant called out, "Where ya from?" Demie shouted back, "Richmond, Virginia". He then invited us all to tea and signed us in at the closely guarded entrance to a NATO communications centre at the top of the mountain. The high security unit consisted of a number of Sergeants, commanded by a very young Captain. Over a huge meal we discovered that the Sergeant's wife was British and lived in Reading. On our return we phoned her with a message from her husband.

Terry and Demie had to return before us. We drove them to Porto Torres and saw them off. After a few more days we took a night ferry from Olbia to Civitavecchia and drove to Rome, where our most interesting experience was

hearing Pope Paul VI's Easter message to the crowds in St Peter's Square. We went on to visit Assisi and Florence. On the way up the Valle d'Aosta, I had a sudden urge to see the Matterhorn at close quarters. We drove up to Breuil-Cervinia and were lucky to get for the night what seemed to be the last available room at the height of the skiing season; it looked straight onto the Matterhorn.

Years later, Peter, who had been skiing in Italy with Annie, gave me a graphic description of a splendid mountain called Monte Cervinia. He had not realised that it was the Italian side of the Matterhorn.

The holiday had proved a second honeymoon on the eve of our Silver Wedding and marked the beginning of a new phase in our lives. In April 1999, as she lay dying in hospital with Peter and Annie beside her, Margo talked about it. Peter wrote:

"I ask Mum what's been the happiest holiday of her life. She thinks a long time, and then says how much she loved the time in Skye, when we all went, Dabble and Mumbo, Andrew and Eliane, Annie and me. But she remembers most of all her anniversary trip with Dabble to Sardinia. They'd been married for twenty-five years, and this was their celebration. Everything was perfect – the time, the weather, the flowers. And she was just miserable. She was confronted with living with herself and she hated it ... But knowing how much she hated her own company, Mum suddenly let go and decided that this was the person she'd have to live with for the rest of her life, this awful, hateful person: herself. And admitting that, she felt an enormous burden roll off her shoulders, and she could look out at the world around her, in all its beauty, and love it. I'm holding Mum's hand, crying for the person I know and love, crying for the person I never knew and also love".

In the early '80s, we spent a week with Rob and Susan Corcoran in Richmond, Virginia, on our way to Peter and Annie in Massachusetts. It was Terry Blair who met us at the airport and drove us to their home. He and Demie were then living with Mrs Brown, her mother, in the most aristocratic suburb of the City. Invited to "Sunday brunch" to meet some of their friends, we reckoned we had never seen a breakfast table so amply spread. Terry also invited us to meet friends in his magnificent Club in the City.

Meeting Demie some time after Terry's death, I was impressed by her outgoingness and wondered if her experience of living without her life's partner was similar to my own.

Andrew and Eliane Stallybrass-Maillefer

At what stage do sons qualify as friends? Perhaps when they leave home and start on a career? The quality of friendship depends considerably on their choices of partners. In our case we have been fortunate in that our two daughters-in-law have played a vital part in the life of the family and are devoted to each other.

Andrew managed to preserve his independence without actually rebelling against us, as Peter did later. On an occasion shortly after he had outgrown Margo, he felt that she was trying to influence him unduly. He drew himself up to his full height, patted her on the head and said, "You must remember, little woman, you can no longer make me do anything".

During his first few terms at Shrewsbury he seemed to achieve little. Then he took an Army Outward Bound course at Towyn in North Wales, the Commandant of which had begun climbing as a Sandhurst cadet with me. He returned with new confidence and zest for life. His housemaster reported on one occasion, "Andrew plays all games with a maximum of enthusiasm and a minimum of skill". In "Bumpers" he was in a house third IV which rowed over bottom of the river all four evenings. While rowing all through the week, he joined an informal cricket team to play against neighbouring villages on Sundays. He also earned a school "colour" as unofficial school projectionist, volunteering to project films in houses other than his own. The Headmaster praised his salesmanship in trying to sell the school a projector which we no longer wanted.

His many enthusiasms appeared to us to interfere with his work and his 'A' levels were not adequate to earn him a university place. We took him away from school and, at the Headmaster's suggestion, entered him for an interview at the Institute of Industrial Psychology. For this there was a long waiting list and he spent some unhappy months at home toying with various unsuitable job possibilities, such as working in a laundry. The interview marked a turning point. He admitted to himself and to the interviewers that he had wanted to teach but had been afraid of failure.

The Institution rightly criticised me for my lack of faith in his academic ability and persuaded us to send him to a crammer in London. He travelled up daily by train and worked extremely hard. Margo used to go to great trouble to prepare excellent sandwiches for his lunch and was horrified to discover that he was selling them to fellow students at a good price.

That summer we planned a holiday on the continent which would include a visit to the conference at Caux, hoping that it might benefit both boys. Both in rebellion, they were put to share a room where, to our great embarrassment, they could plan disruptive moves together. Two things helped Andrew to see that this was more than mere naughtiness: he discovered that he was undermining another boy's faith, which he had no intention of doing, and an Indian called him a selfish pig. At that point, he turned to God for help.

Over a family breakfast he was honest with us about things that had gone wrong at school and apologised to Peter for setting him a bad example. Peter then said, "I want you to know that I both love and respect you more than ever".

Andrew then accepted an invitation to France to take part in a young people's musical. At that point his excellent exam results, which qualified him for the place he had chosen at York University to study English Literature, arrived. He applied at once for a year's postponement, which was readily granted, as their policy was to encourage the entry of more mature students.

Put to share a room with a young Frenchman who hated the Brits so much that he had sworn never to learn English, Andrew was soon on the road to becoming the simultaneous translator he is today. His friend was soon speaking English and visiting us in Ascot. Today we count him, his wife and their four children among our friends.

After a year Andrew gave up his university place to continue his work with Moral Re-Armament, a step which we at first found very difficult to accept. He and Eliane were members of the cast of 60 from 21 countries to travel with the international musical *Anything to Declare?* After a tour of eight European countries, they covered 35,000 miles in 18 months, visiting ten countries of Asia and Australasia.

Today, former members of the cast are giving valuable leadership in different spheres on all five continents. One British couple who, like Andrew, had forgone university, live with their three sons in Richmond, Virginia,

working for racial integration; they told us that American friends, who took it for granted that they had university qualifications, were amazed to hear of their experiences with *Anything to Declare?* and would give anything to have something similar for their own children.

After some years in Paris, where he played in a Montmartre theatre the role of the French Foreign Minister, "Archibald Netteterton Seymour", in the comedy *Pitié pour Clémentine*, Andrew worked in London as editor of the weekly *New World News* and became a member of the Institute of Journalists.

At the invitation of people of different races and political parties he spent the years 1977-79 helping prepare Rhodesia-Zimbabwe for independence. After attending the Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka, he was one of those at the Lancaster House Conference referred to by the BBC and *The Guardian* as "intermediaries", helping the leaders to reach a settlement. One of Mr Mugabe's close associates asked to come to our home, where he told us that Andrew had saved his life.

At Caux one day, when Eliane Maillefer appeared on the platform, I had the clear thought, "She will be Andrew's wife". A little later, he told me that he was indeed in love with her. We agreed not to tell Margo, lest it made it difficult for her to behave naturally with Eliane. During our two years in Germany we drove over to France to see shows in which they were both taking part. On one such occasion, while talking to Eliane, Margo had the thought, "She is the one".

Shortly before their wedding, Margo and I were invited by Swiss friends, Luc and Suzy de Montmollin, to a lunch in their beautiful home on the Lake of Neuchâtel together with Andrew and Eliane, her mother, Jean Piguet – the Minister who was to marry them – and his wife Yvonne. It came to light that all four couples had become re-engaged after a broken engagement. Irmay Maillefer said triumphantly, "I am the only normal person present".

A civic wedding in February 1980 conducted by the Mayor of Montreux was followed the next day by a service in the Montreux Parish Church of St Vincent. 26 Swiss, 11 Brits, including Andrew's godfather Tony Bigland and his wife Yvonne, nine Swedes, four French, three Germans and three Australians had spent the previous few days preparing a colourful reception in Mountain House.

Andrew has served on the editorial board of the magazine *For a Change*. He now has Swiss citizenship, has been awarded a Diploma in Theology at Geneva University and is a qualified Lay Minister in the Reformed Church of the Canton of Geneva. He and Eliane, who was trained as a teacher, have taken responsibility with others for the Moral Re-Armament conference centre in Caux. For over ten years he has written weekly informal and colourful letters, describing events at the annual summer conference. These have gone out all over the world and have been greatly appreciated by what Eliane calls his "fan mail".

Eliane has recently retired from her post as Vice-President of the Caux Foundation and has had various temporary jobs while looking for a permanent one. She has taken up the flute and is already playing chamber music with other musicians. She and Andrew both sing in a Geneva choir which has made live recordings of Mozart's *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* and Bach's *B Minor Mass*.

On a family visit to Skye in 1995, each morning before breakfast, the young drove out to a field on the water's edge with Highland cattle. Looking across the loch to Dunvegan Castle, they saw a number of seals placidly basking on rocks. When Eliane played a Corelli Suite on her flute, four seals responded to the music and started to swim towards her. Based on photographs, Margo produced a fine painting of this incident, which now hangs in their home in Avully.

Under the auspices of "Foundation for Freedom", Andrew arranged in Geneva, with the backing of "Pro Democratia" in Bucharest and the Canton of Geneva, a 9-day seminar on "the Ethical Foundations of Democracy" for 13 Romanian local politicians of different parties.

He is working on a book entitled *The Caux Palace – Witness to a Century*, a section of which, translated into French, appeared as a full page in the leading francophone daily, *Le Nouveau Quotidien*.

Andrew takes part in long distance races and in the annual *Course de l'Escalade* round Geneva. He is a trusted leader of mountaineering expeditions. He and Peter have regular climbing holidays with and without a guide. In 1998 they made a guideless ascent of their first 4,000 metre peak, the Finsteraarhorn.

Our happiest times have been on joint family holidays. In June 1990 we stayed in a spacious chalet, lent us by friends, in Mayens d'Arbaz to the north of Sion in the Rhône valley. ("Mayens" are the high pastures, usually clear of snow in May.) Three bedrooms opened onto a balcony, looking out onto a strawberry field below and southwards across the Rhône valley to the peaks of the Valais. Our mountain walks gave Margo plenty of opportunity to paint the spring flowers, sometimes just emerging from the winter snow. On our last day, using buses, we walked from the foot of the huge reservoir on the Lac des Dix over to Arolla, the most exciting part being the ascent of ladders fixed to the rocks leading to the top of a pass known as the "Pas des chèvres".

In April 1999 Andrew flew over twice to be with us during Margo's last weeks in hospital. Peter and Annie came too. Andrew and Peter took it in turns to sit by her through her last four nights, and it was Andrew who was holding her hand when she died. Eliane joined us for the services and we each read a favourite lesson.

In May-June 2000 we had a family reunion in Avully, a village ten miles west of Geneva, to which Andrew and Eliane moved from Geneva in 1999. Annie and Peter were lecturing two evenings running at Geneva University. We then had six days in Pontresina, arranged imaginatively by Eliane.

Our journey by car took us from the far south-west to the far south-east of the country and over the main watersheds of Europe. We drove round the Lake of Geneva and up the Rhône valley to its source in a glacier. The Furka Pass, which took us over to Andermatt, is the watershed between the Mediterranean and the North Sea. From Andermatt the Reuss flows north to join the Arve near Brunn and the Rhine at Waldshut. Not far to the south-east is the St Gotthard Pass, south of which the Ticino flows into Lago Maggiore and eventually into the Adriatic. Beyond Andermatt the Oberalp Pass took us to the source of the Rhine itself, which meanders east to Chur, north past Liechtenstein and west through Lake Constance before being joined by the more direct Reuss. Finally the Julier Pass took us to the Inn, which flows into the Danube and so to the Black Sea. We stopped several times to admire churches with medieval murals, one with 163 ceiling paintings in 17 rows of 9.

We also paid a visit to our friends Jean and Emmina Carrard in the fine old farmhouse in Lawin in the Inn valley which was once her grandfather's. Jean, once an officer in the *Chasseurs alpins*, has taken Andrew climbing and has advised him over his expeditions with Peter.

On our way back to Geneva, we took the Albula Pass to Chur, then on by motorway in a big northerly loop, stopping in Bern to visit art exhibitions in the Kunst Museum.

On our last evening Andrew made us an excellent fondue and we drank a toast to the spirit of "Mumbo" who, we felt, had been enjoying the holiday with us.

Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones

At Papplewick Preparatory School Peter, like Andrew, led the choir; he also became Head Boy and Captain of Boxing. We were thanked by some of the parents for the way in which he helped their sons. Both boys had been taught boxing in a Saturday morning class at Sandhurst by "Dusty" Miller, a former champion boxer whose remarkable life story featured in a radio programme and who was employed as a storeman and boxing coach.

Dusty accompanied us on one occasion to watch Peter box against another school. Peter won his fight and reduced to tears his opponent, who was then publicly rebuked by his headmistress. Much to our delight, Peter marched up to her and said, "Stop that! You don't know what it's like to fight out there when you're tired and sore".

At Shrewsbury, unlike Andrew, Peter refused to row in a house boat, as he felt it would take too much time away from his work. Criticised by his Housemaster and in a mood of "I'll show them!" he entered for the Senior Sculls. He reached the final before the rest of the house realised what was happening. They cheered him on to bring back their one and only cup that year. This earned him his house rowing colours.

At Speech Day there was room in the Alington Hall only for parents of prizewinners. Our two always contrived that one of them should win some obscure prize. Tom Bigland was at that time a Governor and we would see him on the platform proudly pointing out his nephew to his fellow Governors.

Between the ages of 16 and 17, Peter ran away from home twice, the first time after a row over the length of his hair. I missed the opportunity of telling him how, when I was his age, I had planned to run away. After sitting the Higher School Certificate exam for the second time, I was afraid that I had failed in Roman History. This would have meant staying on at school for another year, something which I dreaded. The news that I had passed reached

me before the end of term and put a welcome end to a wild plan to take a train to Birmingham and look for a job as an errand boy.

Margo and I decided never to take any action over Peter that was not our united conviction. An issue arose over which we disagreed despite a long search for unity. Margo then said, "If you feel what you want to do is right, go ahead. If you are wrong, I will not say 'I told you so' but will trust you to learn from your mistake'. This gave me a great sense of freedom. Events proved me wrong, I did learn from my mistake and no harm came from it.

After leaving school at 17 and with nine months to fill in before taking up a place at Sussex University, Peter fell in love with a French girl several years older than himself and decided to pursue her to her home in Monte Carlo.

When he left, our reactions as parents were totally different. Margo, afraid that he would never come home again, was heartbroken. She had to resist the temptation to rush up to any young man who looked the least like Peter. I was angry, my pride was hurt, but I never for a moment doubted that he would come back.

During that difficult time I made three decisions which proved turning points in our relationships as a family. The first was to hand Peter his passport, which I had kept locked in my desk and to tell him that, while I would not back his plans financially or in any other way, I would treat him as an adult and trust him to learn for himself.

Some months later, the British Consul in Monte Carlo phoned to ask us to send money for Peter's return. In reply to Margo's question, Peter assured her that he really wanted to come home. Two days later, he was back with us.

Friends in the Lake District and in Scotland who had invited us to stay with them suggested that we bring him too. My pride rebelled; I did not want to land our friends with a son with whom mutual trust no longer seemed to exist. After a quiet tea with a trusted friend who had been through similar difficulties with his son, I made my second decision: to welcome Peter home with a grateful heart and to include him with our friends.

The third decision was not to question him about his time away, but to wait for him to talk of his own accord. Over the next days he walked the hills in silence. After our return home, he told me in detail what had happened and said, "I am sorry I have hurt you both and I shall probably hurt you again, but

I had to learn for myself". Later, he said to Margo, "I had to come home for the security and I need you to be strong".

It was only with hindsight that we realised what Peter's rebellion had cost him and the importance of what we all had to learn. We had never rejected him, but both we and he had had difficulty in dealing with the pain of it all.

In the local paper he found an advertisement for a job as a mortuary attendant at the Heatherwood Hospital, a quarter of a mile away. We suppressed our reactions. He returned from the interview beaming. The personnel officer had said, "You're not quite what we're looking for, Sonny, but perhaps we could use your talents with the living rather than with the dead".

He worked there as a porter until it was time to go to Sussex and returned to the job each summer.

With his first earnings he repaid the money we had sent to Monte Carlo and contributed each week to the housekeeping. At the hospital he made his mark both with staff and with patients. When Margo was later brought in with broken knees, she was welcomed as Peter's mother and when we went to the wedding of a girl whose family Peter had befriended in hospital, we were treated as VIPs when it became known that we were the parents of Peter the Porter.

At the end of his first term at Sussex, Peter asked if he might bring home a dozen friends to celebrate his 18th birthday. The first guest arrived a day before Peter. His toes were appearing through holes in his shoes and socks; he was wearing a railwayman's jacket with silver buttons, under which was his younger brother's Cub uniform jersey, barely covering his elbows, and a pink chiffon scarf tied in a bow. The next day I remarked to Margo, "Ben's got very nice eyes; I managed to see them through all the hair". Ben and his family have remained good friends since. Today he is a respected middle-aged lecturer and always impeccably dressed.

I had reacted violently against those who, I thought, were supporting Peter in his rebellion. When he told me that he had stayed with a niece of mine, I held it against her until we next met, when she put me to shame by telling me how she had encouraged him to return home.

My fury against a man who had encroached on my authority as a father was such that for hours I toyed with the idea of burning down his house. My

rage abated when I was honest about it, not only with Margo, who felt almost as strongly as I did, but with a visitor who was completely uninvolved. We became friends again when he had similar problems with his daughter.

In 1977, I was admitted to hospital for a prostatectomy. Peter, then aged 27, wrote to me, "I could scarcely believe it when I heard that you were ill – you have always been such a tower of strength it just didn't seem possible. I felt strangely indignant, as if this had no right to happen! Do you remember in *Crime and Punishment*, before he commits the murder, Raskolnikov has a dream, and in the dream he is a little boy, watching some drunken peasant beating an old horse to death. Every detail of the scene comes back to him, with luminous clarity, every detail of the landscape and of the cart and of the horse. But it is his father's presence that is the most terrifying of all: the knowledge that suddenly shakes the child's security when he knows that his father is unable to control the world, unable to shield him from the brutality and the hurt.

"I remember when I first read the book, the scene struck me dumb; I felt as if I myself had died. And I remembered a terrible moment in Camberley when I had lost your hand in the street and, for a brief minute, you had vanished. And even when I found you, I knew that the world would never be the same again, that there was finally no one to protect me. I felt something like that hearing the news: like a little boy, betrayed by the world. But I also knew that I had the strength to face it, and that it was a strength which I had learned from you, and that finally the strength included the acknowledgement of weakness, the recognition that even our heroes are human, and that there comes a time when we are no longer meant to follow in their footsteps, but rather to stand by their sides. And I knew suddenly that I loved you with all the passion with which I have always loved you, but without the fear, without all the terror of dependency. The umbilical cord is cut so that we can love each other as equals, not dependants. In some final sense, we seem to be called upon to accept things as they are. Not passively, not through giving in, not without a continuing fight for a life that is to be; but with the recognition that we can only build a life if we care enough about the life that is. As Julian of Norwich says, 'Sin is behovely (necessary): but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well'.

"One day you can be here with me, accepted and accepting, here, as you lie in bed in Stevenage, as I write from Brighton, but here as never so intensely as before, here in a way that is only learned through illness, or through the day when I lost your hand. For it is even here, no longer running to escape into

the past or the future, that we begin to see not through a glass darkly, but face to face".

After graduating he spent some years as a Lecturer in English at Sussex University. In 1978-9 he had a sabbatical year and was appointed visiting professor at Smith College, Massachusetts, and invited us to stay with him. His first marriage, to Helen Dowson, a fellow student at Sussex, had broken down. On our first evening we met Ann Rosalind Jones, Esther Cloudman Dunn, Professor of Comparative Literature, a chair for excellence in scholarship and teaching, at Smith College. There was no doubt in our minds that "Annie" was the right partner for him.

Her first marriage too had broken down. Alfred Korn is one of America's leading poets. In 1984 in an epic poem (1), describing a journey across America he and Annie had made, following the route taken by the explorers Lewis and Clark, he has written a "Letter in Dedication" to Annie in which he mentions Peter. In December 1986 we were surprised to receive in West Dulwich a visit from Alfred Korn and his male partner.

After commuting across the Atlantic for some years, Peter took up an appointment at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. He later became Professor of English, Chair of the Cultural Studies Committee and Director of the History of the Book Program at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a Supervisor of the English Institute at Harvard University.

In our front hall is a handsome oak shield with the crest of the University of Pennsylvania and the inscription:

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
IRA H. ABRAMS MEMORIAL AWARD
FOR DISTINGUISHED TEACHING
PRESENTED TO
PETER STALLYBRASS
1997

In 1986 Peter published, together with his late Sussex colleague, Allon White, his first book, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (2). It has been described as "this arresting and original book ... one of the most challenging recent texts to address ... the question of the relationship between the social and the symbolic, the 'play' between power and culture" (3). He was also joint editor of *Staging the Renaissance* (4). Annie contributed to

both of these and also to *Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation* (5). She is the author of *The Currency of Eros* (6).

In 1992 Peter was invited to give the prestigious Annual Shakespeare's Birthday Lecture at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington.

One of our greatest joys has been to visit them in their fine old farmhouse in North Leverett, Massachusetts, and to meet their colleagues and friends. The area consists largely of forests and is now very thinly populated, but numerous cemeteries with graves dating mainly from the 19th century bear witness to the change which took place when the descendants of the New England settlers started to move west to more fertile ground. With the recent emphasis on the dangers of smoking, the once thriving tobacco fields, marked by nets to protect the plants and sheds to store the crops, are few and far between. The nearby town of Hadley is still famous for its asparagus.

The area has become an important centre of academic life with five closely connected university colleges. Amherst, home of the poet Emily Dickinson, houses the huge University of Massachusetts and its own College. Hampshire College is a short distance away. The others are Smith College in Northampton and Mount Holyoke College.

Peter and Annie also have a fine house in Pine Street, Philadelphia, where we enjoy meeting Peter's colleagues.

It was Peter and Annie who arranged the first family reunion, when they invited us together with Andrew and Eliane for a holiday in Massachusetts and introduced us all to a number of their friends.

In July 1992, when Margo was celebrating her 80th birthday, they flew over to Scotland and invited us to spend two nights with them at Glenfeochan Lodge before seeing us off from Oban to take a painting course on the Isle of Mull.

Peter spent the year 1994-5 in London, looking after students from U Penn studying for a year at London University. Annie had a sabbatical and they spent the year together in a charming house in Princes Gate Mews. We had the great joy of meeting for the first time Annie's daughter Anne Hillyer, her husband Pedro Samboy and their two-year-old son Wolky. Pedro, a Haitian refugee, had been a civil servant and a member of the international football squad. Watching Wolky playing with a football on our lawn, we were amazed at his control of the ball.

In September 1995, knowing that Margo and I had planned a honeymoon in Skye which had never materialised, Peter and Annie arranged a family holiday, travelling in two cars to Skye, staying in comfortable hotels on the way there and back. Andrew, Peter, Annie and I set out one morning to climb Bla Bheinn in the Red Cuillin, the summit of which was shrouded in mist for most of the day. About 200 feet short of the summit, I had an uneasy feeling that if I pushed it any more, I might have to be carried down. Peter, who had climbed the mountain before, kindly decided to accompany me down, while Annie, for whom it was her first Munro, and Andrew made the summit to be rewarded with the only clear view of the day.

Peter and Annie had the good fortune to be granted a sabbatical year together from 1998 to 1999 and to be appointed Fellows of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington.

Margo had always longed to see Washington in the spring, an experience which I had had in 1946. Peter and Annie duly invited us to stay with them in March.

For us the outstanding experience was attending the lecture in the Library by Annie on "Fetishising Gloves", ably supported by Peter with colour slides. Two days later, we celebrated my 88th birthday. We lunched with three of their fellow Fellows in the splendid George Hotel Restaurant. We telephoned my brother Robin in Somerset, who was celebrating his 86th. Peter writes, "Hope is with him and Emma is coming with two of his grandchildren. He's also about to watch the rugby game between England and France, and he'll be ecstatic when England wins.

"Two days later, Hope rings to tell us that Robin had died suddenly of a heart attack. We all weep for this wonderful man, whom we loved so much. But, as Hope says, it's how he wanted to go".

The next day Margo was diagnosed as having pneumonia. The doctor agreed to her being nursed at home and over the next few days her health improved. Then, while Peter and I were out shopping, she fell in the house and broke her left wrist. Annie sat comforting her until we returned and Peter took her by taxi to hospital. There were three days to go till our return and, with numerous phone calls, Peter succeeded in persuading our "Help the Aged" insurance to upgrade our return flight to Club class, allowing her adequate comfort.

Two days after our return, Margo was admitted to King's College Hospital for six days, released for three days, then readmitted for the last 17 days of her life. Andrew was with us for four days.

Meanwhile, Peter and Annie, who was suffering from a deep depression, were on holiday in Sicily. Peter writes, "What had started as a glorious celebration had turned into a nightmare. Mum had also given up eating, which made Annie feel helpless. It also brought back to her her own mother's painful death.

"Throughout our time in Sicily, Annie had wondered whether we shouldn't be with Mum. I took this as a sign of her depression and anxiety, and perhaps it partly was. We certainly needed the holiday after the stress and strain of Mumbo's pneumonia, the doctor's visits, her broken wrist, the hospital, her difficulty eating, the stress of upgrading the return flight, as well as the demands of work. And I was sure that I had already said goodbye to Mum, that I had done enough. But Annie was right ... it is time for us to pack and go to London. She punctures the bubble of my anger to reveal my grief, my desperate desire to do anything in my power to protect Mum from pain and from a lonely death, my need to be with Dad at his time of need".

They were with us for Margo's last ten days. Three days before the end Andrew was with us again. Peter writes, "I realize how much I'm missing Andrew. I need him more than I've ever done before. I thought I had the strength to go through this without him, but I don't. I don't even know if Mum will survive tonight, and I can't ask him to come for her sake. But I love him, I want him beside me. I tell Mum, and she holds my hand and says, 'Follow your heart'. But what should I do? Am I being selfish and demanding? And then there's a moment of absolute clarity. I must ring Andrew right now. I go down to the bank of phones in the hall and ring Geneva. I tell Andrew that I want him, I need him, I love him. We weep and weep and weep. It's so simple. All I had to do was ask. He'll find out about flights immediately. An hour later, Dad rings the ward to tell me that Andrew will be arriving at midday tomorrow. When I tell Mum, we both cry again. I feel I can bear anything if Andrew is here".

Andrew writes, "I am *so* moved by Peter's words. What an amazing gift it is to feel such love and trust, to feel so close and united. I ring Dad to say that I'll be with them tomorrow".

Peter continues, "Four years ago, I'd said to Dr Hole that, although we were intensely close as a family, Andrew and I would only really be able to be with each other after Mum died. Mum's very desire for us to be together made it somehow harder, as if she stood between us. Dr Hole, who has meant so much to Mum and me over these last years, had said, 'You could be close now if you wanted to be', and it suddenly seemed obvious that we could indeed. That summer, we went climbing together in the Alps for a fortnight, and we've done so every year since. Last year, descending a glacier, Andrew suddenly fell into a crevasse. I was able to hold him on the rope, and he used his ice axe and some hauling by me to get out, but it had been a scare. At the same time, it had literalized the bond between us: a rope that tied our destinies together. We both felt that intensely, and Andrew wrote movingly about the experience (see Appendix G).

"Now, as Mum dies, I feel Andrew anchoring me, holding me. And I know that Mum will live until he is here".

It was the unity between the two brothers that made it possible to hold the services on May Day, three days after Margo's death. And it was Peter who decided the form the Thanksgiving Service should take, "like the Christmas services of lessons and carols". Peter chose for his reading the passage on love from *1 Corinthians* 13, Annie A. E. Housman's poem, *Parta quies*.

In July 1999 I spent 11 days with Peter and Annie in Massachusetts. I read aloud to five-year-old Wolky Samboy his books on dinosaurs and sharks. He corrected my pronunciation of some of the longer Latin names. When I asked him if he knew what a palaeontologist is, he replied, "A fossil searcher".

On 22 December 1999, three days after burying Margo's ashes in Heswall, we all celebrated Peter's 50th birthday at a dinner in Gravetye Manor, a super country hotel with large park and gardens in lovely Sussex countryside. We five were joined by Hope Stallybrass, Guy and Puff Bigland, Josephine Holt, Carole Seymour-Jones and Geoffrey Parkinson, Patrick and Deb Conner, and Colin Thubron. Carole later told me that Margo had appeared to her in the night, saying how much she had been enjoying the party with us.

In March 2000 a good number of relatives, friends and neighbours met at the Globe Theatre to hear Peter give the Sam Wanamaker Lecture for the

year on "My Foot My Tutor?": Feet and Footwear in the Renaissance Theatre". He concluded his lecture with the following paragraph:

"Just after my father's eightieth birthday, we went climbing with him in Skye. He decided to call it a day two hundred feet short of the summit of Blaven. By the time we were back at the car, he had ascended and descended well over 5,000 feet. He has not climbed since. And yet his hands, which often give him pain, have become ever more active, completing his memoir and now writing a new book about the many friends in his life. In Philadelphia, an ocean away, I imagine my father's fingers walking miles every day over his ancient Amstrad as he recalls all those in his life who have given him their hands, to whom he has offered his hand. I imagine him, like Oedipus, finding his feet as he walks towards the light".

In a footnote to the written version, he adds, "My greatest debts are to my father and brother Bill and Andrew Stallybrass, who have tutored my feet on and off the mountains of Europe. I wrote this for my father's 89th birthday".

In May 2000 Andrew, Eliane and I heard Annie lecture in French at Geneva University on *Le blason des femmes* (four French women poets). The next evening we heard her and Peter give a joint lecture with slides on "The Fetishism of Gloves", which Margo and I had heard a year previously in Washington.

In January 2001 Peter was named Kahn Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania.

The book about clothes, on which they had been working for years, was published in 2000 (7), and in 2001 it was awarded the James Russell Lowell Prize by the Modern Language Association for the outstanding book in the modern languages and linguistics. They dedicated the book "In memory of our mothers: Margaret Puchner Jones (1918-1991) and Margaret Rosa Stallybrass (1912-1999)". Andrew, Eliane, and I will be in New Orleans with Annie and Peter at the end of December, 2001, to celebrate the giving of the award.

- (1) Alfred Korn: *Notes from a Child of Paradise*, (Penguin, 1984).
- (2) Peter Stallybrass and Allon White: *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, (Methuen, 1986).

- (3) Stuart Hall in *Introduction to Allon White: Carnival, Hysteria and Writing – Collected Essays and Autobiography*, (OU Press, 1993), p.3.
- (4) David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (ed.): *Staging the Renaissance*, (Routledge, 1991).
- (5) Katharina M. Wilson (ed.): *Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation*, (University of Georgia, 1987).
- (6) Ann Rosalind Jones: *The Currency of Eros – Women's Love Lyric in Europe 1540-1620*, (Indiana University Press, 1990).
- (7) Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass: *Renaissance Clothing and the Material of Memory*, (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

T. C. ("Dickie"), Ann and Kathleen Dodds

Dickie Dodds of Essex was known as the only opening batsman in county cricket prepared to hit a six off the first ball of an innings. He published a book entitled *Hit hard and enjoy it*.

We had as guests one evening John and Maureen Deighton, Brian and Juliet Boobbyer, and the Dodds. Brian had been opening batsman for Oxford University. John had captained the Army, had played for Lancashire as a fast bowler and had had the distinction of bowling out the famous Australian batsman, Don Bradman. "You don't need to introduce me to Dickie," said John, holding up a hand in which one finger was permanently bent. "I did that stopping one of Dickie's hits."

The Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was concerned about his youngest grandson, Prince Philip, and consulted Frank Buchman, who had befriended him during his exile. It was arranged that two of Buchman's colleagues should act as Philip's guardians. John Caulfield had taught at Lancing and had served as a Captain in the US Army Air Force; his wife Elisabeth was Swiss; their daughter Catherine was about the same age as Philip. They were living in Switzerland and Philip was sent to an excellent international school. It was an ideal arrangement until tragedy struck.

While walking on holiday in the mountains, John had a heart attack. Hurrying to get help, Elisabeth slipped, fell into a ravine and was killed outright. Their bodies were not discovered until several days later.

Dickie and Ann Dodds were then asked to take over as Philip's guardians. They and their son Michael were then living in the home of Dr Paul and Annejet Campbell and their two daughters in Dulwich. Dickie wisely arranged for Philip to go to a small private boarding school for educationally backward boys. Higher authority then insisted on his being transferred to a minor British public school which had links with the Imperial family.

In August 1970 Dickie visited us at Ascot, bringing Prince Philip and Colonel Kosrof Boghossian, Master of the Horse to His Imperial Majesty. We were deeply impressed by the way the Colonel treated the Prince with a judicious mixture of respect for His Imperial Highness and authority towards a presumptuous youngster. He was a very sick man, visiting London for treatment. A few days later, Dickie phoned to tell me that he had died. Hearing that his daughter Aster was making funeral arrangements, I wrote to tell her how privileged we had been to meet her father. We have kept in touch ever since. She works with the United Nations in New York.

In the autumn of 1971 Dickie consulted me about Philip. Treated at school as a special case and exempt from much of the usual discipline and pressure, he had reached the age of 18 without passing a single exam, including a specially arranged one in his native language, Amharic. His elder brother, Prince David, was doing well as a Sandhurst cadet and Philip rose to the idea of following him there.

Knowing that I was resigning from my job at Sandhurst, Dickie asked if I would be willing to become Prince Philip's tutor and try to bring him educationally up to Sandhurst standards. Margo, on whom the responsibility of having him living with us would largely fall, agreed at once. While we were in Sardinia, a telegram reached us to say that the Emperor had approved of the appointment. Our time with Philip, recounted in the next section, cemented our friendship with the Dodds.

Ann on one occasion courageously set up a tent in our woods and camped out with Michael and their dog. They were driven in by an early morning thunderstorm. Sadly, not long afterwards, she died of cancer.

Dickie's friendship with the late Sir Conrad Hunte, for many years opening batsman for the West Indies cricket team, did much to support him in his outstanding work for racial reconciliation in Britain, America and South Africa.

We owe it largely to Dickie that we moved from Ascot to 35 Carson Road. Hearing that we had been considering properties in Pimlico, but had found them too expensive, he put me in touch with an agent in West Dulwich, who kindly showed us round various possibilities. One Sunday morning, Dickie drove round with us, looking at the places we had in mind. We also stopped at 35 Carson Road, to view for which we had an appointment with the agent that afternoon. Dickie did a pull-up onto the top of the garden gate and reported that the garden looked promising. That afternoon, he was with us when the agent showed us round. He and I both objected to the small size of the kitchen and were firmly put in our places by Margo, who was perfectly happy about it.

Over our next years in Carson Road, our friendship with Dickie grew. He confided in us over his plans to marry Kathleen Johnson, a brilliant composer of songs of great beauty. We had first met Kathleen when Alan Thornhill's play *The Forgotten Factor*, was being performed at the David Lewis Club Theatre in Liverpool. She was billeted with friends in Heswall, we were on holiday with Margo's father, and we helped her with transport. Later, we got to know her parents in Haywards Heath, and in July 1974 her mother, Anne Johnson, stayed with us in Wuppertal for a few nights.

Living in what had once been a farmhouse on a big estate in Tetworth, Bedfordshire, Dickie and Kathleen became close friends of Tony Sursham. Our frequent visits to Tony always included time with the Dodds. On one occasion they invited us to a meet of the local Hunt on the estate. Tony and Margo worked together on a watercolour of the occasion, which now hangs in the Dodds' home.

They moved later to a delightful house in Eynesbury, a suburb of St Neots, with a view through their garden gate to the banks of the Ouse.

When Paul Campbell died in 1995, Dickie was invited to give the address at the Remembrance Service in Christ's Chapel, and he and Kathleen stayed with us for several nights.

At Caux in 1995, we were deeply moved by a musical entitled *The Silver Thread*, based on Kathleen's music over the years.

HRH Prince Philip of Ethiopia

For six months of 1972 Prince Philip lived with us at Ascot. I arranged with Esmond Cooper, who had once been Andrew's headmaster and who lived close to us, to give him daily lessons in arithmetic and I taught him English. His knowledge was extremely limited and he made very little progress. With Sandhurst in mind, I spent a number of afternoons teaching him map-reading on the ground. This he quickly mastered, perhaps because it was a new subject in which he had no hangover of failure.

His father, the Crown Prince, had been killed in a motor accident when Philip was four. His mother's family had taken part in a coup against the Emperor and had been banished. He had been brought up under the strict eye of his grandfather.

When we took him to visit friends, he would make an excellent first impression of graciousness, but his extremely limited vocabulary made conversation difficult. He would often seize on one word, confuse it with a similar word and move onto a totally different subject.

We aimed to treat him as we would a son and became very fond of him. We played daily games of croquet and it was a great day for him when he beat us both. He appreciated the rare occasions when Andrew or Peter could be with us. We spent a particularly happy weekend with Peter in Sussex, which included two walks with map-reading over the South Downs, one with Patrick Conner, who was at the time Keeper of Fine Arts of the Brighton Pavilion.

A visit from Catherine Caulfield drew the best out of Philip. He was totally at his ease with her as they reminisced about the past.

At one point I was invited back to Sandhurst to give a course of lectures in Germany history and found his brother Prince David in my class.

Hearing that his grandfather, the Emperor, was to stay at Windsor Castle as Her Majesty's guest and to visit Prince David at Sandhurst and take the salute at a parade, we realised that he would drive past our house and presumed that he would stop off to see Philip. When it became clear that His Imperial Majesty preferred to ignore Philip, I applied to the Embassy for leave for him to join him in London. When this was refused, Philip rebelled, left us and gatecrashed into his grandfather's London hotel.

Dickie Dodds and I called at the hotel and negotiated his return with an official. I had met HIM when he was on an official visit to Ghana. He had been brought to my office as Director of Studies, where I had shown him a

photograph of a Sandhurst cross-country running team with one of his subjects, Cadet-Sergeant Bayou Alemu, sitting as team captain beside me as officer in charge. I was saddened that he never wanted to see his grandson's tutor.

Philip returned to us with a new affection for his grandfather. He told us that one morning at Windsor HRH The Prince of Wales had knocked on HIM's door and asked to breakfast with him. He had been amazed at the Prince's huge appetite. It became clear to us that Prince Charles's care for the old man had prepared him to build a new and real relationship with his grandson. It was agreed that Philip should return to Ethiopia during the summer for the Emperor's 80th birthday. Philip made a point of buying him a suitable present.

Dickie and I were at Heathrow to meet him on his return, but he was not on the plane. The Embassy had no news of him, but he appeared a week later, having made his own arrangements to visit a number of European cities on his way back. We were pleased that he had shown such initiative, but sad to hear that things had gone wrong again between him and his grandfather. He would often join Margo in the kitchen, experiment in cooking and talk about his country. He saw the situation clearly and foresaw the revolution that was to come. "When they realise how much we have cost the country," he said, "and how little return they have had for it, they will put us up against a wall and shoot us."

His work steadily deteriorated and it became clear that he would never reach Sandhurst. I reported to Dickie and the Embassy sent a car to take him away. Margo was in the kitchen when he took his leave of her in the most formal and princely manner. She said, "Come off it, Philip. You've been a very naughty boy, but you know that we all love you". Both had tears in their eyes as he left.

Another tutor was appointed, who took him to Canada. There he found suitable employment in the motor industry. Both brothers escaped the coup, in which many of their relatives were killed and their grandfather died in prison.

Some years later, Dr Paul Campbell visited Philip in Edmonton and reported him as saying that as you grow older, you begin to appreciate what people have tried to do for you.

Gérard d'Hauteville

A friend from my time in Versailles, Gérard d'Hauteville, had suffered as an officer in the Marines a severe accident which had left him partially disabled. He had been serving in the late General Leclerc's *2e Division Blindée*. He wrote to tell me that in June 1972 the veterans of the Division would hold their annual family reunion in England and suggested that I might like to help host them.

This was the Armoured Division which owed its inspiration to Captain de Hauteclouque, who had escaped from a German prison camp in 1940 to join de Gaulle in London and had taken the name Leclerc to avoid reprisals against his family. The small force which he had then raised in French Central Africa had crossed the Sahara, defeating an Italian force at Koufra, to join Montgomery's 8th Army in Tripolitania. After training in Britain, the Leclerc Division had taken part in the liberation of Paris.

Leading the party of 1,500 was his widow, Madame la Maréchale Leclerc de Hauteclouque. They chartered a steamer, which provided living quarters for three nights. They sailed on a Friday night from Dunkirk to Hull where, after a civic reception, they visited the Yorkshire villages where they had been stationed in 1944. On the Saturday night they sailed to Southend.

I was one of over 20 "hosts" in charge of the coaches hired for the Sunday. The previous weekend we had all covered in one coach the route planned for the day and had been briefed on what would be likely to interest our French friends.

Early on the Sunday morning, we made our way to Southend, each took charge of a coach and received our visitors as they disembarked, having breakfasted aboard. Our convoy was accompanied by an escort of police motor cyclists. First stop was the Albert Hall which, with its numerous toilets, was to be our main base for the day. There we were each issued with an excellent packed lunch and a bottle of wine to take with us. We then drove back to the Cenotaph in Whitehall, where Madame la Maréchale laid a wreath.

Next stop was the Ascot Race Course, where we debussed – toilets again! – and lunched in sunshine, then on across the Great Park and into the Home Park through the Frogmore Gate to Windsor Castle. After we had assembled in the big rose garden at the east end of the castle, the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Queen Mother all came out and practised their French with the guests. I saw their faces light up at the magic

moment when Madame la Maréchale led the Veterans in singing their Divisional March.

We then drove on to Brookwood Cemetery, where rain, which had hitherto held off, caused a memorial service to be shortened. Free French who fell fighting alongside the Allies during the German occupation are buried there, Christians, Jews and Muslims together.

Back in the Albert Hall, after a picnic supper, Margo and Prince Philip of Ethiopia joined me for a fine Anglo-French concert. To us the highlight was a scene, *An Imperial Dream?*, written by Gérard with vision for the relationship between our two countries, in which Julien Bertheau played the part of Napoleon evaluating the occasion:

This music heard resounding from afar
Across Europe, I hear again tonight
In London's centre. Have my armies won?

Has Maréchal Leclerc, the brave, at last
Conquered this island and brought England down?

But no, I must be dreaming! For I saw
The British and Leclerc, together there
As friends, in a tremendous struggle locked.

These men of England who stubbornly opposed
Me in my time, I saw them fight again
Resisting, battered, battling all alone.

How staunch a people, democratic, tough;
It's good that I can once salute them, cheer.

Had I my time again we'd share the power.
Yes, and the world were lying at our feet,
Alexander's empire, and China, America ...

No!
I dream again! An old habit of mine –
It were not for dream of empire that Leclerc
And his good men went marching all the way
From farthest desert where they fought like lions
To Berchtesgaden, Hitler's "Eagle's Nest",

To reconstruct men's freedom, and to end
A tyranny ... and all other tyrannies.

History's wind has veered, Europe had to be
Created, yes, but not with bayonets.

Across the continents our rivalries
Have left old bitterness in us and you.

Let us wipe clean the slate and act together.
A world that's fit to live in, urgent task
Ours to accomplish is, lest everything explode.
We share the same traditions, root of faith.
Leclerc's ideal your common heritage.

This night, let us listen a moment still;
Chevalier of our time and patriot,
Marshal Philippe Leclerc de Hautesclocque speaks!

In bed after a 19-hour day, I murmured "Vive la France! Vives les français! Vive la 2e D.B!" An appreciative article which I later wrote was printed in *Caravane – Revue de l'Association des Combattants de la 2e D.B. et de ses Amis*.

Gérard is now happily settled in a home for former members of the armed services and their widows not far from the Moral Re-Armament centre in Boulogne-sur-Seine.

Lt-Colonel Alan and Lesley Shepperd

Alan Shepperd had been the Sandhurst Librarian since 1947. He had been very severely wounded in Normandy and had had both legs amputated. He lived in considerable pain for the rest of his life, yet I never saw him lose his temper. Before going to Ghana, knowing that running the library would be one of my duties, I had consulted Alan, who gave me valuable advice.

In the spring of 1973, he invited me to join his staff temporarily. There had been considerable delay in the appointment of an Assistant Librarian and he badly needed help. I worked in the Library for four happy months and was

particularly glad to get to know most of the lecturers in the Department of War Studies, who often studied there.

I was surprised one day when his wife Lesley came in and thanked me for what I had done for them as a couple. "Alan was so overworked," she said, "and your coming has made all the difference."

When I left to go to Germany, I was presented by the Library staff with a Parker screw-pencil in an inscribed case.

As our final farewell party, Margo and I took a coachload of Ascot and Sandhurst friends, including the Shepperds, to the revue *GB* at the Westminster Theatre, providing supper in the coach on the way. To our surprise, one of the cast introduced a "gag" about "Mrs Stallybrass's party". As we said goodbye to our guests on our return, Lesley said in tears to Margo, "We shall miss you both. You have done so much for Sandhurst".

In July 1976 I was invited to a retirement party for Alan Shepperd in the Central Library and contributed the following:

Retirement is in some ways sad;
In other ways it's far from bad.
It brings the chance to get to know
New friends, new spheres.

Four years ago
I also left the RMA.
For me it opened up the way
To work in the Library with you
And with the splendid happy crew
You've skippered so successfully.

Recently in the Library
I spent an hour browsing through
Old magazines and found a clue
To how you'd learnt in '31
To build a team second to none.

The Sandhurst Record of that year
Makes, I think, the matter clear
In a most interesting note,

The gist of which I'd like to quote:
 "The hockey team's full-backs' good play
 Will very much improve as they
 Develop more co-operation" (1).
 Clearly this sting brought stimulation
 To learn a lesson which could be
 Applied to life more generally.

Enough! The time has come to say
 How much we all value the way
 Lesley and you have given your best
 To Sandhurst, not demanding rest
 Nor heeding all too frequent pain.
 We're glad the Chapel still will gain
 The benefit of your thought and care.
 We hope often to see you there
 And hope it won't be long till when
 We read more works from your fertile pen.

A few years later we attended Alan's Remembrance Service in the Royal Military Memorial Chapel. It was an occasion which brought many old friends together from Generals to Mess Stewards.

- (1) "The good play of the backs, G. A. Shepperd and H. M. Mohite, will be much improved as they develop more co-operation" (R.M.C. Magazine & Record, Vol.40, Spring 1931, p.91).

The Berning Family

I had long wanted to make restitution to Germany for my flirtation with Nazism. Early in 1973 I saw an advertisement for the Centre for British Teachers in Germany, an organisation with centres in London and Bamberg. I applied and was surprised to be accepted at the age of 62.

Shown a list of towns requiring an English teacher, I chose Schwelm, as I had met separately and on different occasions through MRA Walther Berning and his wife Marta who lived there. They proved generous friends over many years. It was a pleasant little market town, surrounded by woods, immediately east of the industrial complex of Wuppertal, where Walther managed a family packaging firm.

They also had a chalet in the village of Muggardt, situated between vineyards and the western edge of the Black Forest, which they would put at our disposal for holidays, while they stayed a few miles away in their flat in Müllheim, joining us most days for drives or walks or to buy fresh trout from a local farm.

The youngest of their three sons, Christoph, was a student at the time, studying revolutionary movements in Europe. When his parents invited me to address a number of their friends, he helped beforehand to improve my German and translated for Margo during the evening. As usual on such occasions, I spoke about my Nazi sympathies as a young man. The almost invariable reactions were, "You mustn't blame yourself"; "You were too young to understand"; "You were led astray by others". Christoph commented, "If our leaders had been as honest about the past as you, Germany would be a different country today".

After our two years in Schwelm, we continued to visit the Bernings in Muggardt. During one tour, a side window of our car was smashed during a night in The Hague. We drove on next day to the Bernings in Muggardt. Christoph had got engaged to a Swiss girl, Sylvia Miesch, whose parents lived in the village of Muttentz near Basel. He arranged for us to spend a night on our way to Caux with his future parents-in-law, and Herr Miesch kindly arranged for our car to be repaired in Basel.

Before leaving Schwelm, we introduced the Bernings to our landlords, the Blesingers. Christoph, who has taken over the family firm, has Stephan Blesinger as his legal adviser.

Walther Berning died some years ago; Marta is in a nursing home with acute mental problems. Christoph and Sylvia and their two sons have continued to visit us on occasional trips to London.

The Blesinger Family

Before we left for Schwelm, a German friend said to us, "Let your mistakes rather than your successes work for you, and let your needs be known".

The Centre had arranged accommodation for us with a lawyer and his wife, Stephan and Renate Blesinger, in the pleasant garden flat of their attractive modern house in the Steinhäuser Bergstrasse. A mile from the Märkisches Gymnasium, we were just over the border between Schwelm and

Wuppertal. A garden gate led into the woods, from which deer would come in to eat the roses.

Owing to a misunderstanding, we had expected the flat to be fully equipped, but had to make do with sleeping bags and the contents of a picnic basket until we could buy what we needed.

For some time our relationship with our landlords was somewhat distant. One day Margo switched off by mistake the heating system for the whole house. Asked if she had done so, she denied it and only realised later that it had been her fault. She spent a sleepless night resisting having to admit it, but in the morning she told Renate the truth and learned enough German to say sorry to 6-year-old Thomas, who had been blamed. He solemnly shook her hand and forgave her.

Next day Renate asked Margo to look after Thomas and his older sister Christiane so that she could go out with Stephan. On their return, they both came down to thank her. He told us why they had kept us at arm's length: as a schoolboy he had suffered painful incidents with the occupying forces at the end of the war and she had been badly treated as an au pair girl in England. "But now I regard you as friends," he said, "and I want to help you in any way I can." He built us a much needed cupboard.

A doorway at the back of this cupboard led into the children's playroom, the walls covered with pictures of pop singers. I christened it the *Schreckenskammer* ("Chamber of Horrors"). The Blesingers kindly allowed us to use this as a spare room for occasional visitors.

At Easter 1974 an MRA youth gathering took place in Berlin. Andrew, who at that time was living in the French centre in Boulogne-sur-Seine, arranged to take to it in a minibus twelve young friends. Schwelm was just off the motorway from Paris to Berlin and almost exactly halfway. We arranged for them to stay a night each way. The Bernings, the Blesingers and three other couples offered accommodation and Renate gave a supper party for the young people to meet their hosts and hostesses.

The highlight of the evening was a challenge from Farida Rawalpindiwallah to our well-to-do German friends to think of the needs of India.

Our friendship with the Blesingers has lasted over 25 years. We have visited each other a number of times. In April 1976 we took Christiane, then

in her teens, to stay with Maisie Fletcher in Ellergreen and with the Ogilvys in Pencaitland. In August 1988 Thomas visited us in Carson Road. Both are now married and have started families.

The Büsche Family

Never having had a sister or a daughter and having taught boys or young men all my life, I found myself having to adapt to being form master to the only girls' class in the school, 38 teenagers between the ages of 13 and 16, an awkward mixture of bright little children and cynical young women. They were reputed to be the worst in the school and I gathered that it had been considered that some Sandhurst discipline might benefit them.

Having experienced National Socialism, I found it difficult at first to accept my pupils' idea of democracy. I would enter a classroom to find a riot going on. Shouting like a Sergeant-Major merely increased the decibel count. I soon discovered that if I went to my desk and stood quietly looking round the room, someone would say "Shhhh", the "Shhhh" would spread and very soon they would all be sitting quietly waiting for the lesson to start. My telling them to shut up was dictatorship; their deciding of their own accord to be quiet was democracy.

Quite the most outstanding girl in the class was Gerlind Büsche. On a special Saturday morning when parents were invited to discuss their children's problems with individual teachers, I was surprised that her parents, Dr Manfred Büsche and his wife, only wanted to thank me for what I was doing. One Saturday afternoon when the Blesingers were out, I cut my fingers badly while mowing the lawn and phoned Dr Büsche for help. He and his wife took us to a local hospital which did not have an out-patients department. Margo innocently asked Frau Büsche whether her husband worked in one of the hospitals. She replied, "He's a Doctor of Law". From then on we became family friends.

Before being let loose in classrooms, we British teachers had all taken a fortnight's course on the German school system. There we had been taught that cheating was normal and should not be considered a moral problem. Pressure to succeed was so great that some parents encouraged their children to cheat. In one term I caught one of my girls cheating in all three *Klassenarbeiten* (official tests). I wanted to give her the lowest grade for the term's work, but was overruled by the Head of the English Department, who

insisted that I set her a special test to be taken with those who had missed tests through illness under the supervision of a colleague. I warned him about her and he duly caught her cheating for the fourth time.

At a tea party to which my women colleagues invited Margo, they laughed about my predecessor, who had treated cheating as a moral problem. Margo could only say, "Well, in Britain it simply isn't done", which caused great amusement.

She then invited Renate Blesinger to a return party to tackle the issue. She asked, "How would you like to be operated on by a surgeon who had cheated in his finals or defended in court by a lawyer who had cheated in his?" She was told that by that stage cheating would have stopped, but no one could say at what stage that happened. Renate was the only woman to back her.

My 63rd birthday was one of great surprises. On arrival at school, I was summoned by the Headmaster, who wished me happy birthday. On my desk was a huge basket from my girls with 38 different German delicacies. Several other classes presented me with handsomely illustrated books on the area signed by each pupil. I had to phone Margo to bring the car to transport the presents home.

In addition to generosity, I discovered a keen sense of humour among my pupils. A *Klassenarbeit* was sometimes an occasion for a teacher to overrun his or her allotted time. One day I found a notice outside a class I was about to take: "*Klassenarbeit! Nicht stören!*" I peeped in to see which of my colleagues had failed to ask permission to use my time. All were busily writing, but there was no teacher. I was greeted with a unanimous burst of laughter. Sometimes on a Saturday parents were invited to sit at the back of their children's classes. On one such occasion I had filled up the front one of the twin blackboards and slid it up to expose the back one. On it was written, "STELLY (sic) IS A PLAYBOY".

After we left Germany, four of the girls in my class paid us visits. Gerlind Büsche stayed a night with us in March 1988. She had by then qualified as a dentist and was working for a time with a British GP.

She recently sent me photographs of herself with her husband and their recently born son.

Herr und Frau Wiethoff

The *Elternpflegschaft* (Parents; Association) plays a very big part in all German schools; each class has its own branch. On my second evening in Schwelm I met the one for my class, 9c. the Chair was Herr Wiethoff, whose daughter Heike I assessed as about in the middle of the class.

I was told that the girls had never had a *Klassenfahrt*, a trip of several days to which they were entitled every two years. I rashly agreed to take them when the appropriate time came; I was told later that no previous teacher had dared to do so. Meanwhile, we invited the Wiethoffs to supper to meet the Blesingers.

The *Klassenfahrt* duly took place in September 1974. According to the regulations, I needed *weibliche Begleitung* (female accompaniment); none of my women colleagues could be persuaded, so Margo courageously volunteered.

We booked accommodation for five nights in a youth hostel at Boppard on the Rhine. The girls elected a committee of three to plan a programme with us: two long walks, a trip up the Rhine by steamer and one by coach to Koblenz and Marialaach.

At the parents' meeting held to discuss the trip, divergent views were expressed: "Organise every minute of their time and never let them out of your sight"; "Leave them free to do exactly what they like"; and "Could we not trust Herr S to use his discretion?"

Eight of the girls were over 16 and legally entitled to drink and smoke in public. We agreed that there should be no drinking or smoking when the class was together, but that 16-year-olds might do so on their own provided no under-16s were present; also that in their free time they might go out in groups of not less than four. The parents signed a form entitling me to send home any girl who misbehaved.

"Lights out" in the youth hostel was at 10, so we arranged roll-call at 9.30. The third evening a 17-year-old who was one of our committee and two under-16s were late back; these two had to be prised out of the arms of two young men in the garden; they were reeking of alcohol and were very sick for the next few hours.

After a restless night, I phoned Herr Wiethoff, who undertook to arrange with the parents concerned that I would send all three home by train. About

half the class formed what looked like a weeping funeral procession to see them off; the others preferred not to be involved.

To recover from the stress of the night, Margo and I took off for a walk on our own. When we returned, we found in our room a bottle of wine, two small presents and a note from the senior girls saying, "Thanks for the way you have tried to help us". Later, several of the other girls thanked Margo for the way we had dealt with the trouble, which they said they had known would happen.

On our return to Schwelm we found the three naughty girls waiting on the platform to greet us; they looked us straight in the face as they shook hands. That afternoon a florist arrived with a huge bouquet, the gift of appreciative parents.

My colleagues were delighted at the stand we had taken. When at a staff meeting the Headmaster queried the legality of our action, they threatened to boycott *Klassenfahrten*. He then consulted the Ministry of Education and announced at the next staff meeting that our action had been correct and could set a precedent for similar troubles in the future.

The Wiethoffs together with Heike and a younger son were with us in the coach party which we took to see the musical *Song of Asia* in Bonn in May 1975.

Saraswati Albano-Müller

In November 1973 the Bernings invited from Caux to Schwelm seven Swiss ladies and Madame Irène Laure, who had played a big part in building a new relationship between France and Germany. The Bernings arranged a large lunch party in Schwelm and the ladies all came on for tea and supper with us and met a number of our friends. Madame Laure told us that of all the people she had met at the lunch the most outstanding was Saraswati Albano-Müller, Indian wife of Schwelm's leading industrialist, and urged us to get to know her.

We were feeling frustrated at being unable to find a natural way of doing this, when Frau Albano-Müller herself phoned to invite us to tea. She started by asking, "What is your connection with MRA?", then told us that she had been with her parents at a conference in Mackinac some years previously when some powerful ladies had questioned her engagement to a German. The whole family had left in disgust. "But I realise now," she concluded, "the folly

of dissociating myself from something good because of somebody else's mistake."

We learned that she had founded two women's clubs, one for the ladies of Schwelm, the other for the wives of leading industrialists of North Rhine-Westphalia. She also played a leading part in the Parents Committee of the *Märkisches Gymnasium*. Shortly afterwards she came with her husband and two sons to coffee with us. From then on, we were firm friends and were included in a number of family occasions.

In May 1975, we invited 38 friends to join us on a coach trip to Bonn to see the MRA musical *Song of Asia*. Saras came with one son and an Indian servant, who helped us to serve supper on the way. The show contained an amusing scene, showing how some Indians treat their servants. Saras, sitting next to Margo, objected, "We don't treat our servants like that". Her servant, sitting next to me, said, "It's just like that with us".

Some years later we revisited Schwelm, Eliane and an Indian friend staying with the Albano-Müllers, Margo and I with the Blesingers.

Archie and Dorothy Cameron

Archie Cameron had been a senior executive in British Rail and was entitled to free travel in Britain. He and his wife Dorothy lived in Haywards heath. Their daughter Frances, who married Patrick Colquhoun, travelled with the musical *Anything to Declare?* as producer.

We became close friends shortly before we left for Germany and suggested that they might visit us there. We had been there only a few weeks, when they wrote to say they were coming. We had no spare room, but Walther and Marta Berning were very happy to have them stay with them and help them with the lunch party which they had arranged for Irène Laure.

They also met many of our German friends. The school was holding a *Wandertag*, a morning when classes did long walks with their teachers. I had worked out an interesting walk through the woods for my class, in which we were joined by the mother of one of my girls. We ended in the Blesingers' garden, where the Camerons helped Margo to provide refreshments for us all. They were also at our first dinner party, when we entertained the Blesingers and the Wiethoffs.

We took them one day to lunch in a restaurant out in the country. On the menu were the words, *2 kl. Koteletten* (2 small cutlets), which railwayman Cameron immediately interpreted as "2nd class cutlets". We laughed so loudly that the manager insisted on being included in the joke and rewarded us all with a free dessert. On future occasions *Zweite Klasse* became a standard joke when ordering.

A few years later, on a visit to the Blesingers with the Camerons, Archie came with us to a tea party organised by some of the girls in my former class and completely won the heart of Beate Sonnenschein, one of the more colourful of them. She adopted him as "Opa Archie" and they wrote to each other for a time.

In October 1977, when we were living with Robin Evans in Cambridge, Beate stayed with us for a week. Archie used his rail pass to make a day trip to us from Haywards Heath and to share his latest convictions with Beate. Sadly, she was killed in a motor accident shortly afterwards.

After Dorothy Cameron died, we arranged to take Archie to Caux for a summer conference. He met us in The Hague and we visited the Blesingers in Wuppertal and the Bernings in Muggardt on our way. Over breakfast one morning, Archie told the Blesingers that he thought they were spoiling Thomas. On our next visit, after Archie's death, they told us that they had taken to heart what he had said and were grateful.

Adolf and Almuth Scheu

Through Steve Dickinson, we got to know Adolf Scheu, Socialist MP for Wuppertal. Saras Albano-Müller ran into difficulties when she invited him to address her Schwelm club. Schwelm was a Christian Democrat stronghold and a number of her members threatened to boycott the occasion. She asked us to bring as many of our friends as possible. The Blesingers invited some of their CD friends, hoping to argue with the Socialist. Scheu's account of the friendships he was making with parliamentarians of different views in several European countries silenced any criticism.

I helped to look after Herr Scheu on a visit to London. Thanking me, he said, "You have been my good ghost". (The German word *Geist* can mean either "ghost" or "spirit".)

Later, during a long stay at Caux, his widow Almuth Scheu asked me to give English lessons to their daughter Corinne.

I spent Christmas 2000 and New Year 2001 with Andrew and Eliane. We drove one day up to Caux, where I was delighted to be recognised by another of the Scheus' daughters, who introduced me to her husband and their little daughter.

Robyn McAdam

After our sons had left home, Milcote Cottage seemed too big for us. By the time we returned from Germany, our top floor was a separate flat. Robyn McAdam, a ward sister at Heatherwood Hospital, proved an ideal tenant, whom we included in many of our parties. She was the best of a succession of tenants and left her flat in perfect order.

Since she returned to a nursing career in Canberra, we have kept in touch by post, and she visited us once in Carson Road.

The Seymour-Jones Family

In October 1963 Ernest and Mary's twin son Robert, Margo's godson, married Carole, elder daughter of Tony and Elizabeth Seymour-Jones, in Portsmouth Cathedral. Tony and I had won scholarships to Shrewsbury in the same year and were for a time in the same form.

Lessons started at 7.45 before breakfast, usually with what was known as "Strue"; we would be called out in turn to stand beside the "Brusher"'s desk to translate a passage from Latin or Greek which had been set for preparation the previous evening. One morning Seymour-Jones was in the middle of translating when the form master, the Rev. "Joe" Whitfield, was seen to leap on him from his desk and land on top of him on the floor in a vain attempt to catch him as he fainted on an empty stomach.

"Joe" was a popular character. His Sunday sermons were mercifully short; he was never known to start a new sentence after the school clock struck 12. When one of his pupils did his "strue" in an inaudible voice, Joe sent him outside to shout it up through our first floor window. When I was guilty of some misdemeanour, he said, "Well, boy, I shall have to destroy you;

but I won't destroy you now; I'll wait till I see you on the river in a sculling-boat and then I'll destroy you".

As an ear, nose and throat surgeon, Tony very kindly removed Andrew's tonsils free of charge after a long wait for an operation on the National Health Service.

Carole's brother Nick, a brilliant artist, was a contemporary with Andrew at Shrewsbury; we would sometimes meet as families on Speech Days.

In Jun 1973, Robert and Carole's second daughter, Sophie, was accidentally drowned in a swimming pool. They phoned Margo for help. Carole blamed herself and the family were badly divided by the tragedy. At the funeral Nick, who had once been regarded as a "drop out", appeared to us to have great strength of character.

That October, when we were at home on holiday from Schwelm, we invited Carole to come to Germany with us. She stayed for five days, during which she found a certain peace of heart. Over the next few years she and Robert had a son, Edward, and a third daughter, Lucy.

In June 1986, the Dulwich College Orchestra and Choir, in which I was then singing, gave their final concert in the Royal Festival Hall under their Director of Music, Alan Morgan, who was about to retire.

Peter and Annie were staying with us and we invited Nick, a practising architect living in South London, and Kate Seymour-Jones and Peter's Sussex University friend Ben Martin-Hoogewerf and his wife to join us at the RFH for supper and the concert. Each couple told us how they had recently got married; Kate was expecting their first child. We did not know that Peter and Annie had also recently got married in Amherst; they only informed us later.

The concert included Vaughan-Williams' *Serenade to Music*, composed in 1938 for eight individual singers, three of whom were in the audience. There was a wonderful moment when we cheered them in their box and they cheered back. We also performed Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, which we had heard at Shrewsbury with Andrew and Peter taking part. On a later occasion Nick and Kate joined me for a performance by Christ's Chapel Choral Society under Alan Morgan of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in St Barnabas' Church, Dulwich.

Not long after their Silver Wedding in 1988, Robert left Carole. In a strange way, the painful divorce freed Carole to find her real calling as a distinguished writer. She had left Oxford to marry him in the middle of a degree course in English. She had later taken an external degree at Sussex University and started teaching at 6th form level.

In Geoffrey Parkinson, who writes radio plays for the BBC, some of which we have enjoyed on cassette, she found a fully supportive partner who encourages her in her writing and also helped her daughter Lucy to stage a play at the Edinburgh "Fringe".

Carole invited Margo and me to meet Geoffrey shortly after her eldest daughter Emma had become engaged to Andrew Marshall. Andrew and Emma kindly undertook to free Carole by cooking and serving lunch. From the first moment, we realised that we had found in Geoffrey a friend for life. He has a way of asking intriguing questions of all those he meets. Throughout lunch he made jottings in a notebook and we wondered whether we would appear as characters in his next play.

The wedding of Emma and Andrew at Albury in Surrey was a happy family occasion. Margo and I were ushered to our seats in the Church by a handsome figure with long blond hair and a floppy black Victorian hat, whom I embraced warmly, thinking it was Carole's younger daughter Lucy, while Margo whispered loudly, "It's Edward, you fool!" At the lunch, I was sitting next to his godmother and told her what had happened. She said, "I hope you told him off for wearing a hat in church." I replied, "I wouldn't dream of doing so."

The success of Carole's first book, a biography of Beatrice Webb (1) in 1992 led to her being commissioned to write the centenary history of the World YWCA (2), the headquarters of which is in Geneva. She linked up with Andrew and Eliane, and we too enjoyed seeing her there when staying with them.

In January 1993, shortly before Carole left to research in several African countries, we gave a supper party for her to meet friends with African connections. Margo then wrote to Nana Rawlings, the First Lady of Ghana, who agreed to interview her. Carole kindly invited Jane Reid and me to the launching of her book in the Central Hall, preceded by an impressive and colourful world service in Westminster Abbey. I was especially happy to meet Edward and Lucy and get to know them better.

I was particularly struck by Carole's summing up of Nkrumah's rule in Ghana, "When Dr Kwame Nkrumah became Ghana's first independent Prime Minister in 1957, the economic prospects of the country appeared to give grounds for optimism. The national coffers were full, the British having departed from the country leaving reserves amounting to £200 million accumulated over the colonial period; the economy was based on the thriving export of cocoa, gold and timber to the developed countries of the West. But, although Nkrumah, the Osagyefo, was a man of vision who dreamed of an economically self-dependent Africa, he set his country on an ambitious path of industrialisation which converted credit into massive debt and led to his downfall in 1966" (3).

In March 1967 we celebrated our Golden Wedding with a series of occasions, one of which was a supper party for the six of us with Geoffrey and Carole in our local Café Rouge.

On the Thursday of the week before Margo died, Carole, sadly without Geoffrey, visited her in hospital. Peter wrote at the time, "Carole is one of the daughters Mum never had. And this is one of the most intense and important friendships in Mum's life ... Later, we take Carole to supper at the Café Rouge ... Annie and I both adore Carole, and it's good to break the hospital/home routine. It's also like a relaxing bath just to be able to talk about Mum to someone who loved her so much. We talk about Carole's new biography of Vivien Eliot, and about the anxieties that writing can create. A long, voluble, stimulating meal".

The next day, "Mum's nephew and godson Robert arrives with his new wife Biddy. How strange that Robert and Carole, who are on such difficult terms, should come on consecutive nights. Mum had looked after Robert and John, his identical twin, during the war in Llanarmon. They have retained a private language from then, and I am moved to tears as Robert calls her 'Argie' (is this a childhood combination of 'Margo' and 'Aunty'?)

"Although Mum has given Robert hell in recent years (perhaps all the more because of that), she loves him and is deeply touched to see him. She's also delighted to meet Biddy, whom we both like enormously. I can see how hard Robert is fighting to hold back his tears, and I'm near to breaking down myself. And yet the conversation is happy and funny, about fishing and about Ernest and about the children. Mum is her usual alert, vivacious self. When Robert leaves, I try to walk with him, but he doesn't want me there as he begins to weep. How strange and wonderful these Bigland men are. All loud voices

and bluster, all terrified of emotion, all embarrassed by what makes them finest – their tender hearts".

I was happy to give a warm welcome on May Day to Carole and Geoffrey, Robert and Bidy, at the cremation and at lunch in our garden afterwards.

On 9th January 2000 I gave up driving and handed over our Nissan Micra, the car we have cherished most, to Lucy Bigland. Peter, who had given "Nissy" new to us nine years previously, was delighted that she would stay in the family. Lucy had not yet passed her driving test and was taking lessons in a Nissan Micra. Edward came with her to drive. We had a cheerful lunch together at the Café Rouge. Sitting near us was an elderly man with what was clearly his granddaughter, aged about five, who was playing him up. Presently, Lucy gave him a card of the theatrical agency for which she works, telling him it would be a good way to introduce her to the stage.

In May 2000 Tony and Elizabeth Seymour-Jones celebrated their Diamond Wedding. George Smith, who works for Forest Hill Cars and has become our special driver, drove me to Edward's flat in Shepherd's Bush, we picked Lucy up and he drove us in "Nissy" to their grandparents' home in Emsworth near Portsmouth, where Tony and Geoffrey welcomed me. I rejoiced to see Carole's younger sister, Louise, with her two lovely daughters. Like Carole, she had been through a very painful divorce and had found a more suitable partner. I had never seen her looking so happy. I was shown an article in *The Daily Mail* about the centre for couples with marital problems which she now runs.

About 50 guests were at a superb lunch in a local hotel. The fact that Nick was suffering from long-drawn-out terminal cancer in Australia naturally cast a shadow over the otherwise happy occasion. The highlight came when Lucy sang songs of the '30s in which Tony joined her; he then went on to sing solo some remarkable patter songs. The celebrations went on till 5.00. Edward, driving fast and very well, kindly had me home in West Dulwich by 7.00 after a very happy day.

(1) Carole Seymour-Jones: *Beatrice Webb – Woman of Conflict*, (Allison & Busby, 1992).

(2) Carole Seymour-Jones: *Journey of Faith – The History of the YWCA 1945-1994*, (Allison & Busby, 1994).

(3) Op. cit. pp.136-7.

Patrick Stow

Over the many years since I had left The Leas, vowing that I would never again teach in a preparatory school, I had carried a sense of defeat and a desire to be given a second chance.

In the autumn of 1975 at the age of 64 I responded to a rather vague advertisement for what I thought was a part-time job. I found myself being interviewed by Patrick Stow, Headmaster of the Oratory Preparatory School at Great Oaks, Goring Heath. His French staff, one man and one woman, had given notice in September that they wished to leave at Christmas and get married. He had already replaced the woman, but could not find a satisfactory man. I so liked the atmosphere of the school that I was easily persuaded to take the job for the Easter and Summer terms.

It stretched me fully. My day started and ended with a 28-mile drive to and from Goring Heath. I had to take games in the afternoons, including "rugger", a game with which I was not familiar, but the boys themselves helped me over the rules. Thanks to Patrick Stow and to his wife, who played a very full part, the school could not have been a happier place.

Most afternoons I could leave at 4.30, but one day each week I was on duty from 8.30 am till 8.30 pm. The boys themselves arranged an evening service in the Chapel. A prefect would summon me when all was ready and there was never any indiscipline. The school was divided into four "houses", which competed for points in many different ways and took it in turns to clean the classrooms. My final duty was to go round with the prefect on duty and award points for tidiness.

Thanks partly to my colleague Wendy Porter, herself the mother of two boys, the French exam results of boys leaving were the best the school had had for some years. It was the most satisfying end to a career in education I could have wished for.

Margaret Wileman and Donald Wort

From September 1977 till July 1978 we let Milcote Cottage to friends and lived with Robin Evans in Cambridge.

Robin and I were able to work together on a preliminary English translation of Claire's book (1), assisted by her friend Margaret Wileman, a retired Principal and president of Hughes Hall.

Through her I renewed a friendship with Donald Wort, who in 1942 had worked with me for a time on *Invade Mecum*. He had been recovering at that time from a serious illness. Knowing that he was a lover of music, I had invited him to come to a Promenade Concert in the Albert Hall. While queuing we were presented with tickets for seats in a box by a regular promenader who was unable to use them. We found ourselves two boxes away from the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. I remember being struck by the perfect curtsy which Harriet Cohen paid them before and after playing a Bach Concerto.

Little had I realised how much my friendship had meant to Donald. I was amazed at the number of his friends who wanted to meet "Donald's Captain". An Honorary Fellow of Hughes Hall and Secretary of the School of Music, he invited us to supper in the Hall and a concert in which a University orchestra played César Franck's Symphony.

Whenever we went to stay with Tony Sursham in Godmanchester, we would visit Margaret and her friends. She visited us in Ascot and we dined with her in her London club. In her 80s she still walked considerable distances at a great pace.

When Donald died, he left me a pair of his gloves in his will. Margaret invited me to a fine memorial concert in Hughes Hall, arranged by Stephen Cleobury, Director of Music of King's College. A plaque on the wall of the new concert hall states that Margaret herself had opened it, and she showed me her portrait in the Senior Common Room.

I last visited her in October 1999 when she invited me to meet several of Donald's friends. In her 90s I found her as lively as ever.

(1) Claire Evans: *Freewoman*, (Becket, 1979).

Carmen ("Chiqui") Gomez

While taking a course in English in Cambridge, Chiqui Gomez, a Spanish girl, responded to an advertisement from Robin Evans wanting someone to help

clean the house in Gough Way. She quickly became a friend whom we included in our parties.

Living across the road were Brian Josephson, a Nobel Prize scientist, his wife Carole and their baby daughter Miranda, over whom they turned to Margo for advice. Chiqui worked for them and became their friend too.

Her parents lived in Coruña. Qualified as an air hostess with Aviaco, she lived with an aunt in Madrid until marrying and starting a home of her own.

On flights to London, she often visited us in Ascot and in West Dulwich and also visited the Josephsons in Cambridge. I took her to Mass one Sunday in the Catholic Church in South Ascot and to the Dulwich Picture Gallery which, as a keen amateur painter, she greatly appreciated. We once arranged for her to meet Robin Evans here in Carson Road.

Since Aviaco was taken over by Iberia, she has been restricted to flights within Spain, but hopes to be able to get on a flight to London again.

Sir Roger and Lady (Ann) Parker

Margo, Peter and I spent Christmas 1977 with Robin and Francis Evans in Cambridge. Andrew was in Zimbabwe. Norah Kerr was staying with Ann, her niece, and Roger Parker, and their large family in Widford, Hertfordshire. He had become nationally known when he presided over the Sellafield Inquiry.

They invited the three of us to lunch on the Bank Holiday. One of their daughters, Elizabeth, had already been to tea with us in Cambridge.

Some years previously, Ann Parker's brother and his wife had both been killed in a plane crash. They invited their three children to live with their own family of four.

Lunch with the large family marked the beginning of a friendship which was strengthened when Ann invited me to give the address at Norah Kerr's funeral in Holy Trinity, Sloane Square.

On two occasions Roger, then Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn, invited us to a Sunday lunch at the High Table. We were privileged to be present in the Chapel for the annual Warburton Lecture. William Warburton was appointed Preacher to Lincoln's Inn in 1746 and was later Bishop of Gloucester. The Lectures, founded in 1768, are to be "in the form of a sermon to interpret and apply the Truth of Revealed Religion in General and of the Christian in particular".

On this occasion the Lecture was given by the Rev. Dr John Polkinghorne, Master of St Catherine's College, Cambridge, who was the guest of honour at the lunch afterwards. Over coffee we met students from different parts of the world.

On our numerous visits to Tony Sursham in Godmanchester, we would arrange to meet the Parkers for lunch, sometimes in their home on our way to or from Tony's, sometimes together with Tony at a convenient pub approximately halfway between the two homes.

Oliver and Gunnvor (née Sannerud) Stallybrass

It may seem strange that it is only at this late point of my book that I start to write about my youngest brother and his wife.

I was Oliver's senior by 14 years, was at one time his teacher and tended to treat him unduly authoritatively.

Margo and I invited him to be Andrew's godfather, a task which he undertook with considerable thought and care. We had a happy time together when he stayed with us in the Bigland Hut on the Dee and came to Andrew's confirmation in Shrewsbury School Chapel. But the fact that Margo and I were totally committed to one way of life, Oliver to another, naturally led to difficulties.

Oliver was born in March 1925. My housemaster at Shrewsbury remembered me as the boy who got a scholarship, a baby brother and 'flu all in the same week.

Teaching Oliver at The Leas, I was hard on him to avoid any hint of favouritism. He had a subtle way of taking the mickey out of me. In French

dictation he would sit with his head deliberately turned away from me. "Stally, you're not looking at me," would be countered with, "I can see you perfectly, Sir, out of the corner of my eye."

In May 1937 we were given a short holiday to celebrate the Coronation of HM King George VI. I took Oliver to Langdale for three nights. Leading my youngest brother up rock climbs, I lost all my confidence. I was to discover the same thing later when leading my fiancée.

On our first morning I failed on three short and not very difficult climbs, then lowered a rope from the top of the third for Oliver to climb it. We went on to do two easy climbs on Pavey Ark and to walk over the summit of Harrison Stickle, which involved a little scrambling.

On our second day we walked over Esk Hause and Sty Head to climb the Arrowhead Arête on Great Gable.

It must have been a disappointment to Oliver, who had admired his eldest brother's climbing exploits, to see him in such poor condition.

Oliver followed in our brother Andrew's footsteps, winning a scholarship at an early age from The Leas to Winchester, where his studies were interrupted by a war emergency.

At the time of the Germans' greatest advance in Russia, Iran was threatened with invasion through the Caucasus. Oliver was one of a number of schoolboys who accepted War Office bursaries to base in Dulwich College and to study Persian at the School of Oriental and African Studies, on the assumption that they would be commissioned in the Intelligence Corps and sent to Iran as interpreters.

By the time the course ended, the Germans were retreating, the threat to Iran had receded and the students were offered the alternatives of an infantry commission or an eventual posting to Iran as Sergeants. Oliver, who took his Persian very seriously, chose the latter but, after waiting for a long time in a depot for a posting which never came, he volunteered for a parachute course and ended as a Field Security Sergeant in the 1st Airborne Division. They landed in Norway on VE Day to deal with expected German resistance in the mountains which never materialised.

With a number of his pals, he met a group of Norwegian girls, among whom was Gunnvor Sannerud. Eager to learn the language, Oliver asked if any of them could lend him a Norwegian dictionary. Gunnvor offered to post one to him. Knowing that it might take weeks to reach his coded military address, he asked if he might call at her home for it. Gunnvor and her parents, who were both dentists, were horrified when Oliver arrived, still with all his pals. They did not want their home to be invaded by foreign soldiers. To break the ice, Gunnvor sat down at the piano and played some Grieg. Oliver at once wrote home asking for a book of piano duets. Gunnvor's parents quickly saw that he had more to him than his pals and did not discourage his visits. Before he left Norway, Gunnvor told him of her reaction against soldiers, to which he replied, "I am not a soldier; I am a civilian in uniform".

Posted to Palestine, he played lengthy games of chess with an enthusiast in another unit, making daily moves by despatch rider. While on leave in Cairo, he proposed to Gunnvor by post and was accepted.

After his demobilisation, we spent a Christmas together in Heswall and were surprised to hear him conversing fluently on the telephone with Gunnvor in Norwegian. She meanwhile had been qualifying as an interior designer at Copenhagen University.

When I was living in the Mess at Sandhurst, Oliver visited me and I drove him to see our brother Stephen in the special home in Surrey in which he was living. We lunched in the Mess, where he met an officer under whom he had served in Palestine.

After their wedding in Norway, to which Margo and I were unfortunately unable to go, Oliver followed Robin to Clare College, Cambridge, where he took a degree in English. He and Gunnvor made their names in literary circles for their translations of novels by Knut Hamsun and Axel Jensen.

Oliver decided after Pater's death to invite Mother to live with them. Before Oliver had settled down to teaching at Portsmouth Grammar School, Mother sold Dinglefield and Pater's Liverpool house and overruled Gunnvor in buying an unnecessarily large house in Portsmouth, accustomed, as she had been, to living with a fleet of servants. Fortunately, the difficulties which this caused did not last long, as Oliver's career as a teacher proved abortive. Their new home in Westwood Hill, Crystal Palace, was tailor-made for the family. Mother spent 15 good years there, seeing the family grow up round her. She

was much loved by all and the many friends who visited the house, of whatever colour or creed, called her "Mother". Gunnvor compares her relationship with her to that of Ruth with Naomi.

There is little doubt that Mother spoiled Oliver as her fifth and youngest son, especially after Andrew's death. Once when she was staying with us at White Cottage, Gunnvor was away and Oliver was alone at Westwood Hill. We had difficulty in dissuading her from dashing back. He was due to go to an occasion requiring a dinner jacket and would need her to tie his bow-tie.

Oliver had by then joined the staff of the London Library, taking time off to qualify as a Fellow of the Library Association (FLA) and eventually becoming Deputy Librarian.

Oliver had an unusual sense of humour. One morning, while on holiday in Heswall, I returned by bicycle after spending a night with friends some miles away to find a queue outside our gate. As I made my way in, a man shouted, "Hey! You can't go in now, they're closed for lunch". Then I spotted a notice in Oliver's handwriting pinned to the gate: "Come and see our bomb craters – sixpence for the Red Cross". The first two bombs to fall in the area had landed the previous night, one just behind, the other just in front of the house, which was built on the slope of a hill. The blast of the first had skimmed the roof, slightly displacing a few tiles; that of the second had gone away from the house, creating a clearance in a patch of rhododendrons. The visits of the curious raised over £5 in sixpences.

One morning for a bet with a fellow student on their daily journey up from Dulwich he wore his shirt, collar, tie and jacket back to front. He enjoyed watching a businessman sitting opposite him on the train taking peeps at him over the top of his newspaper and hearing Cockney comments such as, "Hey, Mister, you're goin' the wrong way", and "*You've had a nasty accident*".

When the bulky typescript – before the age of computers – of *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, of which he was joint editor with Alan Bullock, was ready, he delivered it to Collins in a wheelbarrow, ensuring that the media were on hand to photograph him.

John Wells writes of him:

"Stallybrass looked like an eccentric young professor, with a bushy beard ... Stallybrass was a keen cyclist and mountaineer, and came

to the library in sandals and strange homespun tunics found for him by his Norwegian wife Gunnvor.

"... He was colourful and outgoing, and gave musical evenings in his home in Sydenham Hill where he sat happily playing the piano – 'appallingly badly' according to one friend – accompanying singers and dispensing small glasses of brown sherry. Thirty years later people's faces still brighten when they talk about him.

"He was a favourite of writers who used the library, and Masfield wrote him a parody in gratitude:

If I were in a pavender,
A pavender or pub,
I'd pledge you a javender,
A javender or jubbe,
Or orange-juicy shravender,
Rum shravender or shrub,
For taking so much travender,
Such travender or troub.

"In his correspondence with John Betjeman, it was Stallybrass who wrote the parody:

Sir J. Betjeman, Sir J. Betjeman,
Disarming and charming with verses that scan,
What ingenuous, tenuous jingles are these
That I strike from my portable Underwood's

keys.

"... He longed to run the library. He was, it is true, impulsive and impractical; his wife describes a dinner party at which he and five old friends from Winchester were trying without success to do his son's eleven-plus exam. Suddenly they discovered a skylight was leaking and, cheered on by his friends, Stallybrass climbed out onto the roof. When she at last persuaded him to come out of the rain he had already put his foot through the skylight, and was about to test his mountaineering skills by roping himself to some precarious lead pipes which would certainly have come away from the wall and killed him.

"In such a stable institution as the library he was valued for his flair and theatrical dash; when an American visitor once asked him if he was a celebrity, his answer was, 'Not yet!'" (1)

A year after his untimely death, an anonymous correspondent wrote in *The Times* of 23 November 1979: "... There was hardly an aspect of the craft of book-making and of the book trade itself which Oliver Stallybrass did not adorn ... His indexes ... are a monument to the indexer's art ... His combination of sensitivity, insight and skill has made the Abinger Edition a model of editorial scholarship and judgment.

To mark E. M. Forster's 90th birthday in 1969, Oliver edited a collection of *Essays and Recollections* (2). Later he was chosen to edit the Abinger Edition of his works.

Oliver and Gunnvor were a wonderfully warm-hearted couple. While we were in Ghana we received a visit from Christopher Yerbuaah, a lawyer who had studied in London. He told us how, admiring the British, he mistrusted them in their pride, superiority and patronage, and had decided not to accept hospitality in a British home, because he thought he would only be invited to see if he could use a knife and fork properly. Then Oliver had befriended him and invited him to their home, where he and Gunnvor had won his heart. To express his appreciation, he had brought us two huge baskets full of coconuts, pineapples, mangoes, pawpaws, avocado pears and eggs.

It was while we were living with Robin Evans in Cambridge in the years 1977-8 that a real friendship with Oliver developed. He was working at that time on the Abinger Edition and was spending several days each week in the special library of King's College in which Forster's manuscripts are housed. He had left Gunnvor and their family; he was homeless. The room in the College was his only while he was at work; the rest of the week he was spending in digs in London.

Despite his many happy years with Gunnvor, who was extremely sensitive to the fact that his health suffered from having been treated with cortisone, he claimed to be embarking on a new and fascinating life in his 50s. We and his Cambridge friends could see that he was a lonely and uneasy man. He would talk to us and we would listen, saying little. He trusted us to the point where he wanted us to meet his friends and invited us to dinner at High

Table in King's. When we had friends visiting us who we thought might interest him, we would call on him at his work and he would receive us warmly.

The last time we saw him was the happiest and best of all. I was in Addenbrookes Hospital recovering from a hernia operation. It was a sunny Whit Sunday afternoon and patients were allowed out in the garden. Oliver came and read aloud to us from a book which he had specially chosen and lent me other books which he rightly thought would interest me. Shortly afterwards we returned to Ascot. Sadly, I got involved in other interests and lost touch with Oliver.

A few months later Gunnvor phoned to say that he had committed suicide. I drove at once to her home, took her to identify the body and spent most of the day with her.

His colleagues in King's College arranged a memorial concert, at which the composer Elizabeth Poston, who was then living in the house which had been the model for Forster's *Howard's End*, accompanied a singer in some of her own songs, including a Norwegian one, specially written for Gunnvor.

Moving to West Dulwich, we were delighted to find ourselves only two miles from Gunnvor at Crystal Palace. On the day our possessions were being moved in, she brought us an excellent picnic lunch in the garden. Over the next weeks she helped us practically in many ways and introduced us to a number of her friends and to the cultural life of the area. We started to go to the chamber music recitals which she arranges in her home, inviting young artists, especially those preparing to give public recitals, to face an audience privately and raise money for charity. Through her I took up singing with a local madrigal group under Susan Anderson, in concerts in the Royal Festival Hall with the Dulwich College Choir under Alan Morgan and, after his retirement, with Christ's Chapel Choral Society, which he founded.

In March 1987 Gunnvor gave us a Ruby Wedding lunch party. She cooked a huge salmon and baked a splendid Norwegian wedding cake. Peter had arranged from America for the house to be filled with flowers. My brother Robin and our son Andrew were staying with us and, together with Gunnvor, we sang a couple of light-hearted rounds. Also with us were Alan and Barbara Thornhill, Neville Brazier-Creagh (my best man), Will Reed (our organist),

who played Grieg duets with Alan Morgan, two of Margo's bridesmaids and two of my groomsmen.

Especially happy have been times at Christmas with Oliver and Gunnvor's son Michael, his wife Catherine and their four daughters. They have formed a family brass sextet; they are all members of the Swinton and District Excelsior Band, of which I am the proud owner of a cassette entitled "Rye Brass".

Michael has made a successful career in international rail administration, starting with British Rail. He now works for VSR (Vossloh System Technic) Comreco Ltd, based in York, but travelling all over the world. At a recent dinner in London, presided over by the Minister of Transport, he was one of seven to receive prestigious awards. His Railway Forum Award, sponsored by Eurostar, was for "technological innovation".

Catherine takes a great interest in the family. For one Christmas she produced a little volume entitled "A Family in Profile – The Bulleys over fifty years". It contains 29 silhouettes of four generations of Raffles, Bulleys and Stallybrasses together with a family tree.

Gunnvor is an outstanding artist and has recently published cards of four watercolours of Dulwich Village, with which she raises funds for the Dulwich Picture Gallery.

After being crippled for some time with arthritis, she is enjoying a new lease of life after a hip replacement. Her daughter, Anne, once distanced from her parents, made a point of coming to help her when she left hospital.

- (1) John Wells: *Rude Words – Discursive History of the London Library*, (Macmillan, 1991), pp.196-7.
- (2) Oliver Stallybrass (editor), *Aspects of E. M. Forster*, (Edward Arnold, 1969).

Mary Wight-Boycott

Shortly after our move to Ascot, Margo had made friends on a train with Mary Wight-Boycott, Honorary Secretary of the Ascot Priory Branch of the

Conservative Party. She and her husband Reg who, sadly, died prematurely, became our good friends.

Soon Margo was working with the Conservatives, not so much from political conviction as out of friendship. She even agreed to collect subscriptions and set off boldly, armed with an electoral roll. She noticed that some of the residents had "S" in red against their names and concluded this meant "Subscriber". The first of these on whom she called chased her angrily away. Trembling, she retreated into the road and went in at the next gate, only to be confronted by the same furious Socialist. To a Conservative children's party she invited a number of children of Socialists. Finding that her activities were not fully appreciated by her more politically-minded colleagues, she decided to limit herself to social functions.

My initial reaction to Margo's activities as to threaten to join the Labour Party, but my attitude changed when Sir Alec Douglas-Home, later Lord Home of the Hirsell, became Leader of the Conservatives and Prime Minister. I respected his integrity and had an urge to back him. I was glad recently to read that HRH The Prince of Wales, unveiling a statue of him at Coldstream, referred to him as "that rarest of breeds, a true and unique statesman" (1).

I phoned Mary Wight-Boycott and said I would like to join the Party. To my surprise, she invited me to join the committee and to come to the next meeting in her home. We were almost all elderly, but I succeeded in recruiting three younger men onto the committee. I resigned when we went to Germany.

On our return, I discovered that my younger friends were no longer serving. My enthusiasm for politics had by then waned and I lay low. Early in 1979, I was asked by the Branch Chairman if I would stand for election for the Bracknell District Council. I saw a way of serving the community to which I could devote as much time as was needed.

Bracknell District, in the parliamentary constituency of Wokingham, then consisted of Bracknell itself, a very well planned new town, and the five country parishes of Binfield, Crowthorne & Easthampstead, Sandhurst, Warfield and Winkfield. The greater part of Ascot, including the race course and the shopping centre, lay in the constituency of Windsor; only a small but widespread part belonged to the Parish of Winkfield.

In all three wards of our Parish of Winkfield, no other party put up a candidate, so we all got in unopposed. Before the election, however, I made a point of calling at every house in our branch of the ward to leave leaflets introducing the local representatives.

After moving to London, we kept up our Ascot friendships by staying a few nights in the Berystede Hotel, South Ascot. On these occasions we have always visited Mary in her delightful home in the Oasthouse, Titness Park.

(1) *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 August 1998.

Dorothy Benwell

I thoroughly enjoyed my three years as a District Councillor. The most interesting part of my work was on the Leisure Committee. Much of it centred on South Hill Park, a Georgian mansion on the outskirts of Bracknell which was used as an arts centre. A decision was taken to support the building of a Performance Centre as an annexe to the original building; this has since taken place. There were excellent chamber concerts, which Margo, Peter and Annie and Robin enjoyed on occasions with me. Margo and I went to a centenary Grainger piano recital by our Australian friend Penelope Thwaites. Andrew and Eliane gave Margo as a Christmas present a subscription to a term's art classes and for a couple of years she got great enjoyment from these. We were grateful, too, for their printing services.

The Leisure Committee was also responsible for controlling the huge Bracknell Sports Centre, one of the finest in Britain. Each Christmas a big carol concert by local bands and schools was held there.

An annual event which Margo and I enjoyed together was a Sunday morning civic service, a chance to appreciate some of the churches of our district: Easthampstead, Bracknell, Binfield and Warfield.

Just as in Germany Margo had taken on fully with me to care for my 38 girls and my colleagues, so now she took on my 39 fellow Councillors and some of the officials too. One Christmas we had printed and used as our greeting a moving Christmas story about Zimbabwe which Andrew had written there the previous year. At a meeting in the Council Chamber, our MP, Sir William van Straubenzee, called across the room to thank me for

Andrew's story (see Appendix H) and asked me about his work in Zimbabwe. "Bill", as he liked us to call him, sometimes included me in his local "surgeries" to help him deal with local problems.

Mrs Dorothy Benwell, who had been for many years one of the three Councillors for the Ascot Ward and had served as Chair, took me under her wing and was my closest friend and adviser in all Council matters. Together we won a great victory for right over wrong in one of those cases – too frequent, alas! – when the letter of the law is opposed to common sense and elementary justice. It concerned "The Warren", a small residential area on the edge of Swinley Forest, the only approaches to which were an unmanned level crossing or a long detour on narrow, muddy lanes.

A few years previously, a family running an itinerant show business had taken over a plot of land and had settled down in caravans without Council permission. They were violent people, owned fierce dogs and had terrorised the neighbourhood by driving lorries at high speed along the lanes and forcing pedestrians into a ditch. After one of them had been convicted of assaulting a Council official, they had moved out and peace had reigned for several years.

But now they were applying for temporary permission to park caravans on the site with a view eventually to building, and the neighbourhood was up in arms. Our legal experts advised us that there were no grounds for refusing permission, since previous history and the character of the applicants were inadmissible.

At the Development Committee meeting, Dorothy Benwell opposed the application brilliantly on the grounds of difficulty of access to the Warren for heavy vehicles. I made a passionate plea that our duty as Councillors must surely lie in protecting residents from harassment and that to pass the application would be to subject them to misery. To our great surprise, the application was rejected, the only vote in favour being that of the Leader of the Labour group, who duly criticised me for introducing personalities. The residents, who were present in force, were overjoyed.

When we moved to London in 1982, I still had a few months to go as Councillor before the next election. To avoid a by-election, it was agreed that I should continue to serve, making the long journey for meetings. Early in 1983, however, the District Secretary phoned to say that, as my name was no

longer on the new electoral roll, I was not entitled to serve. Deprived of the opportunity to take leave personally, I wrote to each of my colleagues and to the leading officers.

The Environmental Health Officer replied, "It is meant as a compliment of the utmost sincerity when I say that I always regarded you as a Councillor of the old school. One who had the interest of the community that he served at heart and not one who was on an ego trip or who was conditioned by party political dogma". An SDP Councillor wrote, "This was my first experience of Council service, and I was pleasantly surprised that differences of Party were no barrier to friendship".

Jim and Karen Bennett

Colonel Jim Bennett had been Senior Medical Officer at Sandhurst and had helped us greatly as a family over injections before going to Ghana.

On becoming a Councillor, I rejoined the local Conservative Committee. Mary Wight-Boycott had retired, but I was delighted to find that the secretary was Karen Bennett, Jim's wife. Our meetings were held in their lovely home in Swinley Road with a garden full of glorious rhododendrons and azaleas.

I was soon asked to take over the Chair and agreed to do so for two years on condition that we made a concerted effort to recruit younger members. There was already a younger couple; the wife became Vice-Chairman and later took over from me.

We enjoyed two years of happy co-operation before we moved to London.

Gloria Hooper

A regular feature of the Ascot Priory Branch was an annual wine and cheese party at the Berkshire Golf Club, to which we usually invited Bill van Straubenzee, our MP, to address us. Being at that time a keen European, I got the committee's agreement to invite our MEP for Thames Valley, Baroness Diana Elles. Shortly before the party, her secretary phoned to say she had been invited to address the United Nations in New York, but had arranged for Miss Gloria Hooper, MEP for Greater Liverpool, to take her place. Would I

meet her at Heathrow during the afternoon and look after her for the rest of the day? I armed myself with a large placard saying HOOPER and, as the passengers emerged from the customs hall, I eyed questioningly every middle-aged battleaxe who appeared on her own. To my surprise and delight, a lovely young woman responded. She was the youngest and most attractive woman at the party. A barrister with a practice in London, she gave us a most reassuring picture of the EEC and won the hearts of some of our less pro-European members. Presiding over a tombola, she caused much amusement by drawing out first her own ticket and then Margo's. By the time we dropped her off at her home in St James's, we looked on her as a friend for life. Lady Elles duly accepted to speak at our party during my second year of office.

In the spring of 1990, Margo was suffering from as yet undiagnosed abdominal pains. She spent six horrific days in a dirty ward ruled over by a sister who bullied the patients. In her usual way, Margo made friends with other patients, two of whom agreed to join her in a fight to have things put right. They wrote reports in which they stressed their conviction that it is up to all of us to make the NHS what it is meant to be and regretted the lack of influence and personal touch which matrons used to bring.

We agreed to send the reports to Gloria, now Baroness Hooper who, having lost her seat as MEP, was Under-Secretary for Health in the House of Lords. She invited us all there to tea. Bunny Kallipetis, who has remained a friend ever since, came with us. The third lady was unable to come, but her husband ran a minicab service and provided us with free transport for the afternoon. Gloria told us that she had already used the reports at one of her committee meetings and we had a fruitful discussion.

A few months later, Margo was horrified at being condemned in an emergency to return to the same ward. We found that it had been transformed into a pleasantly redecorated room. A motherly sister gave us a warm welcome. Only the most helpful member of the old ward staff remained. She discussed with Margo the tragedy, as she saw it, of the unpleasant sister – a nurse who was unable to cope with the power which authority gave her.

Late that night Margo saw a matron helping the night sister and remembered having seen her being rudely treated by the unpleasant sister. She reported to Gloria that everything had changed for the better.

On another occasion, when Margo had suffered an attack while travelling through Worcestershire and had spent a night in Ronkswood Hospital, she

reported on the excellent service of an ambulance crew to Gloria, who sent them an encouraging message.

In February 1991 Margo was successfully operated on for what turned out to be an obturator hernia.

In March 1991 I celebrated my 80th birthday. We had already decided to give a party to thank the medics who had helped us over the past seven years. In April Andrew and Eliane came over from Geneva to help us with a buffet lunch. Gloria Hooper was the guest of honour. She had spent the previous day at Chequers at a seminar on the NHS. Sadly our own GP, Dr Richard Penny, was unable to come, but to meet her we had four other doctors who had treated Margo. The sun shone, we went out onto the lawn for photographs between lunch and coffee, and conversations went on till 4.00. Even after the party had broken up, we could see three doctors still chatting in our gateway.

Andrew drove Gloria back to her home in St James's and was introduced to her American friend, Arthur Klein, who, like Peter, lives in Pine Street, Philadelphia. A few weeks later he took Peter and me to a baseball match to support the "Phillies".

Gloria, having spent five years as one of the United Kingdom's 18 representatives in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, is now a Deputy Speaker in the House of Lords.

Ian Forgacs

The man who, in the spring of 1990, first gave Margo hope that a cure would be found for her pains, was Dr Ian Forgacs, a consultant physician at King's, who announced, "You are a mystery; I love solving mysteries and I mean to solve yours". It was while he was carrying out tests that she had her unhappy experience in a dirty ward. In stark contrast was a phone call which I received at 7.50 pm on the evening I brought her home. Dr Forgacs' secretary asked after her and informed me of a letter in the post giving her an appointment in case it failed to reach her in time.

In February 1991 she was delighted to be sent back again to Dr Forgacs and spent three nights in Dulwich Hospital undergoing tests and X-rays. He released her for the weekend, but wanted her back for further tests. On the Sunday afternoon another attack occurred. Dr Matthew Kiln came, but as the

injections were no longer effective, sent her by ambulance to King's. There, the surgical registrar at once decided that an operation was necessary. As I sat quietly with her, holding her hand, we had a deep sense of peace. On my return home, I found it a great relief to be able to phone Peter in Philadelphia; I phoned again at midnight to say that she had come through the operation well. I talked at length to Andrew in Geneva the next morning and phoned the Paxton Green Health Centre to pass the good news around.

That morning, Dr Forgacs discovered his patient recovering from an operation of which he had known nothing. The surgeon reported that it had been a very rare and well-concealed condition known as an obturator hernia and that he had had great difficulty in locating it.

Ian was one of the doctors who came to meet Gloria Hooper. He brought with him as a birthday present for me a copy of Lord Hailsham's Memoirs, *A Sparrow's Flight*, which I treasure. It turned out that he was a close friend of Matthew Kiln.

Eight years later, Matthew Kiln made an appointment for Margo to see Ian Forgacs on 12th April. History repeated itself; once again she missed the appointment, having been operated on the previous day.

Meanwhile, I had enjoyed Ian's services when he carried out a test in connection with my hiatus hernia.

After Margo's death, he wrote, "She was a quite remarkable woman, and I am very pleased to have been of some service to her.

"I shall give some thought as to how your beautifully written account of her illness might best be used. However, I can tell you straight away that I shall be keeping a copy in a small boxfile that sits in my office which includes a small but very special collection of letters that I have received from patients or their relatives and which I cherish. I look into this file whenever my spirits are low".

Friends in the National Health Service

We owe a great deal to our NHS, especially for the care Margo received during the seven years in which she suffered from an undiagnosed obturator hernia. Every one of the seven doctors in the Paxton Green Health Service turned out at least once in the night to give her an injection.

Our GP was Dr Richard Penny, the head of the practice. A keen rugger player, he was extremely fit and moved everywhere at a great pace. He left the practice to look after his wife, who died of cancer, and shortly afterwards he too died.

Matthew Kiln, who had been called out to inject Margo just after he had joined the practice and had suffered at least four more similarly disturbed nights, then became our GP. At the memorial service in Christ's Chapel for Dr Penny, he gave the address and his wife sat with us in the gallery. He was one of the four doctors whom we invited to meet Gloria Hooper. At the time of his father's death we read with great interest an account of the part he had played in World War II.

When Matthew left Paxton Green to join Dr Thamer Chabuk in the Rosendale Surgery, I immediately transferred to stay with him. Margo remained with Paxton Green for a time under Dr Roseveare, as she was undergoing special treatment there with Dr Rosemary Leonard. She later transferred to Rosendale. The short walk there was slightly uphill and, with her heart condition, she liked the support of my arm on the way there, but was happy to walk back on her own.

Early in 1999 she suffered occasional pains very like those of the obturator hernia. Matthew agreed that they might well be a warning sign; he wrote a letter for her to show any doctor in an emergency. On the day after our return from Washington he paid us a home call and saw her for the last time. It was Dr Leonard, on weekend emergency duty, who diagnosed the second obturator hernia and arranged for her final visit to King's.

As a family, we cannot speak too highly of the staff of the Pantia Ralli Ward, who enabled her to die in peace.

While visiting Margo in hospital, Annie ran out of the medication she was taking. She arrived at the Rosendale Surgery just before closing time, where Dr Chabuk, who had not met her before, saw to her needs with great care.

The practice manager, Maureen Kiff, the receptionists, Mary Hannon, Jenny Henderson and Jane Overton, and the nurses Patsy Stewart and Daphne, all contribute to the happy atmosphere.

The Corcoran Family

We had known Duncan and Lucy Corcoran for some time, but first became close friends when in 1980 they based with us for a time in Ascot, while they drove over to West Byfleet almost every day to work on a cottage into which they were preparing to move.

I had first met Lucy Davies, as she was then, as a land-girl at Hill Farm; she asked me to help her with an article she was writing on Bill Jaeger and his mother. Duncan, who had worked on the Clydeside docks and had gone to America with Frank Buchman at the beginning of the war, had served as a Sergeant in the American Army Air Corps in Greenland. I first met him in Washington shortly after he had been demobilised and was travelling with *The Forgotten Factor*.

Duncan and Lucy spent many years in Japan. They were there at a time of great demonstrations against the American Security Pact, a situation in the solution of which MRA played a key part. They later looked after Japanese delegations in London and Caux. They brought to visit us at Ascot a distinguished Senator, Yukika Sohma. As a young woman, she used to show her independence by riding a motorcycle. It was her father, Yukio Ozaki who, as Mayor of Tokyo, presented the famous cherry trees to Washington.

I have already written about their elder son, Rob, and his wife, Susan Thornhill, whose wedding we attended and with whom we stayed in Richmond, Virginia. We were sorry to miss the wedding of his twin sister, Ann, in West Byfleet. She was married to Roddy Edwards, who had spent much of his life in Jamaica, on the day in 1980 when Margo and I left to revisit Ghana and Nigeria, backed by a generous contribution from Duncan and Lucy.

Their younger son, Ian, and his wife, Anna, live in Wandsworth with their children. He is a TV film maker, working with BBC on *Panorama*, and has recently been filming in Kosovo. Anna, a singer and actress in the West End for many years, is now working part time as a receptionist at the MRA centre in Greencoat Place. Shortly after we moved to Carson Road, she spent a day helping us organise our possessions. When a Swiss friend of Andrew and Eliane came to us to take a course in English, they agreed to have her to stay; we felt she would be happier in a family than with two "oldies".

Shortly after we moved to Carson Road, Duncan and Lucy moved into a flat in Burbage Road, a mile away. We had many happy occasions together, including Duncan's 80th birthday, when we met the whole family.

Roddy and Ann spent some time on the Edwards family estate, setting up a firm for the export of Jamaican spices. When they settled in the village of Wenhamston in Suffolk, Tony Sursham helped in designing a cottage in their garden for Duncan and Lucy, who died shortly after they moved in.

Janet Mace

From the time she moved into a charming flat near Paxton Green, Janet has been one of our closest friends. Many years earlier we had known her parents in Horsham. Leslie Mace ran a Ford agency from which we twice bought cars. When Margo took one of them to be serviced, she would spend time with Muriel Mace. Janet we saw occasionally when she was Secretary to Roland Wilson.

Janet visits India frequently and has many Indian friends. Living alone, she often had guests from overseas staying with her. Through her, we made new friendships and re-established old ones with people living locally and from India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Germany.

She is a poet, producing two slender volumes of thoughtful verse. She sent us a moving poem for our Golden Wedding. She invited my sister-in-law Gunnvor and me to a reading of an interesting play which she had written; Gunnvor read one of the parts.

When Ruth Dallas came to see Margo during her last week, Janet had her to stay.

She has moved recently to Wallington, where I have visited her twice, once to meet one of her fellow-residents.

Last year, with a septuagenarian friend, she went to India again, a journey of seven weeks. Travelling by plane and train, car and jeep, they visited seven places, including Shillong in the North East, staying in nine homes and being entertained for meals by about 50 friends. She says it was "a privilege and a gift to feel so at home and welcomed in another country" and returned "enriched and stretched in heart and mind".

John and Isaac Amata

In 1980, Margo and I were invited by Isaac Amata, who was responsible for the MRA centre in Lagos, Nigeria, to stay for three months, the first month

learning the ropes with him, the second running the centre while he took a Nigerian delegation to Europe, the third handing over again on his return.

4 Lawrence Road, a large colonial-style house on the residential island of Ikoyi to the south-east of Lagos, had been acquired in the late '50s as a base for filming *Freedom*. It was an ideal centre for large gatherings. In the course of our three months, backed by a resident cook and a driver, we provided accommodation for 44, meals for 49 others, and a further 112 came in for light refreshments and/or film shows; many of these returned more than once.

We had a deep respect for Isaac's work in a country where both posts and telephones were unreliable. He kept in close touch with the Emir of Kano, one of the great Muslim leaders, who lived several days' journey away by car.

Isaac's brother, John, who had played the revolutionary leader "Mutanda" in *Freedom*, had been with the MRA force in the Congo and had come with me to visit General Henry Alexander in Somerset. He was Lecturer in Drama at the Abraka College of Education, a full day's drive from Lagos. He brought a group of his students to join Isaac's delegation.

Shortly before we returned home, a party of 28 came by coach from Ibadan to see the house and to offer support to Isaac. Though his European friends continued to help him in many ways, we were the last to take responsibility for running the centre. Two happy events led to the start of a new era. Isaac's marriage to Rosa provided him with an outstanding wife to back him. A new generation of John Amata's ex-students committed themselves to carry on the work, not only in Nigeria, but throughout Africa and across the world.

Kenneth Noble

Helping Isaac in Lagos was Ken Noble. We had known his parents, who lived in Manchester, and his uncle, Canon Kenneth Lee, who had been a curate at St Peter's, Heswall, and was Vicar of Burton, Tom Bigland's parish.

On the day after the delegation had left, Ken, Margo and I were alone in the house. Margo and I were fortunate to have a bedroom from which we could hear neither the telephone nor the doorbell. We emerged from our siesta to find Ken worried. He had just received a visit from two police officers in plain clothes who told him that the weekly training sessions would start again the next day. He was left wondering whether they were genuine.

I knew that over a period of about 20 years, the centre had provided weekly sessions of films and discussions on the basic principles of democracy for students from the Criminal Investigation Department Training College, selected from all over the country for courses in detection, anti-fraud, photography and finger-printing, but that these had been suspended 18 months previously.

I remembered that when we visited Nigeria by car from Ghana in 1961, we had been asked by the police at the frontier for our address in Lagos. We only knew the PO box number and phone number, but when we mentioned Moral Re-Armament they told us the address and sent greetings to their friends there.

The morning after the police officers' visit, 48 students duly arrived. We had decided to start by showing the film *Freedom*, followed by a discussion. Over drinks which Margo had provided for them, I noticed that their bus had disappeared and was told it had gone to collect the next 48. It was 3.00 pm before we lunched that day.

Ken was a great support to us. I enjoyed walking with him in the nearby forest and benefiting from his expert knowledge of birds. We were delighted when he was invited to a wedding and highly amused when a young man arrived by car to collect him, bringing what looked like a somewhat transparent brilliant turquoise pyjama suit and cap to match. As Ken remarked, such a suit looks great on a black skin, but makes a white skin look distinctly pallid. He required considerable help from Margo to make him look respectable; she felt as if she were the mother of the bride.

Ken married Margaret ("Maggie") Gray, whose parents, Rex and Betty Gray, did excellent work for community relations in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Based on their experiences, Betty wrote a play, *Clashpoint*, later made into a video, which was shown widely around the country in some of the hot spots of racial tension.

Ken became a journalist and worked for a time closely with Andrew. I greatly enjoy proof-reading the magazine *For a Change*, of which he is one of the editors. We have occasionally visited Ken and Maggie with their daughter Laura in their home in Hurst Green near Oxted.

The Rev. Elkanah Folorunso

Ken Noble, Margo and I all felt uneasy that the police course should be run by three white people. The next week we were joined by the Rev. Elkanah Folorunso, Vicar of St Peter's Church in Lagos, who had just returned from a conference at Caux. We were already aware of a division between Muslim students and others. During the discussion a Christian student asked a very awkward theological question, which I passed to the Vicar. He replied, "I think you have misunderstood the purpose of this course. We are not here to discuss religion, but to learn together, Muslims and Christians, how to do our best for our country". From then on there was no further evidence of division.

One Sunday the three of us, together with a Ghanaian friend who had come to help us, went to Communion in St Peter's Church. The service was in Yoruba, but the Vicar broke into English to mention us all by name and to pray for our work.

Ken Dako

Ken Dako had been a schoolboy during our time at the Ghana Military Academy. His father, Victor Dako, ran the Presbyterian Bookshop in Accra and took us to show the film *Freedom* to Presbyterian schools. His wife had played the part of the Queen in the stage version of *Freedom*.

Ken had joined the Army Medical Corps in a rebellious attempt to escape from parental influence, but when he saw what was going on in the world around him, he accepted a calling similar to theirs.

He had visited us several times on visits to Britain and had joined David Asare and Kofi Asare in inviting us to Accra. We had seen little of him during our short visit as he was then taking the Staff College course as a Major, but he flew over to Lagos at his own expense for one week of a fortnight's leave. He came with the conviction that Ghana should make restitution for the ruthless way she had expelled Nigerians a few years previously and that he should form the personal links needed to back the work of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States).

We later met him and his Ugandan wife Sarah in London shortly after their marriage. She was working with UNIFIL. He retired as a Lt-Colonel and travelled with her. They have written to us from Israel, Uganda and New York.

The Campbell and Philips Families

Our closest friends in Dulwich have been Paul and Annejet Campbell. A Canadian doctor, he was for many years personal physician to Dr Frank Buchman. She is a daughter of Frits Philips of the Dutch electrical firm.

They had stayed with us for a time at White Cottage and we had often visited them in their fine home, "The Gate House", in College Road. When Peter had been wrongly diagnosed as epileptic, Paul had introduced us to a Harley Street specialist, who had cleared him.

Both have been prolific writers. Annejet's two books (1) (2) have been translated into Russian and other European languages and she has travelled widely to launch them. Paul's autobiography (3) was published shortly before his final illness.

Our family links were strengthened when their younger daughter, Digna, asked me to drive her to Heathrow to meet her parents returning from abroad.

During Margo's time of undiagnosed pains, she woke one morning feeling unable to face life any longer. Her one thought was to see Paul. I phoned him and he came to breakfast. He told her that God still needed her and so encouraged her that she felt ready to start giving out again.

Paul and I enjoyed country walks and concerts in the Dulwich Picture Gallery. He was one of the four doctors whom we invited in 1991 to meet Gloria Hooper. We noticed that he was not his usual sparkling self and that he appeared to leave it to Annejet to do any talking. From then until his death in February 1995, his mind gradually disintegrated with multi-stroke dementia to the point where he could no longer communicate and it was uncertain if he still recognised us.

One morning Annejet phoned to ask Margo to help her. She had been diagnosed as having cancer and the strain of looking after Paul had become all too great. A brilliant Zulu nurse, Lillian Cingo, whom the Campbells had befriended, happened to be free and helped them to get Paul into a nursing home. Annejet's cancer has since been cured.

With their elder daughter Edith Anne acting in a theatre in Iowa, the younger one, Digna, married with two (later three) children in Gothenburg, and her father approaching his 90th birthday in Eindhoven, Annejet needed to

travel frequently and we were privileged to take responsibility for Paul in her absence. He exuded an aura of peace that was deeply satisfying.

Paul had worked tirelessly in Canada for reconciliation between the anglophone establishment, the francophone *Québécois* and the "first nation" Indians. One of his friends, Chief Ed Burnstick, was spending two nights in London on his way home from a "First Nation" conference in Geneva and asked to visit Paul. I was moved to see him sitting silently holding his old friend's hand. He said later, "I felt good about it".

Annejet invited me to join her together with John Brothwood, Curate of St Barnabas, to plan the Thanksgiving Service for Paul's life in Christ's Chapel. This marked the beginning of a friendship with John and his wife Margaret which has continued.

Meeting Frits Philips on one of his rare visits to Dulwich was an inspiration. His wife, Sylvia, a pillar of strength to the family, had died a few years previously. No longer able to cycle round his estate, he had taken to riding round on horseback. His only grumble was that he was no longer allowed to pilot his own aircraft. At their frequent family reunions he welcomes numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We have been privileged to count as our friends Annejet's sisters, Digna from Wassenaar with her late husband Peter Hintzen and Maria Moniz from Massachusetts.

Annejet played a key part in Margo's "Carson Road Art Ventures", the second of which was held in her home. At the first "Venture" we were deeply touched that Edith Anne with her American husband Jack Lynch volunteered to serve drinks and to do all the washing-up in our flat on the opening night.

Our friendship with "Edie" had started at the time of the break-up of her first marriage and of her father's death. Her American husband, Jack Lynch, had totally won our hearts at our first meeting. We fully appreciated their courage in trying to find theatrical work in Britain after successful careers in Iowa. They gave us a great welcome to their charming home, "White Birch Cottage" in the Surrey village of Binscombe, from which Edie can travel easily to her present post as a secretary in the University of Surrey in Guildford. Jack's skills ensure constant improvement to the already fine garden.

At Christmas 1998 we arranged with our friends Roger and Jodie Lomax at No.5 Carson Road for them to give a performance in their home of their one-woman show on the American poet Emily Dickinson for a number of friends and neighbours. Peter had previously arranged through American friends for them to visit the poet's home in Amherst.

Peter writes of their visit to Margo in King's College Hospital four days before her death: "At eleven, Edie and Jack arrive. Edie has been like a daughter to Mum and Dad, particularly since her father's death. And Jack has massaged Mum and helped her through some of her worst periods. Annie and I leave them with Mum and Dad and go off to shop and to collect things for Mum. We return at one to take Jack, Edie, and Dad to lunch. We decide to go to the French restaurant, Le Piaf, in Dulwich. It's a wonderfully happy time, talking about Mum, sharing memories, catching up on Edie and Jack's news. And we even drink some wine, against my better judgement, and it seems to do us all good".

In December 1999 our neighbour Anne-Marie Braun drove two other friends and me to see the Emily Dickinson play, now called *My Life Has Stood*, in the Mill Studio, Guildford. It had been improved out of all recognition since I had last seen it. Edie plays herself and courageously draws on her own life story with its most painful episodes, weaving it into that of Emily Dickinson. Jack's direction with plenty of movement and changes of lighting so captures the imagination that three "oldies" agreed that they had never at any point found their minds wandering.

A performance in Brighton has since led to its being booked for three weeks at the Edinburgh "Fringe". It has since been renamed *Emily Dickinson and I*.

When Annejet drove me recently to Binscombe, we spent the afternoon on a Mah Jongg session.

- (1) Annejet Campbell: *Listen to the Children*, (Grosvenor, 1984).
- (2) Annejet Campbell: *Listen for a Change*, (Grosvenor, 1986).
- (3) Paul Campbell: *A Dose of My Own Medicine*, (Grosvenor, 1992).

The Hutchinson Family

Michael Hutchinson was a brilliant Eton and Oxford scholar. He had been a friend of my schoolfriend Michael Longson. I first got to know him at Basil Buckland's funeral, at which he gave the address. Norah Buckland paid tribute "to the meticulous editing of the manuscript" of Basil's memoirs and Michael helped me greatly with the Foreword, which I had been asked to write (1).

I was at that time writing a book about my "in-laws", *The Biglands of Cheshire* (2), and I, in my turn, paid tribute to the "many helpful recommendations on content and style", which Michael and Margaret had given me.

After the publication of Garth Lean's excellent biography of Frank Buchman (3), Michael Hutchinson, Hugh Nowell, Francis Smith and I worked together to publish a pamphlet, entitled *Notes for Study*, "to encourage those who have already appreciated its broad sweep to seek out in it for themselves, either in groups or as individuals, the basic truths of Buchman's life and teaching". I have in front of me a copy in which the blank pages at the end are full of notes and references which Margo made. I am challenged to make a fresh study myself.

We both carried treasured memories of a visit to Michael and Margaret's upstairs flat on Boars Hill, after which we went downstairs to lunch with Garth and Margot.

I was grateful to be driven by a friend to Michael's funeral. Since his death, Margaret has helped me greatly with translations from French of works by Philippe Mottu and Hélène Guisan.

On visits to Eva Ricketts, who had been one of Margo's bridesmaids, we were glad to be able to include Margaret in pub lunches.

In the days when I lunched regularly at the Westminster Theatre, it was a special joy to be joined by their daughter Catherine, who is now a member of the General Management Committee of MRA. She has a lively mind and a wide range of interests. I encouraged her over her rock-climbing by introducing her to a woman member of the Climbers' Club.

(1) Basil Buckland: *Take Heart*, (Linden Hall, 1987).

(2) Bill Stallybrass: *The Biglands of Cheshire* (Linden Hall, 1988).

- (3) Michael Hutchinson, Hugh Nowell, Francis Smith and Bill Stallybrass: *Frank Buchman – a life – Garth Lean – Notes for Study*, (Grosvenor Books, 1986).

The Lall Family

Paul and Annejet Campbell introduced us to Peter and Goti Lall. Peter's father had been a close friend of Nehru and a Cambridge graduate. Peter had arrived in Glasgow just before the war started to study medicine. With his father imprisoned by the British government for his political activities, Peter could not raise the money to complete his course, but opted instead for physiotherapy, supporting himself with part-time jobs. These difficulties did not prevent him from earning a hockey Blue. When the war ended, he joined Grindlays Bank and worked for a time in London before returning to India.

Goti was educated in a Catholic boarding school. At partition, her Hindu family lost their home in Lahore. She edited for a time a women's magazine in Bombay.

The Lalls' two daughters, Maalti and Meena, both fine artists, had married Indians working in London and were living with their children in adjacent large houses in Alleyn Road. Peter and Goti had set up home in a comfortable maisonette in Alleyn Park a short distance away. I was for a time asked to give French lessons during the summer holidays to one of their grandsons, Sashi Kapoor.

Peter joined me for a time in meetings at the Westminster Theatre but, sadly, as Parkinson's disease took its toll, it became increasingly difficult to communicate with him and eventually we lost touch.

One day we received a phone call from Goti, who sounded desperate. She had had to put Peter into a nursing home and he no longer recognised her. She had discovered among his papers an invitation to a Caux summer conference which I had given him and a note of our phone number. She felt guilty at having opposed going to Caux, but now wanted to go herself. We arranged for her to travel with Una Gray, who looked after her well. She arrived back with a new lease of life and gave parties for some of her new MRA friends to meet her family and friends. We got to know many of her Indian family and friends, including two distinguished Generals.

When Peter and Annie spent a year looking after U Penn students taking courses in London, we arranged for them to live in a house in Princes Gate Mews owned by Goti's son-in-law, Robin Kapoor.

Goti joined Sir Martin Reid's painting group and took part in Margo's second "Art Venture". She usually returns to India each winter. She now has five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Leslie and Mary Fox

We had known Leslie and Mary Fox for many years. He had been Honorary Treasurer of the Oxford Group. They were hosting 45 Berkeley Square at a time when Andrew was living there. He and his young friends greatly appreciated Mary's readiness to listen to them: she was like the mother of a family. To us they had been the sort of friends with whom we could discuss problems.

Living in Rosendale Road, they became close friends and fellow parishioners of All Saints Church when we moved to Carson Road. I have already mentioned our joint involvement with friends in Belfast.

They introduced us to Sue Hudd, who helped them in the house once a week and she agreed to help us as well, covering the work at first with her elder daughter Lea, then still at school.

Leslie and Mary eventually moved to an old people's home in Croydon, where Mary died. Their friend Colonel Mike Dudding, a stalwart of All Saints Church, came with me to her funeral.

Tony Sursham and I met Leslie at Bunny Austin's funeral; Tony took him back to his home on our way back.

Tom Bigland and Wirral Relatives and Friends

Tom Bigland, Margo's eldest brother, was my senior by one year. I followed him through school at St Fillan's, Heswall, The Leas, Hoylake, and the same house Ridgemount at Shrewsbury. He and his younger brother Ernest were distinguished members of Royal Chester Rowing Club, reaching the final of the Goblets (pair oars) at Henley Royal Regatta three times and being elected

members of the Leander Club. I, as a member of Mersey Rowing Club, used to row against them.

In 1939 Tom married a Wirral girl, **Rosalind Castle**, and they made a home in Hallow Wood Cottage for the rest of their lives. In 1948 I took Rosalind to see Margo and Andrew in the Liverpool Maternity Hospital and afterwards to tea in the Sandon Studios, a club for artists and art lovers. We had a great respect for Rosalind, but we had little in common. She disliked the Hut on the Dee, where we often spent time with Tom and their sons, **Tim** and **Guy**.

Rosalind died of cancer in 1985, leaving Tom considerably disabled by a stroke, from which he had recovered largely by his own courageous efforts. **Betty Holloway**, a big-hearted Irish woman who had worked for them earlier, became his housekeeper, living out, but prepared to stay overnight in an emergency. She was fully backed by **Hilary Hines**, who lived a quarter of a mile away and came in daily to help. **Edgar Cottrell**, whose father had worked for my great-uncle Arthur Bulley at Ness Gardens, worked in the garden and called in each evening to make sure that all was well. This fine team enabled Tom to live out his days in his own home in comparative comfort.

As a girl, Margo had been devoted to Tom and backed him fully, if sometimes rebelliously, over the big parties which he liked to give. From now on we visited him two or three times a year. If Betty went on holiday, she would leave the fridge well stocked and a list of suggested menus. If she were there, Tom would often give a big party for us to meet relatives and old friends. Among the relatives were cousins: **Isabel Williams** (née Hannay), her two sons **Nico and Peter Williams** and their wives, and her sister **Mary Garrod**; **Doe Hannay** who, with her late husband **Tom**, had let us use their house as a base to take off for our honeymoon; **Isabel Brotherston** (née Hannay); and **Gertrude Smith**, a Chester City Councillor, and her husband. Friends included: **Duncan** (Tom's doctor) and **Olive Macdonald**. **Roger** (working with Tom in the wine trade and a keen member of Royal Chester) and **Anne Buckley**; **Sir Derek** and **Christine Bibby**, near neighbours who have become close friends; **Griselda** (daughter of our Heswall family GP, Dr Carlisle) and **Keith Rawlinson** (a surgeon).

I used the opportunity to build a friendship in Heswall with **Guy Kirkus**, whom I had only once met when I was best man at his brother Colin's wedding in 1940.

At one time our commitment to Moral Re-Armament had been a barrier between us and Tom. This changed when in 1967 he read with appreciation the story of Helen Bigland which Margo had published privately for their mother's seven grandchildren who never knew her.

When, twenty-one years later, I published privately *The Biglands of Cheshire* for her eleven great-grandchildren, Tom sent out leaflets about it with all his Christmas cards. In it I had written briefly about his distinguished war record: a DSO at Tobruk, liaison officer in Normandy between Monty and Bradley, an MBE and an American Legion of Merit.

Nellie Bennett had been the Biglands' parlour-maid until she left to get married. They had lost touch with her, though she was still living in Cheshire. In the Heswall bookshop one day, she saw and bought a copy of my book, *The Biglands of Cheshire*. She looked up "Bigland" in the phone directory, took a bus to Parkgate and called on Mary Bigland, Ernest's widow, who gave her our address. From then on, Margo and I would either visit her in her comfortable bungalow or bring her to one of Tom's parties.

Rosalind had kept the letters which Tom had written her between 1941 and 1945. He invited me to help him put his manuscript into readable form, which I did with great enjoyment. He had asked one of his fellow officers in the Desert whom I had known at Sandhurst to write a Foreword. **General Sir John Gibbon** invited me to lunch at his club to go through this with him. *Bigland's War* was launched at Hadlow Wood Cottage on Tom's 80th birthday in June 1990. With the help of his splendid domestic team, he gave enormous lunch parties two days running, the first for military organisations, the media, etc., the second for relatives and friends. Entrance to a marquee in the garden was through the garage which had been turned into a bookshop. Among the guests were his cousin by marriage, **Lord Leverhulme**, Lord Lieutenant of the County, and an American General with whom he had served. Sadly, Margo had not been fit to travel with me for the great occasion.

Tom died in November 1997. For the past few weeks he had been almost totally incapacitated and had been wonderfully cared for by his domestic team and a team of nurses.

Andrew flew over from Geneva to drive us to the funeral. We stayed with Sir Derek and Lady (Christine) Bibby.

Rather than a black tie, I chose to wear in memory of my mother-in-law a Hannay tartan tie, which Andrew and Eliane had bought for me in Scotland.

At the service in Burton Village Church, Tom's younger son Guy paid an excellent tribute to his father. The fact that he had to struggle to control his emotions endeared him to the congregation and introduced a strong note of reality. Andrew commented, "In the heart of every Englishman is an Italian longing to burst out".

On 19 December 1999, most of the Wirral relatives and friends whom I have mentioned were with us when we buried Margo's ashes at St Peter's Church, Heswall, and came to lunch with us in the Hotel Victoria afterwards.

Geoff Milburn

In 1985 The Climbers' Club celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of the opening of "Helyg", the now luxurious club hut on the A5 halfway between Capel Curig and Ogwen, where I had stayed on over fifty occasions. It had once been described by George Borrow in his *Wild Wales* as a "wretched hovel" (1). Geoff Milburn, Honorary Editor of the Climbers' Club Journal and of a number of the Club Guidebooks and an outstanding rock-climber, undertook to compile a book to celebrate the occasion and enlisted my help.

I provided two short paragraphs of text and identified an anonymous photo taken by John Buzzard as being my Swiss friend Max Wirth and myself on Crib Goch. Geoff also republished an old photo of mine (2).

Early one Sunday morning at Helyg I had gone out onto the main road and saw an elephant coming towards me. I dashed back into the hut to collect my camera and to tell the others, who merely jeered, "A pink one!" The photo which I took of it with the Hut and Tryfan in the background was published in the Climbers' Club Journal, paired with one of a climber on the Helyg boulder, taken so as to appear as if there were an enormous drop below, the pair captioned, "Unusual Aspects of the Familiar". It was later published in *The Countryman*, paired with one of a rock plant under the caption, "Fauna and Flora of Wales".

Margo and I arranged to meet Geoff and his wife Wendy at Tirley Garth in Cheshire and introduce them to Heaton Cooper.

(1) George Borrow: *Wild Wales*, (Collins), p.161.

(2) Geoff Milburn: *Helyg*, (Climbers' Club, 1985), p.102.

Jim Perrin

I have to my great surprise become something of a historic monument in the Climbers' Club. My relationship with Colin Kirkus and Menlove Edwards has earned me friendships with their biographers.

Jim Perrin started visiting us in Carson Road and recording my memories of Menlove Edwards. Feeling uneasy about certain aspects of his book (1), I consulted Geoff Milburn. Jim invited me to stay for a weekend in Buxton with him and his wife and asked Geoff to join us on the Sunday. Meanwhile I had been in correspondence with Menlove's older brother, the Rev. Stephen Edwards, and was ready to withdraw my objections. On the Sunday Jim and Geoff took me on a very long walk in the Peak District looking at, but not tackling, some of their favourite rock-climbs. We also visited a cleft in the rocks once used by dissenters to hold illegal services. I found it marked on my old map of Cheshire as "The chamber in the forest". Aged 74, I was very unfit at the time and was totally exhausted. Over supper, I was violently sick, slept for an hour, ate a good supper on my own and stayed up till midnight in fascinating conversation with Jim and his wife.

Jim's book won him the Boardman-Tasker Award for Mountain Literature for 1985 and he was kind enough to invite me to the celebration in the Alpine Club, where I was delighted to meet Chris Bonington and Jack Longland, who had once taken me climbing when we were both living in Durham.

Jim presented me with a signed copy of his splendid illustrated book of essays, *On and Off the Rocks* (2). Especially delightful is a picture of his young son William walking on Llanbedr Hill.

Jim visited us again with his recorder when he was working on a series for Radio 4 on *Inner Journeys – Outward Shows*: Gino Watkins, Eric Shipton and Menlove Edwards.

(1) Jim Perrin: *Menlove – the Life of John Menlove Edwards*, (Gollancz, 1985).

(2) Jim Perrin: *On and Off the Rocks*, (Gollancz, 1986).

Steve and Janet Dean

When he was writing his biography of Colin Kirkus (1), Steve Dean and his wife Janet visited us a number of times on a Sunday. Janet's mother lived near us and they would also visit her.

To Steve I owe the renewal of two friendships of 50 years previously. He put me in touch again with Colin's widow, Eileen Greenwood, and with his youngest brother Guy, whom I had only seen at Colin's wedding in 1940. Guy, too, was a fine climber and in July 1934 had pioneered a new route up the right wall of Twll Du ("The Devil's Kitchen"). He was also a distinguished Marathon runner and has published poems, one of which, written in memory of Colin and entitled *Hands of a Climber*, provided Steve with the title of his book.

I was at a dinner of the Climbers' Club when Steve was the guest of honour and Guy read his poem on Colin and two others.

Steve is an excellent climber and has built a climbing wall on the side of his house in Darley Abbey, Derbyshire.

(1) Steve Dean: *Hands of a Climber – A Life of Colin Kirkus*, (The Ernest Press, 1993).

Tony Giffard, Earl of Halsbury

Watching on BBC2 *The Week in the Lords*, a favourite programme which has sadly disappeared, I recognised the Earl of Halsbury, an enthusiastic climber and music lover, whom I used to meet at Helyg and who had come to a musical evening in our home in Heswall. I wrote to renew our friendship and to ask, on Steve Dean's behalf, if he had ever climbed with Colin Kirkus. He sent Steve a few paragraphs in which he wrote, "Colin wasn't an intellectual like Menlove, just a very nice friend and companion, and a beautiful mover on rock ... I wasn't of course anywhere near to being in Colin's class as a climber and it was characteristically kind of him to take me along with him 'duo'. I enjoyed climbing with him enormously" (1).

"Tony" Halsbury invited me to lunch and to hear him speak in the House of Lords, where he was the "Leader of the Cross-Benchers". We remembered

with amusement the days when I supported the Nazis, he the Communists, flying a hammer and sickle flag on his red sports car.

Browsing through Tom Bigland's photograph albums, I came across a picture of the Centenary Dinner of the Royal Chester Rowing Club in 1938. Tony, then Viscount Tiverton, was the guest of honour, sitting between Bob Bigland as President and Tom as Captain of the Club. Tom told me that he had made a very witty speech and encouraged me to invite him to the Sesqui-Centenary Dinner, which was being planned. He accepted readily.

We drove to the Wirral and stayed two nights in a country hotel. On the Saturday morning I took him to Ness Gardens. When I mentioned that I was a great-nephew of the founder, Arthur Bulley, we were admitted free of charge. We each bought plants to take home.

The guest of honour at the dinner was Lord Leverhulme, Tom and Margo's cousin by marriage, with whom Tony had worked at Lever Brothers. Tony amazed and delighted Club members by being the only person to remember the words and tune of *The Boatmen of the Dee*, a song specially written for the centenary fifty years previously.

Gloria Hooper brought Tony to lunch with us one day in her official car and he invited us to lunch in the Lords.

(1) Steve Dean: *Hands of a Climber – A Life of Colin Kirkus*, (The Ernest Press, 1993), pp.208-9.

Rod and Gwen Hewing

A request from Rod Hewing, Chairman of the Huts sub-committee of the Climbers' Club, for old climbing equipment to be displayed in Helyg reminded us that vegetating in our cellar was a pair of climbing boots, nailed in the style of the time with clinkers, hobnails and tricounis, and made to measure in 1939 by Robert Lawrie, an expert in Alpine equipment. I had given them to Margo as an engagement present before I had given her a ring.

Rod was delighted with these and invited me to stay a couple of nights with him and his wife Gwen in their home in Nottingham and drive with them to the Club's Annual General Meeting and Dinner in Llanberis, where we stayed two nights in a hotel.

On the Saturday morning we drove to Helyg and Gwen and I walked along the old road towards Tryfan and back. I have already told how Rod arranged for me to meet at Helyg my old friend A. B. Hargreaves, who had sponsored my membership of the Club in 1929. An ex-President, he was approaching his 90th birthday, almost blind and walking only with the help of two sticks.

I also met a number of young climbers, who use all sorts of safety precautions which were unknown in our day and were eager to ask me about climbing in the '30s. I told them that I had three claims to fame: the first, my friendships with Colin and Menlove, was entirely fortuitous; the second, Menlove's historic layback of the Flake Crack, was caused by my failure as his second; and the third, making the third ascent of Mickledore Grooves solo, was a one-off feat when I was at the top of my form, which had cut me off from my family. I would prefer to be remembered as a man who had inherited from his parents a love of mountains, who had passed it on to his two sons and to numerous Sandhurst cadets, and who had had the good fortune to count a number of outstanding climbers among his close friends.

The dinner was the one in which Steve Dean and Guy Kirkus were speakers. Afterwards, AB was helped onto a chair to make a brief and witty impromptu speech.

On the Sunday morning we paid a brief call at Ynys Ettws, the Club hut in the Llanberis Pass, before returning to Nottingham.

The Krieg Family

At a conference in Caux in the summer of 1983 I was invited by my German friend Heinz Krieg to take part in a play which he had written and which his sister, Hannelore, was to direct. The setting of *Der Zug* was an international train, in three separate compartments of which reconciliation occurred between occupants with strongly clashing points of view.

One scene dealt with the issue of abortion. Before rehearsals started, I told Heinz, his wife Gisela, and Hannelore how, as a student, I had lied to my mother to get the money for a girlfriend to pay for an abortion. I had later been honest with my mother, but had carried a deep personal sense of guilt that I had agreed to have our child aborted and had never been able to put right

what I had done to the girl. Talking honestly about it freed me from a nightmare that had haunted me.

When rehearsals started, I found myself unable to identify with my part, which was that of a former RAF pilot who had taken part in the raid on Dresden and was confronted with a German girl, whose grandmother had survived the raid and had been left with a deep hatred of all Brits and Americans.

Hannelore, a woman of deep sensitivity and penetration, invited Margo and me to meet her and Heinz over lunch. I talked freely about the past, starting with the death of my father, and spoke of the burden of guilt that I still carried over the suicide of two of my four brothers, each of whom I had failed in his hour of need. I left the table with new hope and by the next morning had experienced a sense of forgiveness and freedom which has increased over the years.

Coming from ten different nations, we amateur actors did not always find it easy to get on with each other but, thanks to the atmosphere created by the Kriegs, we experienced reconciliations between Austrian and Italian, German and Briton, American and German, German and Swiss.

Through these experiences I found a deeper love for Margo and a new level of care for those against whom I had once reacted out of stupid personal prejudice. I lost my fear of what others might think of me and my shyness with women.

The friendship with the Kriegs has lasted over the years and at later Caux conferences Margo took part in art seminars headed by Heinz, himself an art teacher.

Heinz, once a Nazi, served in the German Army on the Russian front. He and Gisela have worked tirelessly in Berlin to promote reconciliation between East and West. Their son Hanno has created a remarkable video film on his father's and aunt's experiences, the English version of which is entitled, *Life Was Suddenly More Beautiful*.

Ellen Riffenburgh-Steck

Ellen Steck, the girl with whom I acted in the Kriegs' play, had recently graduated in German at Berkeley, California, where she had been a member of the prestigious surfboard team. Her mother was Chinese-American, and

Japanese had been her first language. Her father, a Swiss-German journalist, was dying in a Swiss hospital. She had come to visit him, but he had been unable to recognise her. Her Swiss godmother had invited her to Caux and had recommended her to the Kriegs for the play.

On the first morning of rehearsals, she and I were sent off to practise our parts together. She was young enough to be my granddaughter, but I fell like a teenager head over heels in love with her. I told Margo, who laughed and said, "I'm not in the least surprised. She's a very attractive girl and it's just the sort of thing a silly old fool like you would go and do". I invited her to meet Margo, Andrew and Eliane over coffee, and from that moment on she became for Margo and me the first of several honorary granddaughters.

She qualified as an air hostess, flying usually between San Diego and Tokyo, using her Japanese. On the rare occasions when she flew to London, using her German, she visited us. We had a surprise visit from her one Christmas. We were expecting an elderly widower to lunch, the last person I would have invited to meet her. To our amazement, they thoroughly enjoyed each other's company.

We have none of us yet met her husband, Scott Riffenburgh, and their two children, Alex and Jasmine.

Six days before Margo died, our phone rang at 2 am. Peter writes, "We've moved it into our room so as to give Dad an undisturbed night's sleep. It's Ellen from California ... who's been a wonderful friend to Mum and Dad, a daughter to them. I've never met her, but I know how important she is to them. She weeps and weeps, but, like Andrew, she's so real, so present. I don't wake Dad, but I tell her we'll keep her informed of what's happening".

A few evenings later Ellen phoned me in floods of tears. She was finding it hard to understand why we were not fighting to keep Margo alive. It took her some time to realise the rightness of letting her go as we did.

We talked on the phone on her birthday in July 2000. A knee injury from air turbulence had caused her to give up her job, but she sounded happy that Scott was doing well as the sole breadwinner and that she could spend more time with the children. She is considering taking up elementary school teaching.

Una Gray and her Family

Taking part in a crowd scene in *Der Zug* was Una Gray. She had had a distinguished war record as a "Wren" and had married a naval doctor who, after the war, started a practice in Birmingham. Widowed, she was still living in the building alongside the practice. Her father and mother had been active in the Oxford Group. He had started a family packaging business in Cardiff, which their only son Patrick was running; Una herself was on the board.

Kind friends thought that both Una and Margo needed a break from the conference and arranged for them to stay for a few days together in a flat near the lake. Not knowing each other, they both set off most unwillingly, but by the end of the first evening had become friends for life.

On two later occasions we drove out to Caux together, Una sharing the driving with me. We also stayed with her frequently, at first in Birmingham and later in Cardiff, after she had moved into the house in Llandaff which had been her childhood home.

We were staying with Una in Birmingham when Vera Dennison died in Coventry. As I was starting a cold, we decided not to accompany Una to the funeral. During the morning Patrick arrived from Cardiff unexpected. He decided to risk catching my cold and stayed for lunch. We at once became friends. On later visits to Cardiff, meals with Patrick, his wife Mary and their sons, James, David and Matthew, have been a highlight of our time together.

I have already mentioned our links with Glenys Phillips in Penarth. Outstanding among Una's many interesting friends are Idrees and Lorraine Khan, a Pakistani Muslim and a Welsh Catholic. They were married in Pakistan after she had fully won the confidence of his parents. They are doing much to promote inter-faith unity.

We had an outstandingly good time with Una at the 1995 Caux summer conference. At the opening meeting she spoke on "Set-aside", the farming policy of leaving certain fields fallow for political and economic reasons: "We modern Grannies driving our fast cars in the fast lane on every motorway! Our minds are active and full of opinions on every subject – politics, religion, modern morality and so on. Our hands turn to meet people's needs. Our feet go the extra mile. We may not be so disciplined and our tongues and memory do not always find the words, so at what point are we to be 'set aside' and what happens when we are? Do we begin to flourish? Does our 'field' become lovely? Do people seek rare flowers in our corner of God's

'set-aside'? Perhaps if there were time to step aside we should find out about God's plan for what is set aside".

The assembly was divided into a number of "Communities" of about a dozen each to cover the domestic work and hold informal discussions. In the community to which Una Gray, Margo and I were allotted, were a young girl who had been appointed leader, her younger sister and two young men, all from Bosnia, one of whom, Zvonimir Cronogorac, was a soldier on leave. Over the first few days he could think of nothing but his comrades and the situation he had left behind. An elderly French lady was almost equally preoccupied with her sorrow at the death of French soldiers of the UN peace-keeping force.

As assistant to our leader, I realised that the situation in Bosnia should naturally take priority and spent a frustrating day or two trying to prevent any non-Bosnians, including Margo and Una, from talking too much. Change began when I apologised for my schoolmasterly control and left the way open for the Spirit to operate. When Zvonimir expressed his sympathy with the French lady, we began to find unity.

At the final plenary meeting, he spoke "for those in the front line, who can't speak to you", of the "forgiveness without barriers that springs from love". He had lost close friends, but he went on, "We must not hate and imitate the hate of others; revenge is against God". When Margo was called to speak, he helped her onto the platform and stood beside her, holding her arm. Afterwards, Eliane and another lady arranged to drive our community up to the Col de Jaman to enjoy the view and take photographs.

Una spent a long time that evening searching the buildings in vain to say goodbye to Zvonimir. She then walked down to the terrace overlooking the lake, found him surrounded by young friends sitting on the ground and joined them in a "Hail, Mary" with him. Shortly before midnight he left by car. About 50 people who had stayed up to see him off surrounded the car and said the Lord's Prayer, each in his or her own language. When the fighting in Bosnia ended we received a grateful letter from him.

In the summer of 2000, Una suffered a severe stroke, from which she has made a remarkable recovery.

Dutch Friends

My views on pacifism have changed fundamentally over the years. One morning at breakfast at Tirley Garth, I listened to two young Dutch women, **Christa Meijer** and **Johanna de Boer**, express sympathy with the British women demonstrating against the installation of American Cruise missiles on Greenham Common. I felt very angry. Later, I saw that I needed to fight not against these women about peace but alongside them for peace. On that basis we became friends and they invited Margo and me to speak at a Dutch national conference on the subject of peace.

We stayed a few days with them at the MRA centre in Wassenaar preparing for the conference and seeing friends. Christa took us to visit her parents on the island of Zeeland, crossing on the way the longest bridge in Europe. We took the train to Rotterdam to spend a day with Johanna's mother, **Rik de Boer**, who took us to see the interior of one of the numerous windmills. We also saw the tulip fields at their best.

Andrew and Eliane drove me from Geneva to the wedding of Christa Meijer and **Thomas Bräckle** in the South of Germany. At the reception we encouraged the guests to join in a three-part round in Dutch. They now live in Berlin. Johanna is married to **Antoine Jaulmes** in France. Both couples with their families contribute greatly to the unity of Europe and to the Caux conferences.

Among our other Dutch friends are **Dick and Agathe van Tetterode**, who have twice acted as our hosts in Wassenaar. Dick is a doctor and, while treating Margo at Caux for one of her undiagnosed intestinal pains, first discovered that she had a faulty heart.

During our time in Germany we were invited to stay in Wassenaar with **Major-General Unku "Bruno" Nasaruddin**, the Malaysian Ambassador to the Netherlands, and his French wife **Ramona**. They very much enjoyed a tea at the MRA centre with our Dutch friends.

Friends in Massachusetts

Since the first in 1979 of our numerous visits to Peter and Annie in Massachusetts, many of their academic colleagues have become our good friends.

On our very first evening, I was sitting on the patio outside Peter's apartment in Paradise Road, Northampton, and was greeted warmly as Peter's

Dad by a huge black man, who sat down beside me and chatted for an hour. I could not remember when I had had the leisure to chat for so long; it marked the beginning of a new era for me. **Walter Morris-Hale** was Peter's neighbour and had befriended him on his arrival. A distinguished Professor of Government, he had the reputation of being the best dressed and the most demanding teacher at Smith. He was fascinated by Margo and would drop in on us at any hour of the day or night, sitting on her bed beside her without any hesitation. On a visit to North Leverett, when he had not seen her for some time, he picked her up and twirled her around in a huge bear-hug, temporarily damaging one of her ribs. On the one occasion when Andrew and Eliane were with us, Walter entertained us all to a Sunday "brunch" in a Northampton restaurant.

Annie and Peter's closest friends have been **Susie Lowenstein** and **Peter Kitchell**. He was an Amherst architect, known for pioneer work in solar heating and author of a fine plan for an underground car park and pedestrian precinct. She is a professional pianist. We all shared a love of gardening, music and canoeing. They often included me in concerts and recitals and we all canoed one fall evening on Wicketts Pond, admiring the work of beavers, the fantastic foliage and a cloudy sky which Peter K described as "outrageous".

The two Peters competed fiercely at rackets and croquet. Peter and Susie were the only witnesses at Peter and Annie's wedding in Amherst. Shortly afterwards they invited us to lunch in a restaurant in Covent Garden and moved us deeply with their account of the wedding. We celebrated one Christmas with them in North Leverett and in Amherst.

On a visit in September 1999, four months after Margo died, Peter and I joined Peter K, his son "Kit" and grandchildren Sonia and Max for a canoe trip down the Connecticut. I was deeply impressed by Sonia's sensitivity; she clearly realised something of the loss from which I was suffering. At a farewell supper party in Montague, I had Peter K beside me, little realising that it would be our last time together; he was killed in a motor accident a few weeks later.

On my most recent visit in July-August 2000, I sensed that the loss of our partners had drawn Susie and me closer together. In November she visited me at the end of a tour of relatives and friends in Copenhagen, Amsterdam, the South of France, Brussels and London. She arrived triumphant, having taken two buses, changing in Brixton. We had a lively lunch at the Café

Rouge with Edie Campbell and Jack Lynch, whom she had arranged to take to Emily Dickinson's home in Amherst when they were working on Edie's play.

On Thursday 23 November 2000, I woke thanking God for all my American friends. After Peter and Annie had phoned me from North Leverett, I phoned Susie in Amherst to wish her a Happy Thanksgiving.

Other close friends are **Dan Warner**, Professor of Musical Composition at Amherst College. And **Mary Russo**, Dean of Humanities at Hampshire College, who live with an adopted daughter in Leverett. Dan often joins Peter and me for walks; we talk music enthusiastically. We have recordings of his 1st Symphony (1989) and of a beautiful setting of Psalm 121, composed for Mary's father's memorial service. During my visit in September 1999, they came to supper with us together with Peter K and Susie. I played them the recording of Will Reed's *The Top Flat* and they greatly appreciated the movement labelled "Margo".

Klemens von Klemperer and I first met in 1945 in Frankfurt, when we were both Captains in the Enemy Documents Unit. He and his wife **Betty** have recently retired, he as Professor of History, she as Professor of English at Smith College. He has given me a copy of his book on the German Resistance against Hitler, in which he gives an account of Philippe and H  l  ne Mottu's friendship with Adam von Trott zu Stolz (1). We once attended a fascinating informal talk by Betty on her wartime experiences in US Naval Intelligence. In August 2000 they joined us in North Leverett for a long evening together, when we really got to know each other.

Nina Payne, Professor of English and of Creative Writing at Hampshire College, has been fighting a courageous battle against cancer for many years. A widow, she has often had us to meals in her home in Amherst. She specialises in textile art and one of her works is on display in the North Leverett kitchen. Like Peter, she also specialises in book art.

June Farmer, a retired teacher and widow, lives next door to Susie Lowenstein. As lovers of music we meet at concerts. Most recently we became close friends, sitting next to each other at a splendid Mark Morris Dance Festival at Jacob's Pillow in Becket, Massachusetts.

Matthew Rowlinson, who teaches English at Dartmouth and is an expert on Tennyson, has climbed with us in the White Mountains of New Hampshire and in the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Nancy Vickers, President of Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, where Katharine Hepburn graduated in 1900, has recently co-edited a book with Peter and one of his former students (2). We have met her on a number of occasions in North Leverett, Philadelphia and London. When Peter and Annie were staying with us, she came on a drive round Sussex, visiting the historic port of Bosham.

(1) Klemens von Klemperer: *German Resistance Against Hitler*, (Clarendon Press, 1992), p.425n.

(2) Jeffrey Mastewn, Nancy Vickers and Peter Stallybrass: *Language Machines: Technologies of Literacy and Cultural Production*, (Routledge, 1998).

Friends in Philadelphia

Peter and Annie have a fine house in Pine Street, Philadelphia, where we have made friends with other colleagues.

Closest of all is **Margreta de Grazia**, who co-edited a book with Peter and another colleague (1). She twice managed to find her way to Carson Road when train services were suspended. We visited her in her home in Philadelphia and met her then teenage son Austin. She preceded Peter for a year in looking after U Penn students at London University. She invited us, including Andrew, to meet her friends and relatives in her fine home in Weymouth Mews. During our last days in Washington, when Margo was recovering from pneumonia, she came by train from Philadelphia to have supper with us. Her frequent phone calls are a joy.

To Margreta we owe our friendship with the travel writer and novelist **Colin Thubron**. On our way back from a visit to Robin with Peter and Annie in April 1998, Margreta invited us to lunch with Colin in a lovely house in Sussex. He was writing his latest book, about a journey through Siberia, in the course of which he had visited the former home in Transbaikalia of my great-grandfather, the Rev. Edward Stallybrass (2).

With considerable difficulty Margreta persuaded him to read from his manuscript his description of our ancestor's work, which moved me to tears.

Colin, who had been afraid that I might disapprove, hugged me. I later heard him lecture about it at the Royal Geographical Society.

Since then I have greatly enjoyed reading several of his travel books and novels. Colin joined us for Peter's 50th birthday party at Gravetye Manor, and I sat next to him at Peter's Sam Wanamaker Lecture at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

In September 2000, Margreta and Peter gave a joint lecture on Hamlet at a Shakespeare conference in St Catherine's College, Oxford. With Colin, we had a delightful foursome, visiting my brother Andrew's memorial in New College and having a champagne supper together.

John Richetti is Chair of the English Department and is a Gilbert and Sullivan fan. We surprised the company at a dinner party by singing together the Sentry's song from *Iolanthe*. I later presented him with a family copy of *Songs of Two Savoyards*.

At the same dinner party we first met **Don and Phyllis Rackin**. She is a colleague of Peter's. He retired recently as Professor of English at Temple University. An expert on Lewis Carroll, he was interested to know how my mother staged and costumed her productions of scenes from *Alice*. He later presented me with a copy of his book on *Alice* (3). We visited them once in their home in Philadelphia. They have a holiday home on Prince Edward island, where Peter and Annie visit them.

Maureen Quilligan has co-edited a book with Margreta and Peter (1). Her husband, **Michael Malone**, is a successful novelist and was head writer of the ABC Television "soap opera" *One Life to Live*. Peter introduced him to his Uncle Tom Bigland at Henley Royal Regatta; he described the scene in his novel *Foolscap*: "... so many blue-eyed, pink-faced, well-off, well-dressed drunk people together in one soggy field ... so many grown men in bright pink beanies, pink ties, and pink socks, standing among so many pink balloons, pink flowers, and pink bunting in a pink tent. Pink was the Leander Club color, and they took it seriously" (4).

Michael and Maureen invited us to a wonderful party in their penthouse in Philadelphia's main square with a great view of the city to see in the New Year 1997. Having heard a rumour on the grape vine that Margo was fed up with the Stallybrasses, they pulled her leg by inscribing her place label "Ms Bigland".

They happened to be in London at the time of Margo's death and delighted us by considering themselves sufficiently "family" to come to the cremation in the morning and to the family lunch in our garden.

- (1) Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass (ed): *Subject and Object of Renaissance Culture*, (Cambridge UP, 1996).
- (2) Colin Thubron: *In Siberia*, (Chatto & Windus, 1999), pp.197-9.
- (3) Donald Rackin: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-glass – Nonsense and Meaning*, (Twayne's Masterwork Series, 1991).
- (4) Michael Malone: *Foolscap*, (Little, Brown, 1991), pp.232 & 236.

David and Patricia Baber and James Petley

In July 1992, as part of the celebrations for Margo's 80th birthday, we drove to Glenfeochan Lodge near Oban. Peter and Annie had flown over specially and had invited us to spend two nights there with them. Our hosts, David and Patricia Baber, received only six guests at a time; she cooked the most delicious meals, which they served together with the artistry of a ballet. Her son, James Petley, ran a superb garden, providing all the fruit and vegetables needed, and brought in fish from the loch. They created such a delightful family atmosphere that we all hugged them when we left and became friends for life.

In September 1995, the six of us spent two nights with them again on our way to Skye and, with Peter and Annie, another night on the way back.

For several years Margo and I ordered from them Christmas gifts of smoked salmon for our friends, but in 1997 they moved to a big estate in Castillonnes, some miles to the south-east of Bordeaux, where they operate on similar lines.

"Trisha" and I still correspond. "Jamie" has created a super kitchen garden but, sadly, they lost most of their roof and about thirty trees in a storm in December 1999, which caused them all extra work for months.

We are all sorry not to have visited them with Margo, but hope one day to do so.

Dulwich Friends

We moved from Ascot to 35 Carson Road, West Dulwich, in August 1982. We had obtained permission to start work in the garden before signing the contract. On our very first day our neighbours at No.33, **Alan and Audrey Taylor**, invited us to tea in their garden. Audrey had lived in the house since she was six years old and had survived the war, during which No.42, diagonally opposite, had been destroyed by a direct bomb hit. It is the only house in the road to be rebuilt in a totally different style.

We learned that they had a mentally handicapped adult daughter, Shirley ("Shorty"), who suffered from Down's Syndrome. She loved being in the garden, where we met her. She was a friendly girl and, although she was unable to talk, her family could communicate with her.

Alan had retired from work with a large engineering firm and was a keen gardener. Their splendid Bramley, which he pruned from a ladder, has provided us every year with fine apples on our side of the fence. We also owe him our fine Albertine rose, grown from a cutting which he gave us.

We met many of their friends and relatives, including two elder daughters, Judith, a married doctor practising in America, and Christine, a schoolteacher living in Carshalton, Surrey, at a party to celebrate their golden Wedding in 1989.

Sadly, in 1993, after a short illness, Alan died peacefully at home, and only a year later "Shorty" died in King's College Hospital. This left Audrey very much alone, but she has had wonderful help from Christine and also from Judith and her family. We all have frequent chats over the fence.

At a Carson Road Millennium Supper in the crypt of All Saints, I headed a table with Audrey and Christine on my right and two small boys, fairly recent arrivals in the road, on my left.

Directly opposite us at No.46 live **Guy and Susan Robinson** with their sons, Thomas and Philip. On first meeting them, we discovered that they had sung in a choir with Oliver and knew Gunnvor. Spotting our picture of "Ga Biggie" with his three sons in a coxless four at Henley, Guy asked me how I knew the Biglands. His father, who had died recently, had been Tom's Commanding Officer in the Desert.

We also discovered that Susan is the daughter of **Brigadier John Daniell** and his wife **Phyl**, who had come to us for a meal at White Cottage to meet the Jardines, whom they had known in India.

Yvonne had helped us to plant a row of *Leylandii* along the low wall in front of the house. While we were away at Caux that summer, the Robinson family kindly undertook to water them for us. Today they form a magnificent hedge, which constantly needs cutting back.

Susan has joined in Margo's "Art Ventures". They had Tony Sursham to stay with them and discovered that he and Guy were both graduates of Trinity College, Cambridge.

They are the first people to whom I turn when in any kind of trouble. One evening I clumsily dropped the key of the locked door of the sunroom and it fell through a crack into the sunroom. The only way to retrieve it was to climb off the step-ladder through the high window and drop into the sunroom. I phoned the Robinsons, Philip came over and managed it without any difficulty.

Guy and Susan were among the four couples in our road who combined to give us a champagne lunch on our Golden Wedding day.

Susan's brother, **Patrick Daniell**, has written a fascinating book (1) on his Hampshire garden and has appeared in a TV gardening documentary.

Living in the top flat above us are **Ron Steadman and Joan Grundy**. We have little in common, but they have always been extremely helpful and sensitive to our needs, watering plants in our absence. When a drain overflowed into our basement, they helped us rescue possessions from the flood. Ron has retired from his post in charge of the refuse collection for Lambeth Borough Council. Joan has become "Nanny" to a number of young children in the road, taking them to and collecting them from school when their parents are at work.

My involvement in Neighbourhood Watch, of which I was Secretary for several years, led to many friendships in the road, which were strengthened later by Margo's "Art Ventures".

The founder and first Chair of our Neighbourhood Watch was **Anne-Marie Braun**, who stood once as an SDP candidate for Parliament. She and her husband, **Christopher**, a senior Civil Servant, gave me generous

hospitality at No.30 at times when Margo was in hospital. It was in their home that our Golden Wedding lunch was held. For the occasion Anne-Marie had made a superb pen-and-ink drawing of a couple on a rocky summit with a flag labelled "50". It is one of a number of artistic efforts by Margo and her friends on display in our spare bedroom.

Anne-Marie came to both of Margo's "Art Ventures". At the second she painted a colourful picture of the party at work, which we had photocopied and distributed with Margo's report.

Of their three children now of University age, Henry, Helena and Susan, it is Susan that we have got to know best, as she was the only one at home at the time of Margo's death. She and Anne-Marie visited Margo in hospital on Easter Monday. A fortnight later, Anne-Marie was the last friend to visit her. I had been afraid that Margo was too far gone to respond, but she rallied well and was glad to see such a faithful friend.

Knowing that she would be away for the Thanksgiving service, Anne-Marie came to mourn with us two days earlier. Susan alone courageously represented the family on May Day.

Since then, they have had me for Sunday lunches to meet Christopher's German mother, who is very much "all there" in her 90s.

I was privileged to be one of Susan's sponsors for her year in Chile between school and university, working with the charity *Aldea Infantil SOS*, helping impoverished children. It has been a joy to share through her letters something of the wonderful experience which it has been for her.

At a service at All Saints, Leslie Fox introduced me to **Mike Dudding**. A retired Colonel, he had as a Sandhurst cadet been a close friend of Asif Nawaz, who had been in one of my French classes. Mike had visited him in 1960 when they were both Captains. Mike's two sons had visited him 30 years later when he had become Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army.

When Captain Baber Khan, who had looked after us during our visit to the Pakistan Military Academy, retired from the Army and returned to Britain, Mike helped him in many ways. I was glad to have Mike's company at the funeral of Mary Fox.

Jan Dudding, a Churchwarden, invited Margo to join a small Christian fellowship group and joined her in painting. She has given us several plants,

notably a magnificent camellia, which was in full flower at the time of Margo's death.

In Margo's last weeks Jan gave us great support, visiting her frequently both at home and in hospital and giving her much appreciated massage. Of one of her visits Peter writes, "Jan had made up her own herbal cream, and she rubs it onto Mum's head and onto her feet and onto her legs. At such moments, Mum looks like a contented cat. And Jan disapproves of our work on Mum's hair that makes her look like a cross between Elvis Presley with inadequate Brylcreem and a pointy pine cone. Jan does a much better job although, with her hair plastered down, Mum now bears a marked resemblance to Marlon Brando playing a Roman soldier".

Over the past months, the Duddings have invited me to meals, sometimes with one of their two sons, to a Retreat on Horse Guards' parade and to the Induction as Canon of our former Vicar, Peter Adams, in Southwark Cathedral.

I was happy to be able to give Jan the silk scarf from St Cyr-Coëtquidan which General de Boissieu had given to Margo.

Four houses away from us at No.43 live **Sir Martin and Lady (Jane) Reid**. Martin had been a diplomat, his last posting being as High Commissioner to Jamaica. Suffering severely from Parkinson's disease, he was forced to take early retirement.

We invited them to supper to meet Yvonne, who had told us that when she and Tony were staying at Walkerswood and encouraging young Jamaicans to take up woodcraft, the High Commissioner had backed them. Martin told us that he spent much of his time painting and that he had a small group of friends joining him to paint one afternoon a week. Jane, in a full-time job, was out all day, but is a keen painter on holidays.

Margo joined them and, when she discovered that there were no other men in the group, she invited our friend John Cook at No.48 to join. John, a professional photographer, had previously limited himself to copying paintings. We had given his copy of Pissarro's painting of Dulwich College as an 80th birthday present to our friend Will Reed, an Old Alleynian. John's latent talent developed greatly.

Tony Sursham joined the group occasionally and when Martin decided to hold an exhibition in All Saints Church, Tony and John helped to mount it.

A portrait which John had painted of Martin was a key feature of the exhibition.

In July 1992, as the last part of the celebrations for Margo's 80th birthday, we joined the Reids and Tony Sursham for a week's painting course at Inniemore Lodge, Carsaig, on the south coast of Mull. Of the 15 guests, I was the only non-painter.

Peter and Annie saw us off on a steamer from Oban to Mull. There was a tricky moment when loading started. Peter had taken Margo in his hired car to do some last-minute shopping, while Annie sat with me in our car. We were facing the possibility of an incestuous wife-swap, when they reappeared just in time.

Jane Reid was keen to do some walking as well as painting. On the first day we set off along the beach westwards, aiming to see some remarkable rock formations known as Carsaig Arches, but after two and a half hours I pulled a calf muscle; the painful return took us three and a half hours, Jane having to carry the rucksack. The muscle recovered quickly, but not enough to climb Ben More, the island's one Munro, as we had hoped.

Later in the year, the principal of the painting course ran an exhibition in Edinburgh with two of each of her pupils' pictures. Both Margo's were sold.

The next year, 1993, Martin and Jane hired for a month a holiday castle, Château de Salaman, in Lincou on the Southern bank of the river Tarn and invited us to join them for a week of painting. We had a leisurely drive out and back with a night on the steamer between Southampton and Le Havre and two nights in comfortable French hotels each way. Also staying were their friends **Lorna Kingdon** and **Ralph Turvey**. Ralph, a widower, is an expert cook and a connoisseur of wines. Margo had a complete holiday from the kitchen and painted with Martin.

Martin's bedroom was in a turret. One afternoon the lock of the door jammed, making it impossible to come out or go in. It was some hours before we could find a locksmith capable of releasing him. Meanwhile he had found a long piece of string which he lowered through the window for food to be tied on and pulled up.

The Reids have invited us to several family occasions, including the wedding of their youngest daughter Alice in the British Empire Chapel of St Paul's with the reception in Westminster School.

Martin came to both Margo's "Art Ventures" and on both occasions Jane provided supper one evening for us all, despite having been out at work all day. Although she finds it difficult to cope with ill health, she visited Margo in KCH during her last week.

Of the Thanksgiving service on May Day, Andrew writes, "I had chosen to read the Emmaus story (Luke 24), so it is fitting that one of Sir Martin Reid's paintings was on display at the front of the church, of the road to Emmaus text of this post-Easter season. It's a story of travel. Mum was a great traveller. And in most of her travelling, she had a sense of Jesus travelling with her on life's road. But she was also good company for others on their journeyings, and part of what people were responding to was the Christ in her, the life-force, the love-force".

The next afternoon we all went to a happy tea with the Reids in their garden. We talked about the things deepest on our hearts. Martin phoned me later to say that it had been the best time we had ever had together.

Since then, the Reids have included me in numerous happy times together.

As an extremely conservative Anglican I choose to go to services at which *The Book of Common Prayer* is still in use. This was for many years the 8 am Sunday service at All Saints. One Sunday I took grave exception to a notice in the church porch encouraging parishioners to join a protest at the House of Commons over relaxing sanctions against South Africa. An angry note to our Vicar, **Peter Adams**, received a polite reply, assuring me that he had the Bishop of Southwark's backing. I then invited him to discuss the matter over coffee. Margo wisely kept well out of the way. We each stuck firmly to our own point of view, but agreed to disagree without being disagreeable. I then invited him to come again to meet Margo.

We became good friends and on more than one occasion, when Margo was unwell, he gave us Communion in our home. We also invited him to join us with others to celebrate my 80th birthday in a restaurant in Brixton. He left shortly afterwards to become Vicar of Addington. In 1999 I was delighted to be taken to his Induction as a Canon of Southwark Cathedral.

With hindsight and especially after reading a book by my Swiss friend Paul-Emil Dentan entitled *Impossible de se taire – Des protestants suisses*

face au nazisme, I now think I was wrong to object to other Christians opposing evil policies.

It seems appropriate that the largest house in the road with the largest garden, No.5, should be occupied by **Roger and Jodie Lomax**, as they are perhaps the most hospitable couple in the road, giving huge parties on special occasions as well as intimate ones. Roger, a corporate finance adviser, spending much time abroad, and Jodie from Texas, a barrister with a Mexican background, first met as students in Boston.

We first became close friends when Jodie stopped working and was spending more time at home and at All Saints, which she supports in numerous ways. We visited them at a time when Roger's widowed mother had come to live with them. She eventually moved into the same nursing home as Paul Campbell. After her funeral at All Saints, we were at an intimate family tea together with Roger's sister and their two daughters, Catherine and Lizzie, then schoolgirls.

When an American woman curate, **Sarah Robbins-Cole**, was appointed, I broke off my connection with All Saints. Jodie invited us to meet her over lunch. Staying with Andrew and Eliane in Geneva, I had noticed how some of the women ministers in the Reformed Church were far more effective than the men. After that lunch I returned at once to All Saints and was genuinely sorry when she left to become Chaplain of King's School, Wimbledon, a post for which she was eminently suitable.

Over another lunch Jodie introduced me to **Austen and Daphne Williams**, who live in Tulsemere Road. Austen had been Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, a Chaplain to the Queen and a prominent broadcaster. Working with Toc H in Belgium, he had spent the war in a German prison camp, which had left its mark on his health, though he still takes occasional services at All Saints. Daphne had been a Sergeant-Major in the Auxiliary Territorial Service and is a lively character. Chatting after lunch, Margo and I were side by side on a sofa. I was always happy to let her do most of the talking; she always sensed if I wanted to say something and would make space for me. On this occasion she did so, but almost at once took over again. I gave her a gentle nudge, which was spotted by Daphne; "I saw that. I know. You're a battered wife, Margo".

Outstanding among the many occasions in which Roger and Jodie have included us was a visit to the musical *Oklahoma*. The Lomaxes were among

the four couples who celebrated our Golden Wedding. Roger proposed the toast, in which he said that we had been friends with three generations of his family.

In February 1997 Jodie kindly offered to hold the first of Margo's "Art Ventures" at No.5 and had Francis and Elizabeth Brown to stay. They gave them valuable support, not least in controlling the two dogs, Austin and Beaumont. The course finished on St Valentine's Day, and Jodie gave a special supper party with the house appropriately decorated with the help of Catherine and Lizzie. I proposed a toast to Roger who, coming back late from work, found his home full of people, some of whom he had never met.

During Margo's last weeks in hospital, Jodie visited her several times with flowers, sometimes with one or both daughters. On May Day they offered to hold the tea after the Thanksgiving service for about 90 people at No.5. Andrew writes, "The Lomax's house and lovely garden are the perfect place for the reception. How incredibly generous and selfless of them to welcome these unknown hordes to their house. Another touching sign of this out-of-the-ordinary community in such an ordinary-looking typical suburban street". Among the many fine photographs which Danielle took of the occasion is one of Peter and Annie sitting with Jodie, Catherine, Lizzie, Austin and Beaumont.

In September 1999, the Lomax family took a holiday in New England before dropping off Catherine, who was to start on a graduate course at the University of Michigan. They spent a night with Peter and Annie in North Leverett. While Jodie was helping Annie with the supper, Peter took Roger, Catherine and Lizzie to watch the beavers on Wickett's Pond.

Typical of Lomax hospitality is the way they give parties to welcome newcomers to the road. Through them I met an American family, **James and Wendy Hunsaker** and their son from No.26. James works with Shell and, after three years in Aberdeen, is now with their London HQ. Young James has started school at Dulwich prep. I invited them to tea and an introduction to croquet. They then invited me to a huge party in their garden, at which most of the road seemed to be represented.

John and Sylvia Cook had at one time run an antique shop in the Village. When we first arrived, their two sons were at the stage of roaring round the block on motorcycles. Both they and their father helped us with heavy jobs in the house and in the garden. We were touched that they invited

us to a party for their young friends in their parents' absence. Casper, the elder one, installed a telephone system between the front door and the hall and our bedroom, which has proved invaluable for dealing with unwanted callers.

John gave me advice and practical help on the photographs for my book, *The Biglands of Cheshire*. On two occasions he arranged maps and cover printing for illustrated accounts of our family holidays with water colours by Margo and photographs by our sons. Sylvia often included us in parties for her relatives. They have moved close to one of her sisters in Sedlescombe in East Sussex, where we visited them.

John came for one day to join in the second of Margo's "Art Ventures". We were delighted to welcome them both to Margo's cremation and to the family lunch in our garden. John also came to "Art Ventures III", which was arranged in Margo's memory.

At No.15 live **Sir David and Lady (Judy) Penry-Davey** with three children, all now adult. David is a High Court Judge and is often away sitting at Crown Courts in different parts of the country sometimes accompanied by Judy. I consider it a rare treat to have a chat with him. Judy has been a close friend for years and I often see her at the weekly Thursday 10 am Communion service.

Early in 2001, Sir David's photo appeared on the front page of *The Daily Telegraph*. He had been mugged early one morning on West Dulwich Station, but had stood up to his attackers and pursued them. He had been badly bruised, but appeared in court later that morning.

During the week in March, when we were celebrating my 90th birthday, Judy had offered to hold the Thursday Communion service in their home. Early that morning, a woman rang our bell and presented me with a spectacle case, which she had found in the road outside, marked "J. P-D". I tried to phone Judy, but her line was busy. Then came a call from the Vicar to say that she had been mugged the previous evening while bringing a meal back from a local take-away. We quickly arranged to hold the service in our home. I was glad that Andrew read the Epistle and that the others joined us for "elevenses".

Two days later, David and Judy both came to a party given by Gunnvor, appearing none the worse. The family connection appears to have been a coincidence. For Judy, the worst was to come: harassment at all times of the

day and night by the press. Some days later, her picture, too, appeared on the front page of the *Telegraph*.

A neighbour had managed to catch the number of the get-away car and Judy later gave us a graphic account of how she had picked out her attacker at an identity parade.

When my Aunt Molly died, I took on responsibility for the Weatherhead Prize for Religious Studies which she had founded at the Wallasey School in memory of my grandfather, Canon Weatherhead, who had been a School Governor. The Headmaster, Peter Johnson, noting my address, asked if I knew his cousin, **Nigel Thomas**, at 17 Carson Road. He is an ear, nose and throat specialist at King's College Hospital. I got to know his German wife, **Gerda**, well through Neighbourhood Watch. She undertakes voluntary work at KCH and helped us there in Margo's last weeks.

Sir Anthony and Lady (Pamela) Merifield at No.49 have one of the best kept front gardens in the road. It is a joy to walk past it at all seasons, especially as there is always a good chance of catching one of them for a cheerful chat. A semi-retired civil servant, who spent some key years in Ireland, Anthony was recently knighted. Like our sons and myself, he is an Old Salopian.

At No.39 lives another Old Salopian with his wife and four children. **Mark and Vivien Piercy** both work in the legal profession; he sings in the choir at All Saints. When the children were younger, we used to enjoy the happy shouts and shrieks coming from the next garden but one. We invited them all one year to see our frogs mating. Before I sold "Nissy", the Nissan Micra which Peter had given us new nine years previously, I employed their younger daughters, Olivia and Harriet, to give her a thoroughly good cleaning.

I first got to know **Jeremy Baker** walking back from Communion at All Saints on Sunday mornings. He has been Chairman of Neighbourhood Watch for many years and as a lawyer has done much excellent work on behalf of Carson Road. As Secretary, I enjoyed meetings with him and his wife, **Malgosia**, at No.27.

We are fortunate to have a family of outstanding musicians at No.38. **Timothy Hewitt-Jones** is Principal 'Cellist at the Royal Opera House; his wife **Gillian** teaches music at Dulwich Preparatory School and runs the string

section of their orchestra. Of their three sons, **Simon** and **John** play the violin and **Thomas** is an organist and composer.

To celebrate the Millennium, the Carson Road Community decided to hold on a Sunday evening in February a concert in All Saints, followed by a dinner in the crypt. Rehearsals started in October for a small choir and small orchestra, directed by Tim. He devised a programme of works from each century from the 11th till the 20th, which was represented by Thomas Hewitt-Jones's setting of Psalm 150; he was playing the organ. As a change from choral works, Simon and Tim played us a Sonata by Gabriel Fauré for Violin and Piano. For the dinner afterwards a splendid team had transformed the normally gloomy crypt into a banqueting hall with bright lights and balloons. The whole occasion was a huge success.

As an additional celebration, **Richard and Christine Coman**, who have recently come to live at No.3, the Victorian coach-house, commissioned his artist brother-in-law to make two drawings of houses in the road. These featured on porcelain mugs with the inscription "Carson Road 2000 West Dulwich". I bought thirty as Christmas presents for family and friends, especially for those from afar who had supported our "Art Ventures".

No.37 next door was a Lambeth Council house consisting of three flats; the top one is now privately owned by **Juliet Whitworth** and **Alex Taylor**. The Council tenants, though in other ways good neighbours, are quite unable to cope with their portions of the garden. The front was a disgrace to the road; at the back we were invaded by their bindweed. Thanks to Juliet and Alex, the front is now a pleasantly striking mixture of gravel and stone and the bindweed is under control. Juliet has taken on what was once my job as Neighbourhood Watch "Co-ordinator" for our part of the road.

In No.52 live a black couple, **James and Diane Addo**, both medical practitioners. He is Ghanaian by birth, which gives us a common interest, she American. We were invited by the Reids to meet them one Christmas, together with her charming father, **Probyn Aitkin**, who had flown over from New York.

At No.22 lives **Roger Cocks** who runs "The Secret Garden" in Upper Norwood. He has given us much helpful advice over our garden for many years. We had a decrepit wood and metal bench which we had inherited with White Cottage in 1948 and which we had given up repainting. When Roger

delivered a fine new wooden bench, a present from Peter, I was delighted that he took the old one away for a lady who wanted to restore it as an antique.

For the past five years **John and Margaret Brothwood** have been my closest friends. Both Doctors of Medicine, John specialised in stress and worked for a time with Esso. Entering the Church on retirement, he was Curate at St Barnabas in Dulwich Village, but was forced to give up through ill-health. We first met planning the Thanksgiving Service for Paul Campbell. Their son was suffering from cancer at the time and died shortly afterwards. Since then, they have been doing a great deal for their grandchildren, Phillipa and Geni.

Finding that they were both keen amateur painters, we invited them to join "Art Venture II".

Twice during Margo's last weeks, John came with Margaret to give us Communion in the hospital. Of the second occasion Peter writes, "Annie and I go for coffee, but when we come back, we hear a real scuffle going on behind the drawn curtains. What on earth's going on? It's been a moving occasion for them all. John has read the Nunc Dimittis: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace'. But as they kneel round Mum's bed to pray, Dad had knocked out Mum's morphine drip. So Margaret, a doctor, has to scramble round on the floor to find the tube and then reconnect it. Mum, typically, is delighted by the whole episode, the mixture of the divine and the all-too-human".

Early on the morning that Margo died, **Robert Titley**, our Vicar, and John both came to plan the services. Fortunately, they knew each other well. Andrew, Peter and I had already met Robert in the KCH Chapel and had told him what was in our minds. It was quickly agreed that John should take the Cremation and that Robert should take the Thanksgiving with John giving the address. (For the Thanksgiving Service, see Appendix "D".)

The Brothwoods came to "Art Venture III" and invited all the participants to supper in their new home in Woodward Road. Their granddaughter, Geni, aged 8, was a very sensitive hostess.

In May 2000 they took me together with their widowed daughter-in-law, Theresa, to the 10th Young Art Exhibition arranged by the Cancer Research Campaign in the Royal College of Art. 420 paintings by children between the ages of 5 and 16 from 58 London schools were shown. Among them was one

by Geni of James Allen's Preparatory School. I am happy to have a card of her work.

In November 2000 they invited me to a performance of Britten's "Noye's Fludde" at St Barnabas. The church was packed. I sat with John, his daughter Emma and Theresa; Margaret was working backstage. It was the first of three performances involving eight local schools and several hundred individuals, an orchestra of 92 and a children's animal choir of 82, wearing masks designed by Margaret and made up by a team of supporters. One granddaughter was among the 'cellists and she and her sister Phillipa had both been helping backstage. It was an amazingly colourful performance, lasting only just over an hour. I found it a wonderful family and community experience. Our local *Guardian* had a front page article on it with a colour photo of children in their masks.

After Margo's death, I started going regularly to a Thursday 10 am Communion at All Saints. The congregation rarely exceeded six. Apart from Judy Penry-Davey this brought me new friends. I had met **Jean Castledine** and **Sheila Ray**, a Churchwarden, at Margo's Thanksgiving service. I remembered seeing **Ted Ray**, Sheila's husband, assisting Peter Adams at Sunday services, and **Sheila Kemp** had often handed me a prayer book. **Doris Morgan**, a widow, and I have a link through Sue Hudd, who helps each of us with house cleaning. I also remembered Doris's husband taking the Communion service occasionally. Jean was particularly sensitive to me the first Thursday; at the words "... for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples ...", she spotted my shoulders silently heaving and put out a hand to comfort me.

Two days before Whit Sunday, All Saints Church was completely gutted by fire, caused probably by an electrical fault. The parish as a whole has risen to the challenge and work on rebuilding is going steadily ahead. On the Thursday after the fire the Communion was held in the Vicarage. Much activity was going on both there and in the ruins next door. I felt that Robert was not at peace; I offered our drawing room, which had already seen Communion services taken by Peter Adams and by John Brothwood.

This was immediately accepted. When Robert Titley is not available, the services are taken by our new curate, **Robert Shafto**, or by Austen Williams. Jean Castledine makes a point of arriving early to prepare for the service. Those who are free stay for "elevenses" and a leisurely chat. I discovered that

Robert Shafto as a boy used to spend holidays with his aunts in Wall Rake, Heswall. Just after her 95th birthday, Sheila Kemp, who had served All Saints faithfully for countless years, moved away into a nursing home.

On St Andrew's Day 2000 I phoned our elder son Andrew in Switzerland. That evening he was going to present his parish report to the Synod in Geneva. When Austen Williams suggested a "homily" for St Andrew's Day, I volunteered and spoke about three Andrews, my uncle, killed on the Somme in 1916, my brother who died in 1940, and our son.

Friends who work for us

Returning from one of our many visits abroad, we were met at the airport by a Dulwich Cars driver, **George Smith**. He talked of his two sons and of the recent death of his wife. He became our regular driver.

In March 1999 we had a visit from Ellen Riffenburgh-Steck. George met her at Heathrow and drove her back there; we paid him in advance. A few weeks later we went to visit Peter and Annie in Washington. At Heathrow, I asked George how much we owed him. He replied, "You don't owe me anything. Ellen insisted on paying me for your next trip".

On our return, Margo had already started her final illness. While I went ahead to turn off the burglar alarm, George helped her very sensitively into the house. It was the last time he saw her.

In December 1999 we celebrated Peter's birthday with a dinner and the night at Gravetye Manor. George was due to arrive at six next morning to take Andrew and Eliane to Heathrow; they were bound via Zurich for Libreville, where they were to join Eliane's sister Danielle for Christmas. He got lost in the Gravetye estate, went first to the wrong hotel where, to add to the confusion, other Stallybrasses were staying, and arrived very late. He made up for it by fast driving and extremely good route finding and got them to Heathrow just in time. He returned to Gravetye to join Peter, Annie, Hope and me for breakfast and to drive me home.

In March 2001, when I had arranged with him to meet Ruth Dallas at Gatwick, he was prevented from going, but arranged with his father-in-law to collect her. She did not even know that anything had gone wrong with the arrangement.

Bunny Kallipetis, whom Margo met in a hospital ward in 1990 and who came with us to tea with Gloria Hooper in the House of Lords, invited us to tea with her daughters in Sydenham. She then arranged for **Jane**, then a schoolgirl, to come and clean for us for some years. Bunny works in KCH and was one of Margo's most faithful visitors in her last weeks. She and Jane, now married, came to the Thanksgiving service and have since come to tea with me and brought me presents.

When Jane could no longer work for us. Leslie and Mary Fox introduced us to **Sue Hudd**, who was working for them. She and her elder daughter, **Lea**, shared the work for over a year, till Lea went to university. Sue has now been with us for nine years.

In June 1994, when Peter and Annie were staying with us, we gave a supper party for 45 guests. 15 of the families in our road were represented. Lea came to the rescue when we wanted strawberries for such numbers. Her father, who works in Covent Garden Market, provided her with all that we required. The evening was fine, we overflowed into the garden and guests were still talking in the garden in the dark.

Shortly before Margo died, our ancient washing machine gave up. Peter had a new washing and drying machine installed, and Sue taught me to use it for my own "smalls". On arrival each week, she changes any beds that need it and washes the bedclothes while she cleans the house. She takes away whatever needs ironing and brings it back the next week. She is a good friend and her visits are a highlight of the week.

Annejet Campbell introduced us to **Nick Austin**, who runs a pop group and works part-time as a gardener. We usually employ him for one full day at a time. He keeps all the front hedges under control, cuts back drastically our three thriving buddleias, weeds the beds and trims the edges of the lawn. I still manage the mowing. His greatest triumph is a topiary job on the winter jasmine around the dining room window. In a recent gale it came down on top of a lot of plants in pots. Two days later, Nick put it back single-handed; nothing seemed to have suffered. Susan Robinson said how much she enjoyed it from her bedroom window and that it was improving each year.

In the spring of 2000 I realised that all of Margo's special joys – the herb bed, the rockery, the pond and the pot plants – were totally out of control and, as I thought, needed the feminine touch. I consulted Anne-Marie Braun, who teased me mercilessly about the "feminine touch", but introduced me to

Barbara Gelhorn, who was gardening for her mother. She works in partnership with **Simon Binns**. Between them they did a splendid job. One afternoon Barbara brought me a wonderful selection of plants and Simon arrived in time to carry some heavy tubs from the patio round to the front. On another occasion I arranged for Simon to put plants into a tub by Audrey Taylor's front door. Sadly for me, Barbara, an outstanding contralto, was taken on by the Royal Shakespeare Company to tour as singer of the songs in Shakespeare's *Tempest*.

In trouble with my ancient Amstrad, I discovered in the Yellow pages a local firm called PC Wizard, who arranged for an engineer to call. He phoned to say that he was stuck in a traffic jam and would be late. **Tim Akintoye** is a huge Nigerian from Lagos. In a short time he had sorted out my problems. As he worked I told him about our three months in Lagos in 1980. He had never heard of Moral Re-Armament. When I mentioned absolute honesty, he immediately said, "I overslept this morning and blamed my wife for not waking me". At my invitation, he brought his Nigerian wife to tea with me. A few days later, they brought me a present of biscuits and chocolates.

Roy and Sheelagh Thackray

In August 1998, while Penelope Ogilvy was staying with us, her friend Roy Thackray, whom she had known as an oboist and an arranger of music for woodwind, and his wife Sheelagh came from Addington to tea. She had been a theatrical designer and mountaineer. She borrowed some of my books on climbing.

Hearing that they were both keen amateur painters, we invited them to "Art Venture II". Sheelagh summed it up: "What a festival of painting that was! It really was a memorable experience, and we enjoyed it immensely. It would be difficult to find a group of more pleasant people to be with, sharing the same interest".

In October 1998 we spent a week with Penelope Ogilvy in Winton Cottage. She and her Wind Quintet gave a recital to the inmates of the local nursing home. The most popular feature was two well-known tunes brilliantly arranged by Roy.

I was delighted to welcome Roy and Sheelagh both to the Thanksgiving and to "Art Venture III", held in Margo's memory.

The Clark Family

After a lecture at Geneva University in April 2000, Catherine Clark, an English student, asked Peter if he were related to Robin Stallybrass. Her father had been one of a number of boys at Downside who had helped Robin and Agnes in their garden on Sundays in return for a good meal. They had kept in touch with each other until Robin's death a year previously.

I gave Catherine my address and a few weeks later I had a phone call from her mother to say that she and her husband would like to take me out to lunch on a certain Sunday. Christopher and Fenella live in the little French town of Divonne-les-Bains, just across the frontier from Geneva, where they both work, he as a financial adviser, she as a teacher.

Over a first class meal in Dulwich's best restaurant in Belair Park, we exchanged memories of Robin and Agnes. Robin was a great letter-writer and for his 80th birthday I had produced for the family a selection of quotations from his letters. A copy of this I exchanged for copies of some of the letters he had written them.

Fenella comes over frequently to visit relatives in England. On another occasion she joined me for a lunch at the Café Rouge with the Brothwoods.

Sue Bolton

In 1985 we made friends with a young woman, Sue Bolton, then working as a secretary, who, over the next four years visited us frequently. On one occasion she stayed in our home with a friend while we were abroad. The suicide of her mother caused devastation in the family. We had visits from Sue's father and sister, but could do little for any of them. Eventually we lost contact.

Eleven years later, I met Sue by chance at a party. She greeted me with great warmth and introduced me to her husband, Jeff Green. I invited them to come to "elevenes" and to go to the Café Rouge for lunch. Jeff works in banking to earn a living, but his heart lies in researching and writing about black people in Britain in Edwardian times. Sue was teaching disabled children and practising chiropody on friends. They had met through advertisements in the *Guardian*. It was a joy to see a couple so clearly fulfilled.

Anastasia Stepanova

Annejet Campbell introduced Anastasia to me at one of her many parties in the Gate House. A young Russian graduate from Nizhniy Novgorod, she is at present living in the Gate House and working with Mary Lean as Editor of a section of the magazine *For a Change* entitled "People".

Sensitive to my age, she at once found me a seat and looked after me as if I were her grandpa. I was deeply touched. Also staying with Annejet were a young couple from South America, Ismar and Fabiana Villavicencio. Shortly afterwards, Annejet went abroad, leaving the three of them to look after the house. I invited them all to supper with me in the Café Rouge in Park Hall Road. It was a lively and happy evening together.

Since then, the couple have had their first child and are living elsewhere. I see Anastasia regularly when I do the proof-reading of the latest issue of *For a Change* and use the opportunity for a brief conversation in Russian.

After taking an 'O' level in Russian at Sandhurst, I used to spend time every day reading Russian and learning useful expressions, but gave this up when I started writing books. Encouraged by Anastasia, I am now spending time every day reading the Russian edition of Annejet Campbell's books, *Listen to the Children* and *Listen for a Change* and writing down useful phrases.

I was delighted that Anastasia could come with Mary Lean to one of my 90th birthday parties. I consciously built the party around her as representing the future of Europe and the world.

Jean-Rémy and Ioanna Berthoud

On my most recent visit to Andrew and Eliane in Avully, I met the Berthouds. Eliane first met Ioanna as a fellow alto at the "Rainbow Consort Genève", directed by Chen Liang-Sheng. Jean-Rémy is a professional percussionist in another orchestra.

They visited us for a meal and invited us for an afternoon walk in the countryside and supper in their home in a suburb of Geneva.

On my very last evening, when Andrew, Eliane and Ioanna were all rehearsing with their choir, Jean-Rémy invited me to a rehearsal of his orchestra and choir in a church at Coppet. They spent some time on an interesting work by the Swiss composer Honegger, then played through two works which they clearly knew well: a Trumpet Concerto by Haydn and Mozart's Requiem, my favourite work. Listening to it with four fine soloists almost within touching distance, I felt transported out of this world.

Ioanna is Greek and has spent some years in Romania; the four of them have recently paid a very interesting visit to Romania.

Conclusion

A good date to bring this book to an end is 20th March 2001, my 90th birthday. As Peter and Annie had commitments in America that day, we started celebrating earlier. On Wednesday 14th, Andrew and Eliane, Peter and Annie all arrived.

Peter had arranged for us all to stay quietly from the Thursday till the Saturday at Gravetye Manor, where we were joined on the Friday by Patrick and Deb Conner. As Patrick was convalescing from an operation for prostate cancer, they were unable to come to any of the parties.

On the Friday, Ruth Dallas flew over from Belfast, was met at Gatwick by George Smith and taken to No.30 Carson Road, where Anne-Marie and Christopher Braun had her to stay for the rest of the celebrations.

The main event was a lunch party in what was once my mother's home at Crystal Palace given by Gunnvor. She had prepared a superb meal for 35, helped by her daughter Anne, looking charming in Norwegian costume, and her son Michael. She had baked a Norwegian birthday cake, macaroon circles forming a beautifully decorated pyramid. One of the guests later asked her for the phone number of her caterer.

I was delighted that all three of my mother's surviving grandsons, the widow of the fourth, and all three of her granddaughters were present; four of Margo's relatives were also there. Five Carson Road families were represented: Brauns, Lomaxes, Robinsons, Reids and Penry-Daveys, both David and Judy having recovered from their recent muggings. Representing the Art Ventures were Tony Sursham, the Brothwoods, Annejet Campbell together with Edie

and Jack. Sadly, Yvonne and Robin Evans were confined to Whitbourne on account of the foot and mouth outbreak, and we later heard the sad news that Julia Evans had had her herd of ewes and newborn lambs destroyed.

Yvonne sent me a huge four-page birthday card. On the cover was a fine water-colour of our pond; on page 2 a wedding day greeting and photos of Margo, the Liver Building, Mountain House Caux, and the family at White Cottage and the Hut; on page 3, Biglands and Stallybrasses at Henley; on page 4 a deeply moving poem written by Margo for Tony at Christmas 1951, pictures of Tony in India with friends, including Janet Mace and Geoffrey Daukes, and early photos of our sons, including one of Peter sawing logs with Ga Biggie in the snow. It contains so many very fond memories.

Michael presented me with a huge frame containing 22 pictures of seven generations of Stallybrasses, Weatherheads, Bulleys and Raffles, which his wife Catherine had sized by computer.

Catherine had been unable to come, as her presence was essential in the Swinton and District Excelsior Band, which was competing in the local final of a national competition. Later that day she phoned to say that they had won; late that night Michael collected her at King's Cross.

On the Sunday morning, just before Peter and Annie left to fly back to Philadelphia, Gunnvor, Michael, a triumphant Catherine and my cousin Margaret Green, who had been staying with them, joined us for coffee.

At one time I had planned to give an enormous lunch party in a hotel on Tuesday 20th for the numerous friends who had not been at Gunnvor's party, but Andrew had wisely persuaded me to give two select parties in the home, the food provided by Myra Bright, who had served us so well at Margo's funeral and at the third "Art Venture".

On the Monday evening we received five more Carson Road couples and Sue Hudd, who keeps the flat in perfect order for me. She had us all in fits of laughter with ribald comments on my more serious remarks.

Finally, on the actual day, we received for lunch 11 friends who had played an important part in our lives and whose stories appear earlier: Stanley Kiaer, Ivan and Maisie Poulton, David and Kirstin Channer, Fiona Daukes, Annejet Campbell, Janet Mace, Phyl Cameron Johnson, Mary Lean and Anastasia Stepanova.

It is now two years since my dear Margo died. I can honestly say that they have been the most rewarding years of my life in terms of old friendships renewed and new friendships made. I sense that, freed from the limitations which her fifteen years of health problems and five serious operations imposed on us both, her indomitable spirit is at work, inspiring many to new live-giving force.

I have no ambition to live to 100, but I am happy to go on living as long as I can be of help to others. I wake each morning to see a fine array of photos which our sons arranged for me showing Margo with relatives and friends in Britain, Switzerland, America and Pakistan. They help me to face each new day with joyful determination to give my best.

May 2001

APPENDIX 'A' – THE TOUCH OF MAGIC

These are the stories which Margo wrote about her life with the boys at White Cottage.

Andrew

I had been trained as a children's nurse, so was supposed to know how to look after the boys, but they seemed to know what was best for themselves and I had to learn from them. I'd been taught to boil the water for very small children to drink. One day when Bill came home from work, Andrew had crawled out of the back door and was picking bits out of the drain and putting them in his mouth. We thought I could stop boiling his water after that. He also used to fill his mouth with small stones picked up on the path.

At first he found crawling very difficult. When he saw something he wanted, he would lie on his tummy and work very hard with his arms and legs, but all that happened was that he went backwards and ended up stuck in a corner or under a piece of furniture.

When he started to walk, he was wobbly and always running into things and banging his head, which I thought was too big for him. He loved to play

with pans and lids when I was in the kitchen, and he'd sit on the draining-board and "help" when I did the vegetables.

One day when he was supposed to be asleep in his pram, a man knocked on the back door and said, "Come quickly! Your baby's hanging himself". Andrew had been strapped into his pram, but he'd managed to pull himself over the side and was hanging by the strap. After that, I didn't strap him in any more; I thought he'd get a bump if he fell out again, but maybe he'd learn.

But he started getting out of his pram and pulling all his bedclothes after him. Sometimes he'd dump them in the kitchen, but one day he put them on a bonfire in the garden. I watched to see how he did it. He would rock his pram backwards and forwards until it tipped up onto the handle. Then he'd crawl out, pulling his bedding with him. He'd carefully tip the pram up again before setting off across the garden, dragging the mattress and blankets behind him.

Geoffrey

Andrew's first two summers another little boy came to stay together with a charming Scottish schoolteacher who was looking after him. Geoffrey was just six months older than Andrew. His home was in London; in the country he could enjoy fresh air and freedom.

Much of the time seemed to be spent washing, ironing, cooking and cleaning, which is inevitable with two small children, but there was freedom and space and laughter too.

When the weather was fine, as it nearly always seemed to be, all meals were eaten in the garden. This became a habit that continued even if it rained, when mackintoshes were worn. The children ran about naked; there was a paddling pool and the garden hose was also a great joy, weather permitting.

Geoffrey was small, wiry, active and very intelligent. He had discovered a wonderful game to play on grown-ups. When his will was crossed, he would fling himself on the ground and produce the most nerve-shattering screams while lashing out with his arms and legs. We had no idea how to cope with this.

Not so Andrew! He was fascinated and made a very careful study of the whole proceeding. When he had mastered it, he decided to have a go. He was

large, fat and rather placid compared to Geoffrey and not nearly so athletic. He cautiously lowered himself onto his tummy, rolled over onto his back with arms and legs sticking into the air and emitted strange shouts. We were so helpless with laughter that Geoffrey had to stop his performance to investigate. Somehow Andrew's efforts took all the fun out of his and he never tried it again.

Ruth

Ruth was a Swiss girl who had been brought up in institutions and foster-homes. When she was 19, she came to England to help look after Andrew, who was not quite two, and to learn English.

At first she and Andrew couldn't understand each other very well and weren't happy together. She would come down to breakfast looking unhappy and sometimes rather cross. He would put his arms round her legs, which was all he could reach, and say, "Is oo happy, Woofie? Is oo weally happy?" She would say "Yes" rather crossly. Then he would say, "I does love oo, Woofie".

Afterwards, she said that nobody had ever loved her like that before or cared if she was happy or not. She is now the wife of a doctor.

Miss Sheep

One night Bill was putting Andrew to bed. He was barely able to talk, but could sense an atmosphere. I was sitting by the fire downstairs sulking. When he was in bed, he called to me to come up. He shut his eyes very tight and said, "Please, Jesus, come into Mummy's heart and make her happy and don't let her be like Miss Sheep". Miss Sheep was a very unpleasant and bad-tempered character in one of his books.

Peter

"White Cottage" had been the gardener's cottage to a big house with lots of land and a swimming-pool. When the boys were big enough, they were allowed to play on some of the land and to use the pool. One day the lady from the big house heard something at her back door. She found Peter stark naked; he had come to ask if he could have a bathe. I can still feel sick at what might have happened if he hadn't gone to ask first; he was only two.

There was a big apple tree in the garden, which was very useful when the boys were big enough to climb it; it could be an aeroplane or a boat or anything you liked to imagine. Peter could be anybody he liked, too. He had an old beret which made him into a sailor, a soldier or a Scotsman, depending on how it was worn and what was stuck onto it. After seeing the film *Reach for the Sky*, he spent several days as Douglas Bader and stumped around painfully on two artificial legs.

On a very hot summer's day he was an Arctic explorer, so had to wear a balaclava helmet, a big thick jersey, which came down to his ankles, and wellingtons. He was very red and hot and sticky inside all these clothes. By evening the sun had gone in and a cold wind began to blow. I looked out of the window and he'd become a Red Indian with nothing on except one of Bill's handkerchiefs round his middle and a feather in his hair. He looked very cold and blue.

A bumpy lane ran past the cottage and when it rained a little stream ran down it. On the other side of the lane was a wood where the boys often played, collected firewood and went for walks. At the bottom of the lane was a water-splash where a stream came out of the wood, crossed the lane and ran away across a meadow. Sometimes the stream got blocked and formed a lake.

One day when the milkman came, he shouted, "Hey, Missis, your baby's swimming in the water-splash". I ran down the lane and only Peter's head was showing above the water, as he was crawling about on his tummy.

How to deal with "Baddies"

After Andrew started school, Peter missed him very much. One day when he was finding life very difficult, he announced that there was a "Baddy" in his heart. I suggested he should shove him out. "I can't," said Peter, "the door's slammed on him and he's got stuck." He then gave a graphic description with a finger sticking outside, the door shut on it and all the rest of him inside. "And I can't open the door," he said. I explained that I couldn't do it either. After some thought, he managed to open the door himself, and we both learned something.

After the visitor had left

The children had slept late one morning and when Peter woke, he was whiny and demanding. My first reaction was to organise him into good behaviour, but I was bothered by a feeling that that wouldn't really help. They arrived in the bathroom to be washed for breakfast, Peter still looking sulky. I asked what was making him unhappy. None of his ideas seemed to be the real one. Then Andrew came to the rescue. "I know what he wants – some of Mummy's love." "Is that it?" I asked. "Yes," said Peter. So I sat down and took him on my knee and we talked about the happenings of the past few days. It appeared that both children felt hurt and resentful about a visitor who had been staying with us. They felt she had demanded all my thought, time and attention and that she didn't want them. They were right, but they were also very generous in their judgement. "You see, she hasn't any children of her own," they said, "and that's why she doesn't want us." But they added that some other visitors who hadn't any children liked them and played with them.

I felt just like the children about our difficult visitor, and I had behaved to Bill before he went to work very much as Peter had behaved to me. Yet I didn't think it was all the visitor's fault. I had been so busy trying to make the visitor think I was "the perfect hostess" that it was no wonder the family felt sore. I apologised and asked them to help me not to do it again.

No spoiling!

Another day when Andrew was about 5 and Peter 3, there had been trouble. After it was over, I was sitting on my bed feeling miserable. Andrew came and sat beside me and said, "Mummy, I don't want you to be hard on Peter, but every time he cries, you give him what he wants, and I don't think it helps".

The infectious disease

When I was putting the boys to bed one night, Andrew said, "Are you happy, Mummy?" Not very," said I. "I'm not, either," said Andrew. "Unhappiness is like a disease. If one person has it, everybody else catches it." Next day was better and Andrew commented on it.

The "two-wheeler"

Andrew, at six and a half, was at school all day. Peter, aged four and a half, would play quite happily by himself, but he was tremendously thrilled when

it was time to go and meet Andrew. Yet when they met, there were often rows.

On this particular day, it was over Andrew's little bicycle. It suddenly struck Peter as outrageously unfair for Andrew to have a "two-wheeler", while he only had a tricycle, and by the time they got home there were tears.

I thought of similar situations when the prospect of Bill's return from work after a long day's absence filled me with happy and excited expectation and how that expectation would sometimes end up not so differently from Peter's.

I put my arm round him and let him sob out his rage and frustration. "I feel all bashy inside," he sobbed. So I told him what I had been thinking. After a few moments, he announced, "The bashiness has gone, but I still don't feel very happy". But by the time we'd had tea together, he felt better.

The third way

One rainy morning Peter had to decide what he would like to play with in the house. He chose the big box of bricks which, when emptied, filled the middle of the floor in any of the rooms of our small cottage. So it was important to decide which floor it should occupy. Peter favoured the dining room, which held the central position; three rooms and the stairs led out of it. I had visions of trying to do my housework, armed with mop, brushes and cleaning paraphernalia, climbing over heaps of bricks all morning. I suggested one of the other rooms, but no! That was the room Peter wanted.

We sat down to consider the situation. I could insist and so spend the morning in conflict with Peter's frustration; I could give in and "feel all bashy inside" myself; or maybe there was a third way.

"Are you afraid Mummy will shut the doors and forget about you if you play in one of the other rooms?" I asked. "Yes," said Peter. "Well, I won't," I said; "we'll leave this door wide open and you can tell me how you're getting on each time I come through. Will that make it all right?" "Yes," said Peter, and settled down happily to play with his bricks.

Mark

Mark was a Great Dane who lived in the big house. As a puppy, he was very interested in Peter and used to want to join in when he was playing in the sandpit. Peter didn't like this very much and often came into the house to get away from him. Mark would gaze after him wishing he would stay. He was always bigger and stronger than Peter and, as he grew, he could put his paws on my shoulders and take a look over my head. At one time, if Peter said "Booh!" very fiercely, he would go away a little, but usually came back again.

There was a short cut to Andrew's school through the grounds of the big house, but it meant going past Mark. Andrew had his own little bike; Peter and I shared one. Mark used to jump out and bark at us. If it was unexpected, we sometimes fell off or rode into the bushes. One day I got bitten from behind. Shortly after, Andrew got a nip too. A family council was called to decide what to do. I said I was frightened, but I was sure that Mark didn't want to hurt us; he just didn't understand. We decided to try to make friends. Next day, when he came rushing along, we stood still and offered him a ginger biscuit. He barked all round us, but soon came near enough to sniff at the biscuit and then try it. Next he sniffed and made a thorough inspection of us all, particularly Peter, who was very brave. After this, Mark trusted us, although he obviously didn't think much of the ginger biscuits.

In the garden

I was gardening and was irritated by Peter hanging round asking what I thought were silly questions when he could have been playing happily with Andrew. Suddenly he said, "Why have you got that face?" "Why are you a 'Timmy Tease'?" I countered. "Are you bored?" "No," said Peter, "but you are." I was so surprised that I stopped work and then in a rather hurt voice said, "In that case, we'd better think what I should do". "Yes," said Peter. We did. My first reaction was, "I'm not bored with gardening". Then I realised that Peter was right. I was bored with the children and was seeking self-satisfaction in gardening. "You're right," I said, "and I'm sorry." "I still thought you were the one that was bored," said Peter. But he accepted the apology and ran off happily to play with Andrew.

"New every morning ..."

Bill was taking cadets rock-climbing for the day, so the alarm went off very early for a Sunday morning. But even before, I could hear noises from the

boys. I thought, "If those children are already up and about at this hour, it's sure to be a difficult day with them tired out and cross before it's half over". I swore to myself. Then the first line of a hymn came to my mind, "New every morning ...". I felt so very old and tired and stiff. I'd had a bad fall a few days before. I mentally screwed myself up to face the day as a good wife and mother should.

Before I was up, there were screams from the boys. I could judge fairly accurately from the sounds the degree of blame to allot to each child, though I thought that the last act of aggression lay with Andrew. I called them into my room. They arrived looking sheepish and sat on the bed. I started by asking Peter about his part in the row and then suggested we all sat quietly for a moment to think about it.

Andrew began by saying that as soon as he heard me asking Peter questions he thought, "Thank goodness she thinks Peter's to blame, so I'm all right". "But that's not right," he added. Peter, not yet five, was slightly tongue-tied, but admitted to "feeling all bashy inside again". I said I thought it was my fault, because for some days I'd been thinking so much about myself that there'd been no time to think of anyone else, and I was sorry and wanted to be different. Both the boys agreed that they thought this was the root of the trouble, as they'd both noticed it.

The missing Dinky toy

I had noticed that one of Peter's "Dinky" toys was missing, so made enquiries and was told by both boys that Andrew had taken it to school to play with in break one wet day. "You must bring it back," I said, "and if you've lost it, you must buy him a new one."

After they had thought about it for themselves, Andrew said, "I think it's right I should buy Peter a new toy. I always say to him, 'You'll have to buy me another if you lose or spoil that'". "I don't think you should," said Peter. "I don't want you to, unless you want to." "I do," said Andrew firmly, and he did.

An expedition

One day the boys asked if they could go on an expedition to the common and take picnic "elevenses" with them. The common was about half a mile away

and I felt a little nervous about their going alone, so I asked them if we could all think about it together to see if it was right. I reminded them that one day they had stayed by the road and had thrown fir cones at cars from the top of a bank. "If you do things like that, then accidents can happen," I said. They decided they should go.

Peter was about five and didn't like being told what he might and mightn't do, but this time he said he wanted to remember our joint decisions and abide by them.

When they had gone, I began to think of all the things that could go wrong. Then the milkman called and when he heard where the boys were, he told me a dreadful story of two little boys who had been buried in a sandpit. "24 soldiers dug for two hours, but they were dead when they found them; but I expect your two will be all right," he said cheerfully as he left. I felt dreadful and wondered what people would say if Andrew and Peter got buried in a sandpit and it was all my fault for letting them go out alone. I could go rushing after them, but what would they feel when we had decided together that it was right for them to go?

Half an hour before lunchtime, Andrew arrived home cheerful and unconcerned. He had been in a puddle and got water in his boots, so had come home to change. Peter had gone to play with some friends at the end of the lane. This was revolution, as he had refused to play with them the day before, when they had come to our home; he had shut himself in the nursery and sucked his thumb because, he said, they'd left him out. Andrew changed his boots and went back to bring Peter home for lunch.

Can't Daddy understand?

Both boys were very happy when Bill came home in the evenings. Sometimes he would come quite early and they could work or play with him before they went to bed, and sometimes he was late and they didn't see very much of him.

Suddenly Peter began to behave in a very odd way. He would hide behind a door when Bill came home and rush out and attack him. He'd hit and kick him and then burst into tears. Bill was very hurt at being treated like this, and the first time it happened he punished Peter.

But he thought about it afterwards and felt that this wasn't the right thing to do, so the next time he sat down quietly on the stairs with Peter and asked

what was the matter. Peter sobbed and sobbed. Eventually, he said something had gone wrong at school.

This was true, but only part of the trouble. He was jealous of Bill when he came home and they had to share me with him. He wanted to explain and ask for help, but we seemed so satisfied with his first story and so pleased with ourselves at "understanding" that it was easier to make us happy and not bother. We didn't learn the truth until he was grown up, when he told us that that was the first time he had realised how easy it was to deceive us. We were more interested in being "good parents" than in getting down to his deepest needs and problems. We were no longer infallible and he was very much alone.

Fault-finding and fear

When Bill went to work early, Andrew liked to get up in his dressing-gown and make his coffee and toast and cook his bacon.

One morning, Andrew had been very busy drawing when Bill came down, but he got up quickly and soon there was a smell of toast burning and coffee boiling over. When I arrived, Andrew was standing in a lake of brown liquid making another piece of toast.

Later, when the boys were getting dressed, Andrew kept telling Peter how wrong he was. I asked him why he did it. He thought about it, but he didn't know. I said, "When I keep telling people where they're wrong, it's usually because I've done something silly or wrong and don't want other people to know. Are you like that?"

Next morning the fault-finding started again. Andrew said, "I think we should get to the bottom of it; it isn't just now; it goes on and on". Remembering the burnt toast, I asked, "Are you afraid of Mummy being cross if you do things wrong and is that why you always want to be right?" Andrew wasn't sure. I told him that neither I nor other people loved him any the less when he made mistakes and did wrong things, especially when he didn't try to hide them and would say "Sorry"!

Later, his headmaster told me that Andrew had been very nervous when he first went to school. One day, when he had forgotten to take a book to school, he ran away. He saw my car outside a shop and came in. He was very upset and crying. I drove him home so that we could talk things over. It turned out that he was afraid of "Sir". This made me angry because I didn't

like people making "my" Andrew afraid. But Andrew added, "I'm very sorry for 'Sir', because people are afraid of him, so they don't tell him the truth". I thought it was my fault that Andrew had forgotten his book, because I had been late taking him to school and that always upset him and made him forget things, and that I should take him back to school and tell "Sir".

So back we went. We rang the front door bell and, as we waited, Andrew said, "Are you afraid?" "Yes," I said. Mrs "Sir" opened the door and said that "Sir" was very busy and couldn't see us, but I said I must see him. Eventually, he came and I told him what had happened and that it was my fault and I was sorry. After this, Andrew wasn't afraid of "Sir" any more.

The Muse

One Sunday morning when Andrew was seven and Peter five, Bill went down to make early morning tea. When he came upstairs again, he told the boys that he had heard a knock at the back door and that it had been Pooh Bear. "Do you know what day it is today?" Pooh had asked. "Yes," said Bill, "it's my birthday." "That's not what I mean," said Pooh. "It's Mothering Sunday and I've had a hum about Mum." And this was the hum he had hummed:

Today we say three cheers for Mummy.
 What would we do without her? Lummy!
 We'd feel as helpless as a dummy.
 We know of no one quite so chummy.
 She nurses us when we've a pain in the tummy
 And makes our beds when the sheets get crummy.
 She tidies the nursery when it's slummy
 And washes our fingers when they're gummy.
 At Christmas she sees that the food's yum-yummy,
 That the Christmas pudding's really plummy
 And the sauce to go with it really rummy.
 No wonder like Pooh we feel all hummy
 And want to invent a hum for Mummy.

Bill then taught the boys Pooh's hum.

Later, we went for a picnic to celebrate Bill's birthday and took his presents so he could open them after lunch. A friend and I had made him a beautiful dressing-gown out of a rug. (Money was tight in those days.) He

put it on and looked very grand sitting on a tuft of heather. After presents, Bill and the boys recited the "Hum for Mum". It was a very happy day.

Not long after this, Andrew and Peter wrote their first hums. Andrew's was:

Said Mr Frog to Mrs Frog,
 "Where is your little daughter?"
 Said Mrs Frog to Mr Frog,
 "She's underneath the water".

And Peter's was:

Left, right,
 Pink, white,
 Howdie doodie,
 Punch and Judy.

One day I found Peter crying. I asked, "What's the matter?" "I can't write any more poetry," he sobbed. But he did and so did Andrew, and they still do.

Postscript

These stories were written at a time when I was finding life very difficult. The cottage was isolated and the lane with its water-splash was rarely used except by us and our friends. Sometimes I'd see no one except the boys, Bill and the milkman for days. The trouble in a situation like that is that the less you see of other people, the more difficult it is to contact them and the more isolated you become. I found it increasingly difficult to see any relevance in my life to the world outside, yet without that, what was the point of it all?

Years later, I heard Peter telling a visitor what a happy childhood he and Andrew had had. He attributed it to the freedom. When I said it had cost me a lot to give it to them, he replied that it would have been worth it even if something had gone wrong and that he could still remember the wonderful feeling that the whole world belonged to them. I realise that it must be much more difficult to give children this sort of freedom these days.

On one occasion I was trying to force Andrew, then in his late 'teens, to do something I thought he should do. He drew himself up to his full height

and, patting me on the head, said, "You must remember, little woman, you can no longer make me do anything". I was grateful that I had never tried to use physical force to get the boys to do what I wanted.

My natural instinct was to protect the boys as well as to make things easier for myself. Peter summed it up for us when he said he felt we all had a rock in our lives that nothing could budge us from, however difficult things were, and that he couldn't have survived the bad times without it. It seems to me that it is not so much what we give each other as what we learn from each other that makes each year, as Bill says, better than the last.

APPENDIX 'B' – "PAINTING MYSELF OUT OF A CORNER"

In the February/March 1995 issue of the magazine *For a Change* was the following article by Margo, illustrated with a photograph taken by Peter of her holding up a painting of a mountain in Vermont which the young and I had just climbed:

"I am 82 years old. For seven years I suffered from acute undiagnosed pains. Some years previously my elder son had given me a paintbox to keep me happy whilst the rest of the family enjoyed their energetic outdoor pursuits. I put it away in a cupboard. A year later he and his wife paid for me to have painting lessons. Again, events took over and I forgot about it.

"Then I made friends with a painting enthusiast. A near neighbour, a retired ambassador, he has suffered from Parkinson's disease for over 20 years. Painting has now become increasingly his way of life. We started painting pictures for each other when we were both in and out of hospital. I painted the flowers people sent me, to thank them. I called the results 'Paltry pictures for people'. It was a lifeline at a time of despair.

"Since then we have gone from strength to strength. He was commissioned to write a book on Pissarro (1), one of a series on famous artists, and has had several successful exhibitions. An enthusiastic band of amateurs has gathered around him and some of us have been on painting holidays together. We have been drawn to painting for different reasons, some for the first time, others getting involved again, but all of us with needs which are being met.

"In *Painting as a Pastime* (2), Winston Churchill expresses it better than I can. He describes how in 1915 he lost his Cabinet post and was left gasping, 'Like a sea beast fished up from the depths, or a diver too suddenly hoisted, my veins threatened to burst from the fall of pressure. I had great anxiety and no means of relieving it ... I had long hours of unwanted leisure'.

"Churchill makes it clear that painting is not the only therapy available to those in pain, physical, mental or emotional. He describes worry as a spasm of the emotions, as pain is of the body. It is useless to try to argue with either. 'But,' he continues, 'you can gently insinuate something else into its convulsive grasp – gradually and often quite simply the undue grip relaxes and the process of recuperation and repair begins.'

"Through painting I was taken into a new world of people and things, out of my world of pain, self-centredness and boredom. I was no longer the tragedy queen I thought I was, nor have I become the genius I would like to be, but I am a happy clown with a paintbox and brush, splashing about and free to laugh at myself and with others at the results."

(1) Martin Reid: *Pissarro*, (Studio Editions, 1993).

(2) Winston S. Churchill: *Painting as a Pastime*, (Penguin, 1932).

APPENDIX 'C' – A FAMILY FAREWELL TO MARGO

Margo died on 28th April 1999. She had battled valiantly for four weeks against a variety of health problems and then, with the full backing of her medical advisers and of her family, decided that her time had come and took another fortnight to slip quietly away.

Earlier in the year she had suffered occasional pains very like those of the obturator hernia of 1991. Dr Matthew Kiln, our GP, agreed that it might well be a warning sign; he made an appointment for 12th April with Ian Forgacs, the consultant physician who had helped us eight years previously and wrote a letter for her to show to any doctor in an emergency.

Peter and Annie had had the good fortune to be granted a sabbatical year together from 1998 to 1999 and to be appointed Fellows of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, where Peter had given the prestigious Shakespeare's Birthday Lecture in 1992 on "Worn Worlds – Clothes and Identity in Shakespeare".

Margo had always longed to see Washington in the spring, an experience which I had had in 1946. Peter and Annie duly invited us to stay with them from 16th to 30th March. We were driven to Heathrow by our favourite Dulwich Cars driver, George Smith. A few weeks previously we had paid him to take Ellen Riffenburgh, our Californian air hostess friend to Heathrow. We were deeply touched to learn that Ellen had insisted on paying him for our forthcoming trip.

The Library, 201 East Capitol Street SE, is about 400 metres from the Capitol itself, just beyond the Library of Congress. Peter and Annie were housed in a spacious ground floor apartment of No.307, a bright yellow building a short distance further along. Owing to parking difficulties, they had decided only to hire a car when necessary. With a wheelchair which they had hired for Margo, we all circled round the Capitol one evening with wonderful sunset views of the numerous monuments.

For us the outstanding experience was attending the lecture in the Library by Annie on "Fetishising Gloves", ably supported by Peter with colour slides. This was followed by a tea party for a number of their colleagues and friends.

Two days later, we celebrated my 88th birthday. Margo gave me her very last painting, of No.307 seen from the back garden, where we had lunched out one day, and a Folger shopping bag with a portrait of Shakespeare and a list of his plays in chronological order; it has become one of my most treasured possessions. We lunched with three of their fellow Fellows in the splendid George Hotel Restaurant. We telephoned my brother Robin in Somerset, who was celebrating his 86th. Peter writes, "Hope is with him and Emma is coming with two of his grandchildren. He's also about to watch the rugby game between England and France, and he'll be ecstatic when England wins."

"Two days later, Hope rings to tell us that Robin had died suddenly of a heart attack. We all weep for this wonderful man, whom we loved so much. But, as Hope says, it's how he wanted to go."

On the Sunday morning we had a leisurely breakfast in a French café with Professor Patrick Collinson of Trinity College, Cambridge. He had been running a seminar in which Peter, who had been taking part, discovered that he had been a member of the Climbers' Club. Margo wrote in her diary, "Amazing time. P Loves him and we all fell in love. We had so much in common including God, people, climbing, rowing – almost everything".

On the Tuesday Peter took Margo, who had started to feel ill the previous day, with a chest infection to a doctor who diagnosed it as pneumonia. He agreed to her being nursed at home and over the next few days her health improved. We were all deeply moved that Peter's colleague Margreta de Grazia came by train from Philadelphia to see her and have supper with us.

On the Saturday, while Peter and I were out shopping, Margo fell in the house and broke her left wrist. Annie sat comforting her until we returned and Peter took her by taxi to hospital. There were three days to go till our return and, with numerous phone calls, Peter succeeded in persuading our "Help the Aged" insurance, who had been so helpful 15 months previously in Geneva, to upgrade our return flight to Club Class, allowing her adequate comfort.

Margo's troubles caused Annie a deep depression. Peter writes, "What had started as a glorious celebration had turned into a nightmare ... Mum had also given up eating, which made Annie feel helpless. It also brought back to her her own mother's painful death.

On our last morning, we were delighted that our favourite Folger Fellow, Jessie Owens, a musicologist, came to lunch. At the airport, the authorities allowed Peter and Annie with the hired wheelchair to go through customs to a first class restaurant for supper and to see us right onto the plane. We heard later that Peter had pushed Annie back in the wheelchair.

We were met next morning by George Smith, who helped Margo into the house. Dr Matthew Kiln called in to give her a new prescription, which disagreed with her. Two days later, Good Friday, after a largely sleepless night, an emergency weekend doctor arranged for an ambulance to take her to King's College Hospital, where she spent the next six nights in a rather noisy ward. She was glad to receive visits from Jan Dudding, Sue Hudd, Anne-Marie and Susan Braun, Bunny Kallipetis (her hospital friend from eight years ago), Jodie Lomax with her two daughters and John and Margaret Brothwood, who gave us Communion in the ward.

On the Thursday evening, after having her fractured wrist replastered, she was allowed home. I spent most of Friday night with diarrhoea and vomiting. Jan Dudding kindly came round next morning and gave me medicine to settle it. Jodie Lomax called to offer help and sent her daughter Lizzie with some soup. By the evening I had recovered, but Margo spent most of the night awake in great pain – weekend as usual! As eight years ago, I sat

holding her hand, powerless to do anything, waiting for a doctor to come, little realising that it would be for the very last time. A young emergency doctor called and injected her, but to no avail. We phoned Andrew.

On the Sunday morning Jan Dudding looked in again. Eventually Dr Leonard, an old friend from the Paxton Green Health Centre, working on weekend emergencies, diagnosed a hernia and called an ambulance. I felt too weak to go, received calls from Roger Lomax, Jan Dudding and Sue Hudd, and phoned Andrew, Peter, Tim Bigland and Margreta de Grazia.

Andrew writes, "Later that night Dad rings again, waking us, to say that she's going to be operated on during the night, another obturator hernia. We pray together over the phone – a strange thing to do, but that seems to mean something to both of us; it helps to discharge some of the fear, the worry, the emotion. Whatever happens, I surely need to go over, today, tomorrow ... She's so frail. Can she survive another major operation? Even if all goes well, they'll need my support and help to find the next steps. I write, 'If she lives, she lives with God; if she dies, she dies with Him. For the first time, part of me feels that she's had enough of the endless health problems and battles'".

I found her on the Monday morning in Pantia Ralli Ward, a great improvement on the previous one. As had happened eight years ago, she had survived in very good spirits and had missed her appointment with Dr Ian Forgacs. I gave her the good news that Andrew would be coming next day. I went home for lunch, but visited her again in the afternoon.

Andrew arrived at 11.30 on the Tuesday morning and took off at once for the hospital. He writes, "Dad, exhausted, spends the day at home and mostly in bed. I spend the day at the hospital ... holding Mum's hand – she is a frail, tiny, very old and weary bundle of life. She is conscious and clear, but dozes off frequently".

On the Wednesday, Andrew writes, "A better day. She was more awake, more her old self ... Dad comes in the afternoon" – Susan Robinson had kindly driven me down – "and time wanders slowly by. She's taken down to the plaster department – the splint on her arm is too tight, is causing swelling and pain, so they cut it open, and she's made more comfortable. We wait for a porter to push her down; then we wait for her papers to arrive before anything can be done. The work itself takes 5 minutes. And then we wait 45 minutes for a porter to take her back to the ward. So a day goes by".

By Thursday Margo was on liquid foods, but was fearful of the future and longing to see Ian Forgacs, who had given her so much hope in the past. Andrew writes, "Thursday and Friday go the same way. I'm becoming part of the ward, no longer a visitor, but something of a helper in training, collecting bed pans, discovering where the ice is kept, and changing Mumbo's water, rubbing her legs and face with lotion, providing the little luxuries that the busy staff don't have time for. Dad comes for short spells in the afternoon, but I'm there for nearly 12 hours at a stretch, driving back to Carson Road with Dad and cooking him supper ...

"I ... read to her from Russi Lala's new little book on living with cancer – there are many points of contact with Mum's experience, and Russi (an Indian friend) quotes Mum on painting in the book, her name is in the index, so I have to read the passage to doctors and nurses. She basks in the glory of it.

"She talks and talks, taking me through the entire family history, her childhood, her relationship with her parents, her mother's illness and death, her brothers, Tony. I know it all, but it seems to be important just to listen, to be there, as she peacefully – and it is peacefully – puts the bits of her life together. Is this part of leaving life? But she is getting better. She gets out of bed, and I walk her down to the far end of the ward, where she goes to the loo. She starts to eat, and she's off the drip, only soups and slops, but still getting stronger. The social services people come round again, twice, filling in forms, getting ready to look after her at home.

"On Saturday I fly back to Geneva. I go down to the hospital and say goodbye. We both cry. We both know that this may be the last farewell. Yet she seems set for another spell of life, and there've been so many of these farewells with two meanings. It was so important that I came. Nothing important has been said, we've not gone over our past, we didn't need to. She knows that I love her, and that I came. The differences and the tensions don't matter, they're past.

"It seems to me that one of the things that I've found difficult with her is a British imperial streak, this amazing ability to be at home anywhere, in any country, in any situation, with any kind of person, and somehow to take over, to be central. Above all, her endless demand to understand and analyse what for me remains the ultimate mystery of others' lives (and our own). I don't want to be analysed and understood, least of all by my own mother! But what an amazing passion she has had for life, and for us, those she loved most. I

can imagine her finding the strength to lift a ten ton truck off one of us, if we were trapped underneath!"

Later that morning, I drove Andrew down to Brixton and went on to the hospital and read to Margo for a time. She was suffering from diarrhoea and was very uncomfortable. That evening Andrew phoned from Avully and Peter from Sicily, where he and Annie were on a walking holiday. I could only give them a discouraging picture of Margo's condition.

The next day, Sunday, I found Margo feeling very low, but she improved gradually through the day. On Monday I felt very concerned about her condition. Andrew writes, "Dad rings to say that Mumbo's had a bad day, sicked up the little that she's eaten, having angina pains, is very weary. He clearly envisages that she hasn't the will to get better this time, the energy. This may be the end. We pray together over the phone. So I'm waiting for his phone call to know if she's made it through the night. It's a strange limbo. It's impossible to plan, to think over their future, with so many unknowns. But it looks increasingly like death, a deliverance, and an end to the pain and struggle". Margo and I had already faced the fact that the end was at hand, but I still found it difficult not to try to hold her back.

To my great delight, Peter and Annie, who had flown from Sicily to Rome, phoned to say they were coming next day. Peter writes, "Throughout our time in Sicily, Annie had wondered whether we shouldn't be with Mum. I took this as a sign of her depression and anxiety, and perhaps it partly was. We certainly needed the holiday after the stress and strain of Mumbo's pneumonia, the doctor's visits, her broken wrist, the hospital, her difficulty eating, the stress of upgrading the return flight, as well as the demands of work. and I was sure that I had already said goodbye to Mum, that I had done enough. But Annie was right ... it is time for us to pack and go to London. She punctures the bubble of my anger to reveal my grief, my desperate desire to do anything in my power to protect Mum from pain and from a lonely death, my need to be with Dad at his time of need".

The next morning, Tuesday, I phoned the hospital early, was told that Margo had had a difficult night and decided firmly to let her go. From then on, despite my grief, I had peace of heart. Peter and Annie arrived early, dumped their luggage and took off at once for the hospital, leaving me to take a day's rest. Peter writes, "... Jodie Lomax, the best and kindest of friends, is already there, having brought lovely flowers, but she leaves when we come. Mum's looking gaunt and frail and she's in some discomfort. But she's glad

to see us, holding hands either side of the bed. We can't help ourselves crying, but Mum doesn't mind, even seems to like it. We're near the nurses' desk, the busiest part of the ward, and there's no privacy. Opposite, a man who's recovering from an operation moans intermittently ... Mum finds the noise awful at night, when she lies awake, listening ... But there is some sense of peace. At home with Dad, too, we're cheerful and at peace.

"Mum's made it clear she's ready to die. She doesn't want any more pain, any more operations. And she's not eating at all. She's eaten little or nothing for the last two weeks. But her desire to die and her actual dying won't necessarily coincide. How long does this process take? We have no idea. But we've given Mum our full support; she's ready to die and we're ready for her to die. It's been enough. Her own mother, Nellie Bigland, terminally ill with cancer, stayed out of bed until the marriage of her son Ernest. Then she was ready to die, she lay down, and she stopped eating. Mum will do the same."

Wednesday was a key day. A scan showed some sort of blockage, the surgeon offered another operation, which she refused. From then on all those involved accepted, one by one, to stop trying to make her eat or to get up, and concentrated for the next six days on keeping her as free as possible from pain as she slipped peacefully away. That day she had visits from Jodie and Catherine Lomax and from Bunny Kallipetis. She was moved into a small side ward with only two other patients.

Peter writes, "This morning, Jodie and her daughter Catherine have already visited Mum when we arrive. Catherine particularly wanted to see Mum, and I'm becoming aware, day by day, how many other daughters and sons, granddaughters and grandsons, Mum has. I'm humbled and moved. Humbled, because, as one of her two adored sons, it's amazing to see just how much of her emotional life did *not* revolve around us. Moved, as Andrew will be too, by the sustaining love and generosity of spirit that Mum has given so many, which is now being given back to her as she dies. We're being absorbed into this larger family, the family of those who loved her.

"At 12.30, Annie and I drive Dad back for lunch. Dad sleeps with the deep fatigue of the weeks and months he has endured. Annie and I return to the hospital. Bunny has been there while we were away, but she's already left. We sit beside Mum, hold her hands, talk and read. I ask Mum what's been the happiest holiday of her life. She thinks a long time, and then says how much she loved the time in Skye, when we all went, Dabble and Mumbo, Andrew

and Eliane, Annie and me. But she remembers most of all her anniversary trip with Dabble to Corsica. They'd been married for twenty-five years, and this was their celebration. Everything was perfect – the time, the weather, the flowers. And she was just miserable. She was confronted with living with herself and she hated it ... But knowing how much she hated her own company, Mum suddenly let go and decided that this was the person she'd have to live with for the rest of her life, this awful, hateful person: herself. And admitting that, she felt an enormous burden roll off her shoulders, and she could look out at the world around her, in all its beauty, and love it. I'm holding Mum's hand, crying for the person I know and love, crying for the person I never knew and also love.

"... There were the disturbing moments when someone would ask her what she wanted to eat, and she'd say, 'Nothing, thank you', meaning 'Nothing, ever'. Never again. I'll never eat again until I'm dead. The courage of that and the rightness of it. Not a shirking of life, but a life lived to the full, to the point where any further life would be posthumous, the mere shell of a person, eating and drinking and breathing but no longer living. At 86, this is enough. But how can she, how can we, explain this to people who think it's a duty to live? To live for living's sake, regardless of whether living is intolerable. For Mum, the moment has come. 'God's time', she writes. It is also her own moment, the moment that she's chosen. She'll die as best she can, not knowing what awaits her. Needing all the help she can get from her faith, from us, from friends, from doctors and nurses, from painkillers.

"Sitting beside Mum, Annie and I lose all track of time, and suddenly we're in a panic. Annie has an appointment to see one of the doctors at Mum and Dad's local clinic. It's after five, the rush hour, and the clinic closes at 5.30. Worse, I've parked the car miles away so as to give us a walk through the flowers and blossom of Ruskin Park. Mum's thinking and caring only for us, as we dash away, find a taxi, and get to the clinic just in time. The doctor (Chabuk) is splendid, genuinely thoughtful both for Annie and for Mum. But the tailspin we both went into makes us aware of how much stress we're under. Still, this sort of stress is absolutely different from the acute anxiety that Annie was suffering from before. Here we have work to do, we're needed, and that gives us strength.

"After seeing the doctor, Annie and I search for a taxi, without success, and we have to wake Dad up and call for a taxi from home. Back at the hospital, holding Mum's hands again either side of the bed, Annie and I find each other again.

"There is something absolutely beautiful and simple about the relationship between Mum and Annie. Annie has found in Mumbo another loving mother. At the same time, Annie wants to take care of Mum, to coddle her, to cook for her, to buy things for her, to look after her. And Mum loves being spoiled as she's never been spoiled before. She, who had had to look after all those Bigland men, can now be mothered herself. She has adored the presents that Annie showered upon her, her red coat from Burberry, her canvas shoes and sneakers, her sweaters, her nighties ...

"As she wrote about Annie in her diary less than a month before she died, when Annie was beginning her deep depression: 'One of the most wonderful, loveable, mysterious, courageous, miraculous people I have ever known'.

"When we return to Dulwich after visiting hours, we're immersed in the ceaseless round of telephone calls. They're actually a godsend. It means so much to Dad to be able to talk about what's happening, and for the first time that I can ever remember he actually seems to *enjoy* being on the phone. Something is released in him. He's completely articulate, yet unashamed to weep ... There's something that can only be called pleasure in all this. Not surprising, given how much we love and need each other, how we shift so easily from laughter to tears and back again. Such an easy and natural rhythm, that it's hard to believe that I've ever lived any other way, that once upon a time there was 'normal life'.

"Annie and I make all our American calls, both to let people know what's happening and to cancel supper dates and so on."

By Thursday Peter and Annie had decided to stay indefinitely. He writes, "... I've been up since 5, reading whatever I can get my hands on of Mum's. I'm already trying to hold on to her as I feel her slipping away between my fingers ... We're letting everyone know that this is the end, that Mum wants it this way. Anyone who wants to see her will have the chance to do so ... Pat (Conner) is away in Hong Kong. This troubles me more than I admit, even to myself. I love Pat, and Mum had wanted him to give her funeral address when she thought that she'd die back in 1995. It's not that I want that now, but that I'd feel stronger with him just being there, even if we never spoke a word".

We drive down together. Peter writes, "Alice in the bed opposite is 85, the youngest of three sisters, and she's visiting from Australia. She has a lovely Irish accent, but she's almost completely deaf, and I have to scream at her to ask her if she wants tea or if I can get her a newspaper. Alice is in

hospital because of constipation of all things. She eats her food with relish, although there's nothing much to keep her entertained, and she rarely has visitors. Mum seems quite pleased to have her company, but there's not much possibility of conversation.

"Annie and I go down with Mum to the X-ray room to check on her broken wrist, which has some swelling. Two hilarious porters push her bed at a great clip, keeping up a running patter. Mum is now in a new bed, the highest tech thing we've ever seen. It has an air mattress and a machine at the end that keeps adjusting the mattress, creating waves that take the pressure off any one part of Mum's body. But to move her, they have to unplug her, and as the mattress deflates, she feels the bumps and her own sore bones. She's clearly frightened by her frailty. They plug her back in immediately we arrive, though, and the whole process is rapidly done. But then we have to wait a long time afterwards for a porter to push her back. There's a woman across from us holding a baby with a fractured skull. Mum comes to brilliant life, asking after the baby, chatting to a trainee nurse about her own life as a children's nurse. The mother is a TV comedian, who has just completed writing and acting in a show that will be on this summer. We say we'll look out for it, and only then do I realize that Mum won't be alive to see it.

"That seems impossible, given her sheer vitality, her fascination with all around her, her ability to make friends in the most improbable situations. I'm living in two worlds: in one, Mumbo is dying, sometimes painfully, normally uncomfortably; in the other, we're on holiday with Mum. An unusual holiday, to be sure, but the unusual is usual with her. We're not only reading aloud and laughing at old memories, but also meeting new people. The only differences from previous holidays are that we're confined between these walls, and that we're no longer preparing celebratory meals with her. How much of our life with her has been spent in kitchens, her agile hands joining ours to chop up tomatoes or stir together wonderful ingredients. As if to compensate, Annie cooks the most lovely suppers for Dabble and me every night.

"Annie and I take off for tea with Deb – and there's the splendidly cheerful and rowdy accompaniment of Harriet and Toby ... Deb hasn't been in touch with Pat yet, and we reassure her that there's no point in rushing the news to him ...

"When we return to the hospital, Dabble is there with Carole; she is one of the daughters Mum never had. And this is one of the most intense and important friendships in Mum's life. Carole was married to her nephew and

godson, Robert, but there was a painful divorce which only drew Mum and Carole closer. Long before that, when Carole's daughter Sophie drowned, it was to Mum that Carole turned for comfort and found it. And Mum loves Geoffrey, Carole's new partner, as we all do. We leave Mum and Carole together. Later, we take Carole to supper at the Café Rouge. Dad's dog tired and backs out. He needs sleep. Annie and I both adore Carole, and it's good to break the hospital/home routine. It's also like a relaxing bath just to be able to talk about Mum to someone who loved her so much. We talk about Carole's new biography of Vivien Eliot and about the anxieties that writing can create. A long, voluble, stimulating meal. And so home to bed and sleep. But at two in the morning, the phone rings. We've moved it into our room so as to give Dad an undisturbed night's sleep. It's Ellen from California, an air steward who's been a wonderful friend to Mum and Dad, a daughter to them. I've never met her, but I know how important she is to them. She weeps and weeps but, like Andrew, she's so real, so present. I don't wake Dad, but I tell her we'll keep her informed of what's happening."

Andrew, in constant touch with Peter by phone, writes, "Mum's not in pain, and even seems a little better. God's timing. But she may not linger, now that she's said her farewells. It's hard to think of anything else, to concentrate. It is a joy to lose myself in Bach at a rehearsal of our choir, preparing the B minor Mass. How amazingly tough she is, with all her frailty. I read and re-read Psalm 103 ... It's a strange limbo, waiting ... for her to get worse, to slip away".

Peter continues, "On Friday morning, Annie and I make our decision: we'll stay with Mum until the end, however long it takes. It's an immense relief. Everything's suddenly much clearer. I suppose we were going to do this all along, but now that we've rung Alitalia, cancelled all our flights, there's not only peace of mind but the pleasure of being here in a late English spring. We wander round the garden that Mum so loves, making a bouquet of apple blossoms, bluebells and forget-me-nots to take to her. The sky is a brilliant blue, the grass deep and in desperate need of mowing. We plan to do it at the first opportunity.

"There's much to do: we need to go to the bank, to take washing to the laundry, to buy books to read to Mum. Somehow it's all done quickly, and we're with Mum by 10. Jodie has already been and has just left, and without any planning, the miraculous rhythm of these last few days will establish itself, with one set of visitors coming as another leaves, as if Dad was arranging all this with his usual military precision. But it's just things taking

care of themselves, as they'll do again and again, day by day. We sit by Mum, we talk about Washington, about the old days, about White Cottage. She wants always to be holding someone's hand, Dad's or Annie's or mine. This frail hand that has as firm a grip as a teenager's. There's no tremor in it, just as there's no tremor in her handwriting, up to the last words she'll ever write. I begin reading *Winnie the Pooh* to her, an old favourite.

"Why have children's books played such a central role in our family history? It all began with the Hut and *Wind in the Willows*. Beside the Dee, there seemed to be no other book one *could* read, year after year, particularly after we saw the intense drama of a water vole rescuing her family after her hole was flooded. She carried all of her young in her mouth to safety. But half-way through, a troublesome young one wriggled and wriggled until she couldn't cope any more. She dropped him in the fast-moving current and went back for the rest of her family. We yearned to rescue the little devil, but were frightened that we'd scare her away and that the rest would die. But after she'd got the last of her young to safety, she came back for the 'bad' one, who was still struggling but clearly exhausted. He was so overjoyed to be in her mouth, to snuggle in the safety of her strength as she swam hard against the current. As Mum and I recall the story, I feel the tears coursing down my cheeks: I, the child who ran away from home at 16, who have given Mum such pain and grief. But I have also been so loved, have felt Mum so close to me all her life. Now, at 49, I will have to swim in the world without her loving, protective presence.

"Mum has a stream of visitors. Jodie, Jan, and Bunny are regulars, coming almost every day. Jan had made up her own herbal cream, and she rubs it onto Mum's head and onto her feet and onto her legs. At such moments, Mum looks like a contented cat. And Jan disapproves of our work on Mum's hair that makes her look like a cross between Elvis Presley with inadequate brylcream and a pointy pinecone. Jan does a much better job, although, with her hair plastered down, Mum now bears a marked resemblance to Marlon Brando playing a Roman soldier.

"In the morning, John Brothwood arrives with his wife, Margaret, to give Mum and Dad Communion. Annie and I go for coffee, but when we come back, we hear a real scuffle going on behind the drawn curtains. What on earth's going on? It's been a moving occasion for them all. John has read the Nunc Dimittis: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace'. But as they kneel round Mum's bed to pray, Dad had knocked out Mum's morphine drip. So Margaret, a doctor, has to scrabble round on the floor to find the tube

and then reconnect it. Mum, typically, is delighted by the whole episode, the mixture of the divine and the all-too-human.

"There's a new woman in the bed next to Mum: Jean Abbot, who's had an operation for breast cancer. She must be about 60, round and twinkly, a bundle of energy. She will become the life and soul of this tiny ward, and she talks to Mum at night if Mum can't sleep. They're already fast friends. They're discreet too, knowing when the other needs privacy, when to leave each other alone. Jean's husband, Richard, will be a constant visitor: one of the kindest and most caring men I've ever met. He has a slight cowboy look, with silver hair swept back. He's quieter, calmer than Jean, and they're a delightful pair.

"Mum's nephew and godson Robert arrives with his new wife Biddy. How strange that Robert and Carole, who are on such difficult terms, should come on consecutive nights. Mum had looked after Robert and John, his identical twin, during the war in Llanarmon. They have retained a private language from then, and I am moved to tears as Robert calls her 'Argie' (is this a childhood combination of 'Margo' and 'Aunty'?). Although Mum has given Robert hell in recent years (perhaps all the more because of that), she loves him and is deeply touched to see him. She's also delighted to meet Biddy, whom we both like enormously. I can see how hard Robert is fighting to hold back his tears, and I'm near to breaking down myself. And yet the conversation is happy and funny, about fishing and about Ernest and about the children. Mum is her usual alert, vivacious self. When Robert leaves, I try to walk with him, but he doesn't want me there as he begins to weep. How strange and wonderful these Bigland men are. All loud voices and bluster, all terrified of emotion, all embarrassed by what makes them finest – their tender hearts.

"Saturday, April 24. We're up early again, but an iron rule seems to hold us: however early we start the day, we never seem to sit down to breakfast before 9, never get to the hospital before 10. There are always the phone calls to make, toothpicks to buy for Mum, her beautiful nighties (which Annie bought her) to be washed and ironed. As we arrive, we bump into Jane Reid, who is just leaving. We know how much it must have cost her to come. She hates hospitals, doesn't like to show her emotions. Dad says, 'Thank you so much for coming to see Margo'. Jane replies, 'I didn't do it for you, Bill,' and stalks away. We're simultaneously taken aback, wildly amused, and deeply moved. She reminds us of Tom, Mum's older brother, who had a heart of gold and couldn't bear for anyone to see it. When Tom came down for breakfast,

just after their mother died, Mum tried to put her arms round him, but he brushed her away, saying 'No use crying over spilt milk'.

"As we sit round Mum's bed, holding her hands, we laugh till it hurts, thinking lovingly of Tom and Jane. We talk about the family, the past. For the first time, Mum can talk about her younger brother Tony without keening. She at last seems reconciled to Tony, for whom she has blamed herself all her life.

"We read *Winnie the Pooh* aloud, and there's much laughter. At times, Mum wants to be scratched. She's now on a morphine drip, very low doses. One of the side-effects, as I remember from Allon White's death, is this itchiness. It's not a problem. Mum seems to take immense delight if and when I can find the exact right spot to scratch. Yet despite her good spirits, Mum is much frailer today. Is it the morphine that suddenly makes her death seem so close? I realize that I've no idea if Mum will be alive tomorrow.

"At eleven, Edie and Jack arrive. Edie has been like a daughter to Mum and Dad, particularly since her father's death. And Jack has massaged Mum and helped her through some of her worst periods. Annie and I leave them with Mum and Dad and go off to shop and to collect things for Mum. We return at one to take Jack, Edie and Dad to lunch, just as Bunny arrives to see Mum. We decide to go to the French restaurant, Le Piaf, in Dulwich. It's a wonderfully happy time, talking about Mum, sharing memories, catching up on Edie and Jack's news. And we even drink some wine, against my better judgement, and it seems to do us all good. Yet, at a certain point, I feel the need to be back at the hospital with Mum. Annie and I leave Dad to have dessert with Jack and Edie.

"Dad's been simply tremendous through all this, but he needs all the rest and cheer he can get. The emotional drain of the last days has been overwhelming. He's been through fifteen years of Mum's dying ... He confesses to one moment of desolation: waking up and seeing the empty bed across from him, and knowing that it will never be filled again. I feel an overwhelming love for him, and admiration for his acceptance of his own strengths and weaknesses. He usually sees Mum now in the morning and he's exhausted by it, worn out – worn out by his own love ... For him, as well as for us, intermixed with the terrible sense of loss, there's a sense of relief, of peace. This is *finally* it. No more wild pendulum swings from panic to relief, from equilibrium to catastrophe and back. No more midnight emergency calls. And through all of this, he keeps on writing, bringing Mum into focus,

bringing her into his life, into the lives of others, even as she wastes away. While the pain is there, and he can and does weep, it has not paralysed him. On the contrary, he seems to have been granted a new lease of life, new energy. And with it, a renewed ability to sleep peacefully and undisturbed, despite the recurring arthritis in his hands.

"In the middle of the afternoon I go home to sleep. I'm dog-tired, emptied out, beyond any emotion except fatigue. Mum fears the nights, so I'm going to spend the night beside her in the hospital. She wants someone to hold her hand in her dark moments when she's lonely and afraid. I rest, but can't sleep. Dad and Annie return, and we have supper together. More phone calls every ten minutes, but Dad rushes to answer them, and this constant contact with friends and family sustains him. I've found, though, that there is no way that Mum can receive any phone calls herself ... Mum had particularly wanted to talk to Eliane. But Mum's been feeling weaker, and now she doesn't want to be in contact that way any more. Instead, Eliane and Andrew dictate messages to me over the phone that I'll then read to Mum."

Andrew writes, "There's no way to phone Mum – it's crazy, amazing, infuriating, but there it is. So Eliane and I will both dictate a last message to Peter who will spend the night beside her at the hospital. He thinks that she's slipping away, is much weaker than yesterday, much less present, more sleepy, more absent. He says it calmly. He's not sure that she's going to make it through to Monday. What a pillar he's been. And here am I in tears, almost feeling jealous that he's there and I'm here!"

"I'm going to ask Peter to read her psalm 103: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and remember all his kindnesses: in forgiving all your offences, in curing all your diseases, in crowning you with love and tenderness, in renewing your youth like an eagle's ... He is tender and compassionate ... His empire is over all. Bless the Lord, all his angels, heroes mighty to enforce his word, attentive to his word of command'. I add, 'There are some unlikely angels, and you are going to be one of them. Thank you for life. Thank you for being yourself. Thank you for your boundless passion for people and for life. Go well, your ever loving son, Andrew'.

"Eliane sends her message, which reduces me to floods of tears: 'Dear Mum, I think of you so much. I so wanted to tell you directly how grateful I am for these wonderful sons you have produced, and particularly for Andrew whom I love so much. Our relationship has slowly grown to what it is now,

peaceful and so happy. He has so wonderfully stood by me when things were difficult.

"I know he owes a lot of that to you because he has grown up in a family where there was love between all. That is what has given him the security he now has.

"Our times together as a whole family have also become more and more wonderful. I know I have not always been an easy daughter-in-law, but I think I have improved!

"I love you very much and will treasure all the good times we have had together. With much love, Adieu. Eliane".

Peter continues, "When I read them to Dad and Annie at supper, we're all completely overcome. We sit and weep. It's the small things that hit us hardest, their last words: Eliane's 'adieu'; Andrew's 'go well'. Margreta rings, and she also dictates a wonderful last message. I tell her about Andrew's call, and that he said that he almost felt jealous of me, going through all this with Mum. Doesn't he really want to be here, she asks? I talk about this with Dad and Annie, but we all agree that it's right as it is: Andrew's just been here, he's said his goodbyes, and this is a particularly busy and difficult time for him".

That evening I phone the news of Margo to the Streathers, the Moggs and Eva Bigland. Annie and I watch "Jonathan Creek" on TV.

Peter continues, "I return to the ward, where Jean's been joined by her husband, Richard. Between us all, we've somehow made this ward our home. And, as in any home, there's every kind of emotion: boredom, anxiety, laughter, grief, love. But this evening, there's a deep sense of peace. Jean and Richard look after Mum, if I go to get food or to the loo or to talk to a nurse. Mum is beginning to fade in and out, fully there one moment, very distant the next. I go downstairs to get some food at the cafeteria. As I return down the corridor, Richard is leaving, but he stops and just holds me by the hands and says, 'I think you're all wonderful', and then he goes. I can still feel my hand in his, the kindness of his eyes, as the tears come and come and come. I can't stop. And the words 'adieu' and 'go well' clutch at my heaving heart, make me breathless with loss. I'm alone; I'm bereft. And I'm also held, held as we'll all be again through these days by the kindness of family and friends, the kindness of strangers.

"I settle down in the ward for the night. I've already met the night staff, and they'll become my friends: Anna, the young sister, who gets me to sit with them when I'm exhausted, who feeds me ginger cake and tea; Yvonne, from Barbados, who has a real love for Mum, who holds her hand and prays for her; Theresa, who's new and shy and terrified of making mistakes. Just the three of them for a huge ward. But these will be lucky nights, quiet nights, peaceful nights. It's like being on an ocean liner, with everyone below decks, and I'm somewhere between being a passenger and becoming one of the crew.

"I sit beside Mum and read her the messages from Andrew, Eliane, and Margreta. We're both moved beyond words. We cry. And as I cry, I realize how much I'm missing Andrew. I need him more than I've ever done before. I thought I had the strength to go through this without him, but I don't. I don't even know if Mum will survive tonight, and I can't ask him to come for her sake. But I love him, I want him beside me. I tell Mum, and she holds my hand and says, 'Follow your heart'. But what should I do? Am I being selfish and demanding? And then there's a moment of absolute clarity. I must ring Andrew right now. I tell Andrew that I want him, I need him, I love him. I weep and weep and weep. It's so simple. All I had to do was ask. He'll find out about flights immediately. An hour later, Dad rings the ward to tell me that Andrew will be arriving at midday tomorrow. He also tells me that Ruth, who had looked after us as children, will be coming down from the North tomorrow. When I tell Mum, we both cry again. I feel I can bear anything if Andrew is here."

Andrew writes, "I am *so* moved by Peter's words. What an amazing gift it is to feel such love and trust, to feel so close and united. I ring Dad to say that I'll be with them tomorrow".

Peter continues, "Four years ago, I'd said to Dr Hole that although we were intensely close as a family, Andrew and I would only really be able to be with each other after Mum died. Mum's very desire for us to be together made it somehow harder, as if she stood between us. Dr Hole, who has meant so much to Mum and me over these last years, had said, 'You could be close now if you wanted to be', and it suddenly seemed obvious that we could indeed. That summer, we went climbing together in the Alps for a fortnight, and we've done so every year since. Last year, descending a glacier, Andrew suddenly fell into a crevasse. I was able to hold him on the rope, and he used his ice axe and some hauling by me to get out, but it had been a scare. At the same time, it had literalized the bond between us: a rope that tied our destinies together. We both felt that intensely, and Andrew wrote movingly about the

experience. Now, as Mum dies, I feel Andrew anchoring me, holding me. And I know that Mum will live until he is here.

"Mum fears pain more than she fears death. But that doesn't mean that she's not frightened at times by the process of dying. I have no belief at all in religion, but I hope that Mum's strong belief will sustain her. Curiously, she herself wants to talk about belief. She tells me that she believes that God has walked with her all her life, but that he doesn't seem to be connected to her thoughts about death at this moment. She has no idea at all what is to come, but she's ready to go nonetheless. I'm struck, as I've always been, by the originality of Mum's mind, by her truthfulness. So many unbelievers turn to religion for consolation at the end; Mum, a real believer, faces death with no sense of certainty. She simply doesn't know. But she needs Dabble, Annie, me beside her to hold her hand. Nellie had pushed her hand away, had drawn back into herself. It had been the same with her brother Ernest. He had held her hand and then let go of it, brushed it away.

"The morphine is helping Mum. She has had many bad nights recently, but tonight she sleeps well. I watch her blue, smiling eyes close, I brush her hair off her forehead, I adjust her cushions. And as she sinks into sleep, I take into myself this face that I love, every crease of it, every hair, every freckle. I love Mum with an absolute love. I'm bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh.

"I can't sleep, but I doze fitfully. I read at times, or talk to Anna and Yvonne, or make myself tea. I think about Mum and Dad. Mum has always needed and wanted Dad's commitment, his faith, his unwavering path. But her faith was, I think, one of sudden illuminations, blank misgivings, bitter despairs and hopes and delights. Dad gave Mum ballast, and she could not live without it, blown as she was by the gales of her fears and desires and insights. She lived in repining restlessness, and no one but Dad could have made his lot beside her with such love and patience and fortitude. If she sometimes raged at him, he must always have known the truth: that he was her rock. As she never forgot, she 'loved him all the jungle'....

"Boredom was the absolute enemy. Her hatred of it had a truly spiritual quality. Boredom was the death of the spirit; it was being caught in habitual, unilluminating rounds of recriminations and self-recriminations. At such times, she would say that she was all 'bashy' inside. She was trapped in the prison of her self. But her bashiness was sometimes the necessary prelude to her profound insights, her deep seeing into the hearts of others, including mine. There was something potentially terrible about her understanding,

particularly when I was a child. As Andrew so perceptively remarked, perhaps we both needed to flee England, to put an ocean between ourselves and Mum. How much understanding can a body bear? I sometimes hated it that she knew me better than I knew myself.

"But she came to accept that such knowledge, however true, may be beside the point. Andrew and I had to lead our own lives, make our own way, however lonely and misguided we may have been at times.

"Mum has one or two bad moments during the night. She's uncomfortable and needs to be turned on her side, and there's a moment of acute pain. But they give her a booster of morphine and she settles again and sleeps. This is her first really good night in a long time. Part of me longs for her not to wake, not to have to fear any more pain. 'Go well', as Andrew says. Or, as Annie will later say, quoting a poem by Housman, 'Sleep on, sleep sound'. But day comes slowly, and Mum opens her eyes on more hours of discomfort, pain and love. When she hasn't the strength to love any more, she'll go."

On the Sunday morning, Annie and I go down to the hospital by Dulwich car and relieve Peter, who drives back, tries in vain to get some sleep and soon reappears again. We find Margo very weak. Annie and I drive back in good time to prepare lunch. Ruth Dallas, who has been attending a gathering at Tirley Garth to plan menus for the Caux summer conference, has arranged to come to London by train and spend a night with Janet Mace. Andrew, to meet whom at Gatwick I have ordered a Dulwich car, arrives a few minutes before Janet and Ruth. The four of us enjoy a simple lunch prepared by Annie in the sunroom.

Peter meanwhile finds Margo "quite peaceful and cheerful. I begin to read *Charlotte's Web* to her. The book is a newcomer among her favourites after Annie gave it to her a few years ago ... It's difficult, though, to know how much she's taking in. When visitors come, she's usually fully present, but in between she goes in and out of drugged rest.

"At three, Andrew and Ruth arrive with Annie. I'm overjoyed. I'm worn to the bone, but a sense of lightness pervades me. Andrew's here, we're in each other's arms. He talks to Mum briefly, and then we leave her with Ruth, one of her oldest and dearest friends. I'm also delighted to see her. It's been more than twenty years.

"Andrew, Annie and I walk out to Ruskin Park through the spring flowers and blossom." Andrew adds, "A young man is singing tunelessly on a bench, with a walkman over his ears. We can almost touch a squirrel, so unafraid of us. Nature is springing all around. It is so good to be together. To walk and talk." Peter continues, "We take in the sun, plan the next days, decide how best to look after Mum. We still have no idea how long this will be. It could be tonight, it could be a week or even a month. But for now, there's the simple joy of being together. Annie has held me, has been beside me very step of the way. And Andrew is now with us, this wonderful brother whom I love till it hurts."

Andrew continues, "Peter drives Annie and Ruth back for supper with Dabble, and I eat downstairs in the cafeteria. With the vast Victorian chapel, this becomes one of the havens where I can relax, rest from the emotional cooker of the bedside".

"At home," writes Peter, "there's a lull after all the stress and emotion of these days. Then Dad has the inspired idea to look at the old photos that Mum had recently organized into albums. Two of the albums are old black-and-whites, including Dad and Mum's parents and the early days of their marriage when Ruth came to live with us. Mum and Ruth look so beautiful, so full of life and fun. I remember, as children, how much we loved Ruth; it's wonderful that she's with us now. There's also an arresting photo of a twenty-year-old Mum, arm in arm with her father. She's gazing up and to one side, and she looks like a whole bundle of trouble. We'll keep coming back to these photos over the next days, coming back to the memories, these hauntings of the past that work upon us in the present.

"After supper, I drive Ruth to Janet Mace's house, where she's staying the night, and then go on to the hospital. Andrew is already fully at home, chatting away with Jean and Richard, doing what he can to help Alice. We sit either side of the bed, holding Mum's hands, talking, reading to her, laughing at old stories. Mum has the occasional moment of panic when we move. Are we leaving her? We have to reassure her, stroke her hands, talk to her. We're here to stay; we're here till she won't need us any more. I was going to go home and sleep at 8, but Mum is very restless and in increasing pain. The morphine drip doesn't seem to be adequate. We've talked to the pain team, who have been wonderful, and they've left instructions that Mum can have boosters of morphine when she needs them. But even the boosters don't seem to be working. We have a growing sense of desperation. Anna's as puzzled as we are. Where's all this morphine *going*? Is it running out of Mum's foot?

She hasn't eaten for two weeks, and little enough before that. There can't be anything in her *but* morphine, and yet her body refuses to be soothed by it. Is it that her whole being is fighting against dying, however much she wants to let go?

"It's all so much harder than we could ever have imagined. Or rather, we knew that there's rarely an easy death, and yet nothing had prepared us for this. We've both been through deaths before, but it's different when it's your own mother. We watch the light and colour leeching out of Mum, even as she struggles moment by moment to breathe, struggles moment by moment to give us her love and energy, struggles moment by moment to let go and die.

"By eleven, there's a brief moment of peace. I say to Mum, 'You need your boys and your boosters, don't you?' Andrew corrects me, 'She needs her boosters and her boys'. Mum laughs. But the joke is also the truth. Her priorities are clear. Increasingly, it's medical help that Mum needs, and we're subsidiary to that. We're still crucial, because she hates to be alone, needs to be held. But whatever can stop the pain comes first. Yet Mum's still there, still battling. When Yvonne says to her, 'I love your beautiful blue eyes', Mum immediately responds, 'I didn't make them'. Like so many of her quips, it's simultaneously religious and profane. On the one hand, 'God made me, I didn't make myself'; on the other, 'Don't think *I* did this; I'd have botched them up completely!'

"Although the pain's never far away tonight, she seems calmer by midnight. I'm completely wiped out. It's time for me to go, but it's hard. Mum needs to be reassured again that we're not both leaving, that Andrew is with her. And then she smiles and says to me, 'You must go and get some sleep'. I stroke her hair, kiss her, and leave in tears. It's impossible to bear. Will I ever see her again? The terrible truth is that I hope not, even though the thought makes me desolate. She's had enough. She shouldn't have to endure this appalling pain. But there's nothing to be done. Andrew faces a long, hard night, while I sleep. My one deep consolation at this moment is his presence."

Andrew adds, "Peter ... wants to see Mumbo comfortable for the night before he goes home to get some well-earned rest, leaving me with her. This proves long and difficult. It is after midnight before he can go. Her suffering, when she's in pain, is unbearable. She is mewling with pain, and then so pathetically grateful to the staff, as they turn her to try and ensure that she doesn't develop bed-sores. She is nothing but skin and bone, yet is amazingly

heavy and hard to move. They love her and are so gentle. Yvonne, the closest to her, a West Indian, says she's praying for her. They are angels.

"She sleeps well on her side for four hours, then more agony, and I help the night-nurse to move her. She sleeps again and we can relax. Peter and I are trying to bathe Mumbo in our love, and of course it does count, it does help. But she is also so alone. Only she can let go and set off on this last journey. What can we say or do that will help her? Pete and I've talked about it. On the conscious level, of course she's had enough and she wants to go, and there's little fear, and there are no more farewells to say. And yet the will to live is still there. I watch to see if she's still breathing, and I'm praying that she'll stop. Several times during this long night great tidal waves of emotion and tears have flooded over me. Now it's light, and Peter will soon be here, but she sleeps on peacefully."

Of the Monday, Peter writes, "My plan was to go back to the hospital at 10 with Dabble and Annie. But I'm awake at 6.30, and take off to be with Mumbo and Andrew. It's been a hard night for both of them. Mum's had recurrent pain, although she's finally slept after more boosters of morphine. Andrew is completely at home on the ward, close to Jean and Richard and to the nurses. He's tired of course, but he's had some sleep and his presence is deeply reassuring. We'll go through this together. She doesn't seem to be in so much pain, and the pain team is giving her an increased morphine drip, and trying to cut back on the boosters. But now Mum is developing a chest infection; racking cough follows racking cough. The cough is alarming, and it's wrenching to watch Mum trying to bring up phlegm. All her energy is absorbed in breathing and coughing. And her breathing is badly infected by her asthma and her angina as well as by the infection.

"When Dabble and Annie arrive at 10, I'm absurdly embarrassed for Mum, as if Dabble and Annie don't understand the situation, as if Dabble hasn't seen far more of Mum's pain than me. After one fit of coughing, Mum suddenly looks at them and says, 'Peter hates me doing this'. And alas it's true. I so long for her to be at peace. Mum is now very distant most of the time; she's drawing away from us, drawing back into her own body. When Anne-Marie Braun comes to see Mum, though, Mum's deeply touched. They sit holding hands and Anne-Marie weeps. It's healing for all of us. Outside the ward, Dad and Andrew and Anne-Marie embrace each other as they cry.

"Later in the morning, Annie leans toward Mum and says, 'Thank you for giving me a family', and Mum says, 'I've learned so much about families from

you'. And then, as she holds Annie's hand, she says, 'I've loved you so much'. We're all in tears. Dabble tells Mum that his one thought is that her mother, Nellie Bigland, is waiting for her, and she pats Dad's hand and smiles at him. He talks to her about the little girl with the curly hair that he first met, Nellie Bigland's 'difficult daughter'. Here they are, Mum and Dad: two old people, two young lovers to the end.

"These are the good memories. But there are also the agonizing ones, which Mum has warned us will come. As she pulls back into herself, she still responds quickly to the nurses and the doctors. She'll say to them repeatedly, 'thank you, you're so good to me'. But our clumsy attempts to help, even our love and sympathy, are becoming obstacles for her. They get between her and the death she needs and wants. It's as if we're holding her back. At least once, at each of us, she flashes out in irritation. Last night, Andrew asks if he can adjust her pillows and she angrily responds, 'Just sit down!' This morning, at one point she irritably pushes Dad's hand away. And when Annie asks if she can help Mum to sit up, Mum says, '*You* can't do anything'. In the afternoon, I try to help Mum bring a glass of water to her lips when she seems completely dazed; she rounds on me with 'Leave me alone', and I dissolve into bitter tears of self-pity. 'Alone'. The cruel truth is that Mum has to do this alone, however much we love her, however much she loves us. Our only consolation is that we've all been wounded. There's nothing personal in it. And yet we cannot but experience it as absolutely personal. She's letting go of us, pushing our hands away."

Annie and I returned home for lunch and did some shopping, chatting on the way with Zeesi (the Reeds Burmese helper) and with Austen Williams. After lunch we rested, watching a video of "Ironsides".

Peter continues, "Andrew has talked to Dr Patel, and Patel is worried about how much morphine Mum is taking. We'll later realize that there was a judgement pending in a major court case which revolved around the use of diamorphine. It keeps patients from pain, but it can also kill them, and a doctor has been prosecuted. Patel would like to reduce the morphine dose. But that would be terrible. There could be nothing worse – for Mum, for us – than for her to die in misery. And we've seen Mum begging for something to give her relief. She's had more than enough pain. No one wants her to be put under by the morphine, but she must be made comfortable. Andrew and I feel this passionately. It's not Mum we look at when she's in agony but a writhing animal. It's grotesque, inhuman, to allow that to happen. And we've also seen

how, when she's out of pain, she can suddenly be all there, her bright blue eyes alive, still loving and loved.

"Annie and I try to find Dr Patel to talk to him. But he's elsewhere, and instead we talk to the Senior Registrar, who has known Mum from previous operations, as well as from the present one. He sits in his office, completely open and unhurried, prepared to talk to us as long as is necessary. He will ensure that Mum is not in pain; however, they need to arrange it. He understands and sympathizes with Mum's choice, our choice. He will help in any way he can. And when we return to the ward, the pain team is with Mum and they assure us that they won't allow Mum to suffer. As always, we're overwhelmed by the understanding and care at King's. Mary, who comes round with the tea, always makes extra cups for the visitors; the nurses have not only allowed Andrew and me to stay the night, but they have made us welcome and supported us, as if they didn't have more than enough to do already; the young Indian doctor has been prepared to go against the senior doctors and to side with Mum when she didn't want a feeding tube put into her; the senior doctors have listened, have, with their extraordinary skill, kept Mum alive for these fifteen years and are now helping her to make her death dignified; the pain team talks to Mum every day, sides with what she wants, helps us all to make the right decisions. We couldn't have imagined more caring treatment. And Mum has needed and wanted it. She's asked to stay in hospital until the end, even though she's embarrassed to be taking up a bed. About this, the Registrar and the nurses are totally supportive. They have plenty of beds at the moment; she's where she ought to be.

"It must surely be the end now. Yet there's this indomitable strength in Mum's body, as if it won't allow Mum to rest, to sleep, to die. I sit beside Mum when the others go home. Mum's much more comfortable now, and she sleeps or dozes comfortably. Mum has said that she doesn't want to see any more visitors, but Guy and Josephine (her nephew and niece) have told Dad that they want to come this afternoon. Mum determined to see them. She was with Josephine's father when he died; and she saw Guy's father through crisis after crisis, and was close to him to the end. She's always loved Josephine, but she'd originally been distant from Guy, and it has taken years for her to admire and to love him as she does now. She doesn't see either of them frequently, but they're Biglands, the family she grew up with, took care of, treasured, fought with, passionately loved. Now all her brothers are dead; she is the last of her generation. She will see *these* Biglands before she dies. She's thinking of them as well as herself. She wants, in however small a way, to

console them for their losses, for Tom and Ernest and Pudge. She wants them to know that one can accept death into one's life.

"Yet when Guy and Josephine arrive at five, it seems too late. Mum is in a morphine sleep, far away from this world. They stand beside the bed, and I say to Mum, 'Guy and Josephine are here'. Suddenly, she opens her dazzling blue eyes, and she's completely there. She admires Guy's tie; she's interested in the sun-and-moon pendant round Josephine's neck and holds it up to see; she talks to them about their holidays, their children. After fifteen delightful minutes, she says, 'You must both have things to do. I'm so glad you came'. Even now she's thinking of them, doesn't want to bore them or upset them. But she loves them. As they leave they're both in tears. It's mattered not only that we could cry but that we could be with others who cry. It's been a sort of communion.

"As soon as they leave, Mum drifts back to sleep again. Andrew comes back; as always, I feel the tension subside when he's here. We walk down the corridor to the chapel together, leaving Jean and Richard to keep an eye on Mum. The chapel is surprisingly lovely and we normally have it to ourselves. It's a good place to talk, to cry, to be alone together. Our time together is so precious. It seems quite unimaginable now that we might not have been with each other at this time; we're so gladdened by the other's presence. We're quick to laugh, quick to cry, quick to embrace. *Too* quick when it comes to embracing. So glad am I to see Andrew this evening that I hug him as hard as I can and by accident dig my glasses into his ear. He starts to bleed profusely."

Andrew adds, "There's a book for prayer requests at the back of the chapel ... There are prayers for healing, prayers for health restored. And I write a prayer for my mother to die in peace, to go, to let go. I return later and write a prayer of thanks that she has gone, though it has taken longer than we hoped or expected. Believers and unbelievers, there seems to be so little difference in the face of this ultimate separation and mystery. Mum doesn't *know*, and nor do I. We can believe, but somehow that doesn't seem to count for much in this place. I've never been interested in the question 'Are you saved?' I've no idea; perhaps I'll find out one day. But I feel so at one with Peter and Annie and Dad, we are at one in our love for her and for each other. I am loved; I love; we love. That is enough."

Peter continues, "Andrew and I take turns to eat in the café, while the other sits with Mum. When I return from eating, a new patient is being

admitted to the ward: Doris, a Maltese woman, who's just flown in. She has recurring cancer of the liver, and the prognosis does not look good. Her husband is with her, and he'll spend much of the next days with her. I decide that I'd better explain to them about Mum's situation, so that her death doesn't come as a shock, and we talk together in the corridor outside the ward while Andrew sits with Mum. Above all, I don't want Doris to think of this as a death ward, which it certainly isn't. I say that this is a wonderful hospital, that she'll get excellent treatment. But Doris is still shocked: not shocked that Mum is dying but that she's chosen to die. I try to explain that their situations are so different: that Doris has young children and a life to live, whereas Mum is 86 and has come to the end of a long and wonderful life. But Doris is not convinced. We'll be puzzled later when, after Mum's death, she'll repeatedly say to us, 'Don't cry', as if our tears weren't also a form of relief. Doris is very anxious about herself, with good reason, but she's also honest about it and talks openly to us and to Jean and Richard, who are both caring and calming. We all talk together, laugh together, bound in this companionship of suffering.

"A young woman doctor comes to redo the needle for Mum's drip. Mum's not eating and finds it hard to drink. But she has a drip in her arm – or rather in a vein at the base of her thumb. The problem is that her veins are so frail, and they find it increasingly difficult to find one at all. It's a gruesome process, as gruesome for the doctors as for Mum. Mum's sympathy is all with the doctors – she wills them on to be brutal enough to get the job done. The problem is that, when it causes pain, as it often does, they take much longer. The doctor tries for twenty minutes, but she can't find a satisfactory vein. Andrew and I hold her hand as she tenses in pain. Another doctor comes and there's further probing, but at last he finds a good vein, to the relief of all of us. They'll be able to use this till the end, so there'll be no more searching for veins.

"Andrew goes home to sleep. I'll find it a long night. The strain of the last few days is catching up with me, but I still can't sleep. I've marked up some passages in the Bible that I want to read to Mum. I've been looking for consolation, for what it is I might be able to share with Mum even though I don't believe in God and am antipathetic to all religion. But many passages resonate for me. There are the 'non-religious' parts, which I've always loved: the Song of Songs, parts of Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus. But there are also the Psalms, parts of Isaiah, the Nunc Dimittis, Corinthians, Revelation. I read these passages to Mum when she wakes in the night. She says she can't explain it but that this reading means more to her because I don't believe. I

wish I could believe, for her sake, but nothing has ever separated us, not even this.

"Mum is mainly peaceful, so peaceful that I wonder if she's stopped breathing, if it's all over. I read to myself Hopkins's 'terrible' sonnets, as well as Donne and Herbert and Henry King. Andrew and I have finished reading *Charlotte's Web* to Mum, but we have repeated the final chapter to her several times, the chapters on Charlotte's own death, her own letting go. We don't know how much Mum hears, but it has consoled us. Mum has often asked to be read to, but that's becoming rarer and rarer now. We occasionally read *The House at Pooh Corner*, and it at least helps to keep our spirits up. But the nights are long and I'm restless. The nurses, as always, are wonderful. I talk to Anna, and Yvonne comes and strokes Mum's brow, and there are endless cups of tea."

That evening, Ellen phones me from California in floods of tears. She finds it hard to understand why we have all given up the fight to keep Margo alive.

Peter continues, "Tuesday, April 27. How long can we go on like this? Now I'm just waiting for Andrew to come. It's four in the morning and he won't be back till eight. And then suddenly he's there beside me, just as I'm at rock bottom ... I'm overjoyed to see him. As so many times in these days, we pace the corridors, make each other cups of tea, hold each other. We agree that there's no point in Annie and Dabble coming today. There'll be so much more to come after Mum is dead, and they'll need all their energy for that. Mum is not with us any more, although she's still breathing and still wants someone beside her."

Andrew adds, "I'd been sleeping beside Dad, in Mum's bed, in the few hours of sleep that I was getting, and at the start of that last day, the Tuesday, I'd woken early, I think around 4.30, to the sound of a blackbird singing its heart out in the garden. And I'd slipped out of the room, leaving Dad sleeping soundly, and dressed and hurried to the hospital, expecting to find that Mum had slipped away in the night, feeling that I needed to be with Peter, and with the words of T. S. Eliot's poem ringing in my ears, 'Go, go, go, said the bird'. And she was still with us, and I had the chance to tell her what the bird had told me".

Peter continues, "I go home to sleep, and at last I really do. Andrew will spend the morning with her, and I'll go back in the afternoon, after a sleep and

a bath. It's wonderful to be home, to know how Annie is caring for Dabble, how Dabble is caring for Annie. We've all been through so much together. And these last few days, there've been clear skies. I look out of the bedroom window at the wisteria and the clematis and the apple blossom, an English spring in all its beauty."

Despite what Peter said to Andrew, Annie and I drive down to the hospital. Margo is very distant. Andrew and I go to the chapel to pray and are joined there by Robert Titley, our Vicar, who has visited Margo and been told where we were. We talk over funeral plans. Then Annie and I drive back to have lunch with Peter, who reads to us the moving Bible passages he has read to Margo. He writes, "Dad reads some of the many moving cards that have come, and there's the usual stream of phone calls. But we also have a sense of peace ... I return to the hospital. Mum is drawn into herself, her eyes sometimes open but not focused. Each breath is an effort. But she had roused herself earlier this morning, turned to Andrew and said, 'Tell Doris I'm sorry if I make her uncomfortable'. I'm stunned. I'd talked to Doris the night before in the corridor. How could Mum have heard? But then I remembered Allon's acute hearing when he was dying and heavily sedated. At one point he had been breathing deeply, fast asleep. Jen whispered to me, 'I can't take this much longer', and suddenly Allon had opened his eyes and said, 'Neither can I'. Even now, when Mum so rarely speaks and seems so distant, she's often listening, taking things in. If she's drifting away from us, she's still caring for others, worrying about Doris and her problems.

"Andrew goes home to sleep. At two, the porters come to take Doris down to be scanned. Suddenly, Mum's eyes focus, and she says to Doris, 'I love your beautiful blue dressing gown'. It's the last thing I will hear her say. She is attentive to the wonder of this world and to the suffering of others, even as she prepares to leave it and us. And as she draws into herself to die, she's still trying to console Doris, to cheer her on.

"My memory's dim after that. When did Andrew come back? We'd agreed, I think, to split the night. He'd be with Mum till five in the morning, when I'd take over. Was Mum conscious this last time when I left? I think so, because I remember her kissing me. But was that an earlier night? I'm not sure. I remember the sense of peace at home. Supper, sleep".

Andrew continues, "In that long dark night, the last, I kissed her goodbye and stroked her hair, and whispered to her that she went from love and that she was going to an even greater love. Before midnight she was a little

restless, half-sitting up against her pillows, and I wondered if she was going to die on the Tuesday or on the Wednesday. Then around midnight, she seemed to be more peaceful, to settle, and I relaxed, put my feet up on another chair, and dozed a little. It was 1.45 when I suddenly realised that she wasn't breathing, that she'd slipped away so discreetly, on the tips of her toes.

"We'd joked in a rather macabre style, Peter and myself, about death scenes and last words. (Grim humour seems to be one of the natural ways of dealing with the extraordinary stress of such situations.) Mum loved drama, and we'd suspected that there might be one last dramatic surprise at the end. All through the Monday, she'd been calling for painkilling 'booster' shots of morphine, and we feared that at the end she might sit bolt upright and shout 'booster' as her memorable farewell. But the hospital 'pain team' had made some changes, got the dosages right, and on the last day there was none of this roller-coaster up-and-down. Her drip was giving her all that she needed. Her going was uncharacteristically discreet. I was there, but I didn't notice the exact moment that she slipped out of this peopled room for the next world, or whatever there is, if anything, the other side of this strange frontier.

"I'm in tears as I write this, and I'm writing it for myself, to try to put the pieces of this time together in my head and in my heart, to tell myself the story, as close to the truth as I can, while it is still so fresh. What an amazing time it has been, so rich, so deep, with so much love and generosity and friendship, as well as the pain and the sadness.

"When I realised that she was dead, she'd gone, I went down to the nursing station, to tell the night staff. I had to wait for a good ten minutes, while the three young night nurses dealt with some other patient down the ward. It seemed right that the living take precedence over the dead. One of the nurses had been so gentle and kind with me when she'd come on duty; she'd sat with me, asked me how we, the family, and we, the two brothers, were coping. Asked if she could get me anything to eat or to drink. And she'd hugged me. Almost all the nurses became real friends. Again and again what reduced me to tears (especially in the telling) was such acts of care and kindness.

"I told her that we'd remember you with so much laughter; that there'd be so many funny stories at your funeral, and that you loved good parties and fun. You'd want us to put the fun into funeral. I recalled the time when you drove out one winter morning, and muddled the bonnet release catch and the coke, with catastrophic results – you were going at some speed, and the wind

blew the bonnet up, broke the hinges, and carried it over the car, fortunately for you. A bit typical – a disaster, but not a total ruin, just a good laugh. So we laughed together. Then I rang Dad and gave him the news, and I asked Peter to come and take me home for some sleep. I went back to your bedside and cried for the first time. You'd closed your eyes at last, for the first time that long, long day it seemed, and your mouth was almost closed. You were still warm as I kissed you goodbye. Then I went into the corridor, and Peter was coming towards me, and we hugged and cried. He came in and kissed you goodbye, and then we drove home the well-worn road to Carson Road. We felt that we could do it in our sleep, with our eyes closed, we'd done it so many times in these last days.

"Dad was up and at work on his word processor when we got home, already writing a letter of thanks to the hospital staff, and finishing a memoir that he'd been working on over the last days. We mourn in our different ways; and each of us has now mourned by writing. Dad had angered me by writing most of his memoir of Mum before she was dead. He'd asked me by phone, while I was still in Geneva, if I'd speak at the funeral, and I'd replied, 'Let's let her die first'. But then I sensed that he'd been living so close to her fragility, her pain, her readiness to go for so long. He was so strong and so at peace through all the ups and downs, going his own steady pace, resting and sleeping well. And yet present and feeling it all, not distant or cut off. Each of us was doing our very best, within our all-so-human limitations.

"I think our first reaction, even before grief, for each of us has been relief, relief that it's over, the waiting, our waiting, and your waiting. The next phase can now start. Then after the relief, the gratitude, for you, for your love, for your life and your liveliness, for that precious, powerful and passionate flame that was in you right up to the end. Gratitude to the nursing staff and the doctors, who treated you as a person, with such humanity and respect, and who extended that humanity to all of us. Gratitude for this complex knot of feelings that is our past, our family, our history, for the uncomplicated love that we've been able to share in this time of testing after all the usual complications of life. We have been here for each other when it really mattered.

"I am overwhelmed with love and gratitude for Peter, and for Annie. He has been such a mighty pillar of gentleness and firmness and wisdom. The words are hard to find, but if it's one thing that I'm sure I've learnt, it is that the labels that we give ourselves and each other are of only the most limited importance. I saw the Christ I try to love and serve in him, my dear, generous,

agnostic brother. I guess because the God I believe in is a God of love, and he is so full of love, as was Mumbo. He is so good. He radiates goodness. He could be a great saint, a charismatic preacher of the Gospel. And he preaches Shakespeare and literature. I think he knows the power and the dangers of his charm."

Peter adds, "Mum's dead ... What were our feelings at that moment? Relief that the pain was at an end, I think. And also joy, as we held each other and wept. Joy at the life Mum had led, at the death she had chosen. Joy that Andrew was beside her. Even in her death, she sustains us. Adieu".

Andrew continues, "Now it's over or rather we're on to the next stage, all the thousands of things that must be done and decided for a funeral. But I need a bath, to wash my hair. And to sleep. But later on the Wednesday morning we have time with the two ministers Dad has asked to take the service, Robert Titley, the local minister, and John Brothwood. Within minutes, we're set for a funeral on Saturday. We must write the short death announcement that the undertaker will put in the papers of our choice ... Peter and I call by the hospital again, with a thank you letter signed by us all. We go into the ward and talk with Jean and the Maltese lady – they'd heard nothing during the night, had woken up to find an empty bed. We again thank the nurses. We recognise almost an addiction in us to this place and its routines. It's hard to leave, to close this chapter and turn away.

"We arrange to come back with Dabble and Annie to see Mumbo one last time. A nice lady takes us through the formalities, hands over a bag of Mum's things. Then she takes us to the mortuary, warning us that it won't be nice. It isn't. Her eyes and her mouth are open, and her skin cold to the touch. We don't spend more than a couple of minutes. Dad says as we leave, 'That's not her', and it isn't. She has gone. Where we don't know. But my limited experience of death is of this feeling: the person we loved has gone, only a shell, an empty husk is left".

That afternoon Peter and I drive to Constable's, the undertakers in Honor Oak, and make the necessary arrangements. That evening, we plan the thanksgiving service together.

Andrew continues, "Thursday 29th: it is staggering how much there is to do. Peter and I drive to the Elephant and Castle to pick up a coroner's certificate – there had to be an autopsy, which saddens us. She died because she wanted to go at this time, in this place, with those she loved around her.

Not because of any negligence or medical mistake. We've made that clear to the staff. She died of pneumonia and a post-operative infection, the paper says. Then to Brixton for a death certificate from a pleasant West Indian woman who has almost lost her voice, and speaks to us with a sexy, husky whisper. I certify that my mother died in my presence. Then to Tooting to print a service sheet – this had proved something of a problem. Peter was determined that we should have a printed pamphlet with all the spoken texts and the words of all the hymns, and extra copies that Dabble can send to people unable to come to the service.

"We've worked on our proposed order of service, Dad's completed his memoir of Mum, and the rest of us have added notes and anecdotes. We've gone through all of Mum's paintings, to prepare a selection for display at the reception after the funeral, and we've gone through the family photo albums, and chosen our favourite photos of Mum. A last trip to the hospital, to drop off copies of the memoir for Patel and the ward staff".

During the day Anne-Marie Braun called and had a good weep with us.

Andrew continues, "Friday 30th: Eliane arrives. How I've missed her, but she's had work after these long depressing months of searching. I feel sad and yet at peace that she's been excluded from the ultra-intense experience of these days. We also heard last night that her sister Danielle is coming back specially from Gabon for the funeral. How very touching. We are her family. Peter and I mow the lawn at last for the morrow, in the hopes that the weather will allow us all to be outside. There are tadpoles in the pond, and we see the first frogs that Mumbo never saw, one of her great loves. When we work outside 'my blackbird' sings his heart out from the chimney pot – 'Gone, gone, gone'.

"Saturday 1st May: we're all awake and ready in disgustingly good Stallybrass time, in the sun room. Breakfast looking out into the garden that Mumbo loved so much. Dad's reading his mail on the bench outside when cousin Hope arrives".

(It was a great comfort to me to have Hope by my side through most of the day, comforting each other through the services. Her father, my brother Robin, had died just over five weeks before Margo, and she had been landed with the task of clearing up and selling his estate, about 150 miles from her own home in Hastings. She was feeling the double loss even more deeply than I was. She was wearing a red dress, knowing it to be Margo's favourite

colour. I was deeply moved also to receive Mr Constable, our undertaker, informal in an open-necked shirt, to ensure that we were satisfied with his arrangements.)

"The weather is lovely and warm. We all sit out in the sun, chatting peacefully. Then into a simply vast car for six. We'd had another of our macabre laughs earlier on because Peter had counted on Mum travelling in the car with us, and we'd imagined the shock effect of her corpse sitting upright beside us. The crematorium is very close, and there are perhaps 30 close friends and family. The service goes by very fast; it's all over in less than half an hour. It's strange how the emotion comes and goes, and it really doesn't come for me at all. Dad is strangely and magnificently strong, meeting and greeting everyone, thanking them, inviting them back for the sandwich lunch that we'd arranged with the caterer who's doing the reception after the afternoon thanksgiving service".

(I was especially grateful that, in addition to the family – Hope Stallybrass, Robert, Bidy, Tim and Guy Bigland, Josephine Holt, Carole Seymour-Jones and Geoffrey Parkinson, Yvonne and Robin Evans – we were joined by John and Sylvia Cook, Maureen Quilligan – Peter's U Penn colleague – and her distinguished author husband, Michael Malone. We had seen the New Year of 1997 in with them in their home in Philadelphia.)

"We have such a relaxed, happy, unhurried time in the garden at Carson Road, before leaving for the church, where we run through our readings, drilled by Peter. There are *masses* of lovely flower arrangements. Perhaps 120 people come, a good crowd. Before the start, well before, we've all found our way to the loo and are sitting up front, and Dad's missing. I find him outside the church, welcoming people as they arrive.

"Many people comment afterwards on our choices of texts and hymns – Peter's creative hand, he knew it should be like a service of nine lessons and carols, music and texts, with very little by way of liturgy. We all just made it through our passages. Peter and I weep as we sing, and hold each other. The address by John Brothwood brought needed laughter, as well as depth and fresh perspective. He'd not known either of them long, and he had had to overcome major health problems of his own to see the day through. John told how he'd given Mum and Dad Communion at the hospital, and how Dad had knocked out the morphine drip, and how she loved the mixture of the sacred and the profane, with a zest of humour.

"He had ended his little bedside service with the Nunc Dimittis, as we do in church, with a lovely setting, by the little-known Daniel Purcell (brother of Henry) sung by four excellent professionals that Tim Penrose, the organist, has enrolled. Dabble hits it off with him – he had played a piece of Daniel Purcell on the recorder with Carl Dolmetsch fresh from the archives of the British Museum, giving its first performance for 250 years. He has surprised Tim by asking him to play the Karg-Elert voluntary on 'Now thank we all our God' at the end, a rousing piece that Will Reid had played at their wedding more than 50 years before – Tim had a quiet meditative piece of Bach in mind. It was all over in just under an hour. I think people left ready for more, which is the right way.

"The Lomax's house and lovely garden in Carson Road are the perfect place for the reception. How incredibly generous and selfless of them to welcome these unknown hordes to their house. Another touching sign of this out-of-the-ordinary community in such an ordinary-looking typical suburban street. Dad's years as secretary of the 'Neighbourhood Watch Committee' have doubtless been an important part, as have Mum's art ventures, and their quality of friendship. We instal Dabble on a throne in the garden, and he holds court. Three, or is it four of the couples in the road tell us that they'll keep an eye on Dad, give us their addresses and phone numbers.

"Some days back, while I was still in Geneva, Peter had said on the phone how for years Mum and Dad had tried to 'change' people, but how in Carson Road, they'd just tried to be friends – and how that seems to have 'changed' people, or at least won their lasting love. The house and garden had been the scene for a 'Carson Road Art Venture' organised by Mumbo, and many of the artists are there.

"So it is fitting that one of Sir Martin Reid's paintings was on display at the front of the church, of the road to Emmaus text in the Bible, a story which has spoken to me deeply over these days. It's a text of this post-Easter season, and it's a story of travel. Mum was a great traveller. And in most of her travelling, she had a sense of Jesus travelling with her on her life's road. But she was also good company for others on their journeyings and part of what people were responding to was the Christ in her, the life-force, the love-force. There are pilgrim Christians (and Marxists, Muslims ...) and fortress Christians. The latter, of necessity, don't move much, and there's little doubt in my mind which sort is the most attractive, and which Mum was most akin to!

"I had chosen to read the Emmaus story (Luke 24), and it strikes me again how the disciples fail to recognise Christ, the person they love the most, have travelled so many miles with already. And how often we fail to see Christ in our fellow travellers. The text ends, 'And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight'. And that was the verse I almost couldn't read in church. I almost said 'she' for 'he' (– and indeed, I wrote it, and it was Eliane and Peter who both caught it, proof-reading). Our eyes have been wide open, her eyes were wide open. She didn't shirk what was coming. And she vanished out of our sight.

"Sunday 2nd May: Peter is up early and goes in to Dad. Dabble wants to go to early communion, and they've decided to go together. I join them, driving so that we can pick up Sir Martin's easel.

"Dad has started to write – Peter and I found him writing in bed on Saturday night – and he told us he was writing a letter to Mum. He read it out to us over breakfast on Sunday. It's become a kind of ongoing daily diary. The things he can no longer recount to his beloved life-partner, he puts on paper – and sends later to us.

"We've been surprised to sense the anger in us – Peter remarks on Dabble's violent and uncharacteristic swearing at a couple of ladies crossing the road, forcing them to slow down. I confess to almost wanting someone to be nasty to me at the hospital in the final hours, so that I'll have a pretext to bash them. Peter perceptively notes that we are probably raging at Mumbo daring to leave us, but we don't, we can't, express our anger directly to or at her. Perhaps we're also raging at the pain, the depth of feeling that we're being forced to go through.

"Peter and Annie go with Eliane to lunch with their friend Michele, while I drive Dad and Danielle to visit Bunny Austin, almost totally handicapped, but all there, 100% in possession of his mind and his memory."

(We arrive just in time to prevent a nurse wheeling him to the morning service. The Chaplain looked in on his way back, Bunny apologised for his absence, introduced us, and we had a real and moving talk about death.)

"Then we all go to a happy tea up the road with the Reids. We sit out in their garden; Peter pulls Jane's leg, recalling her visit to Mum in hospital, and how, when Dad had thanked her for coming, she'd said, 'I didn't come for you,

I came for her'. She then tells us about their first row on their honeymoon and I feel she's let us into a precious place in her heart."

(Martin phones me later and says it was the best time we ever had together.)

"Monday 3rd May: I arrive at the last page of the journal that Peter and Annie gave me some years ago, that has travelled with us in the Alps, that has been through quite an important slice of my life, the close of one of the richest and most intense weeks of my life.

"Eliane and Danielle leave and tomorrow I head up to Tirley Garth for three days of meeting to prepare for the first session of the summer in Caux, of which I am the co-ordinator. Peter and Annie leave for the States on Wednesday. Then I'm back again for two nights with Dad before heading home.

"The coming down to 'normal everyday life' is not going to be easy after the intensity of these days; their super-saturation of love; the semi-constant phone calls and their stimulation, several from Peter and Annie's different American friends. What a rich life my parents have made for themselves, what a gift they have for friendship.

"How I wish we could wear mourning, some badge of our grief, some sign to say to others that we come back from this other planet, from the frontiers of death. We're not yet at home back here. We're fragile, handle us with care. We don't demand that you listen; we'll try not to bore you if you ask us how we are, we'll try not to tell you the truth each time. We'll try to remember that it's just a formula, not a genuine question. I'm encouraged by a friend who lost her mother last year. She tells me that with time, the two worlds do come together again; that the precious things we experience at the frontier of death can be brought back into our daily lives, can become an integral part of our lives, of one whole life.

"And now, we, not being the one dead, must find our ways of living on. God bless Dabble through these days and weeks, and help us all to live through our mourning, to be real with ourselves and our feelings."

In July, Arnold Quainoo wrote to me from Accra, "Some cadets of Intake 1 and 2 contributed to order a special mass at the Catholic Church here for peaceful repose of the soul of Margo. We are all very sorry to learn of the sad news. But we are comforted by the fact that 'Great Souls Never Die'".

On Sunday 19th December the five of us were at St Peter's Church, Heswall, where Margo and I were married in 1947, looking out over the Dee estuary to the Welsh hills. On our family grave Mr David Williams of the Birkenhead Monumental Co had carved, "Margaret Stallybrass, née Bigland, 1912-1999". In bright sunshine the Rector, the Rev. Dr Jonathan Gibbs, led a procession of 30 to the grave, where he conducted a brief service, including a most appropriate address, before interring the ashes. This was followed by a buffet lunch in the Hotel Victoria.

Among the guests were twelve of Margo's relatives: John and Pat Bigland, Tim and Jan Bigland, Isabel Williams, Nicko and Jackie Williams, Peter Williams, Mary Garrod, Barbie Hannay, Do Hannay and Isabel Brotherston.

From Willaston came friends whom we had met through Tom Bigland: Betty Holloway and Hilary Hines (his housekeepers), Edgar Cottrell (his gardener), Duncan (his doctor) and Olive Macdonald, Roger and Anne Buckley, and Derek and Christine Bibby.

Also with us were two Heswall couples, Keith and Griselda Rawlinson and Guy and Jennie Kirkus.

Griselda's father had been doctor to many of our families and a great Heswall character. We had seen a plaque in the Church that morning: "Henry George Carlisle strove to relieve suffering and to give courage, gaiety and peace of mind".

I had been best man to Guy's brother, Colin Kirkus, the outstanding rock-climber of my generation, who was married in St Peter's in 1940 to Eileen Foster. Colin was killed in 1942 in an RAF raid on Hamburg. The reception after the wedding was the last time I had been in the Hotel Victoria and the first time I had met Guy.

APPENDIX 'D'

Service of Thanksgiving for the life of MARGO STALLYBRASS 1912-1999

**All Saints Church
Rosendale Road
West Dulwich**

Saturday 1st May 1999

HYMN – 'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah'

- 1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of Heaven,
Feed me now and evermore.

2. Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fiery cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jordan
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Lead me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs and praises
I will ever give to thee.

WELCOME / INTRODUCTION by Reverend Dr Robert Titley

1st READING – Psalm 121

BILL STALLYBRASS

- 1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.
- 2 My help cometh even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
- 4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord himself is thy keeper, the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand.
- 6 So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.

- 8 The Lord shall preserve they going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore.

HYMN – 'the Lord's my Shepherd'

- 1 The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want,
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
- 2 My soul he doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
E'en for his own name's sake.
- 3 Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill;
For thou art with me, and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.
- 4 My table thou hast furnishéd
In presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.
- 5 Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.

2nd READING – 'Parta Quies' by Alfred Edward Housman ANNIE JONES

Good-night; ensured release,
Imperishable peace,
Have these for yours,
While sea abides and land,
And earth's foundations stand,
And heaven endures.

When earth's foundations flee,
 Nor sky nor land nor sea
 At all is found.
 Content you, let them burn:
 It is not your concern;
 Sleep on, sleep sound.

3rd READING – Revelation 21, 1-7

ELIANE STALLYBRASS

- 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
- 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
- 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
- 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
- 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.
- 7 He that overcometh, shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

HYMN – 'Thine be the glory'

- 1 Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
 Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
 Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
 Kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.
 Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
 Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.
- 2 Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
 Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
 Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
 For her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.

- 3 No more we doubt thee, glorious prince of life;
Life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors through thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.
Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won!

4th READING – I Corinthians 13, 1-13

PETER STALLYBRASS

- 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love,
I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and
all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove
mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.
3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my
body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.
4 Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not
itself, is not puffed up,
5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily
provoked, thinketh no evil;
6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all
things.
8 Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;
whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge,
it shall vanish away.
9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.
10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be
done away.
11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought
as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I
know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
13 And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these
is love.

5th READING - Luke 24, 13-16, 28-31

ANDREW STALLYBRASS

- 13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about three-score furlongs.
- 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.
- 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.
- 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.
- 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as if he would have gone further.
- 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.
- 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.
- 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

HYMN – 'Abide with Me'

- 1 Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.
- 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.
- 3 I need thy presence every passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.
- 4 I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.
- 5 Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;

Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

ADDRESS by Reverend Dr John Brothwood

I feel that it is an impertinence that I should be honoured with saying a few words about Margo, but Bill, Andrew and Peter have assured me that it is what Margo would have wished – so who am I to argue?

The reason I feel inadequate is that Margaret and I have only come to know Bill and Margo in comparatively recent time – 4 years to be precise, and that is scarcely any time in a long life fully lived, and nothing compared with many of you here today.

But then I might argue that we saw the vintage Margo, in full possession of her personal and varied skills, innate as well as learned, set off in a body so frail that we marvelled that she managed to do anything – let alone so much. It was a truly remarkable achievement with no hint of self-pity nor anger at her physical disability: a cross which she and Bill carried bravely for 15 years.

I shall always remember Margo for her quite extraordinary charm – she truly loved people, wanting the best for them, the sort of love that Paul wrote about in the passage we heard read by Peter: the sort of love that takes a lot of practice to achieve, a true fruit of the Spirit. Of course, and quite rightly, her love started with her family – dear Bill, her partner for over 50 years, and her two sons, Andrew and Peter, of whom she was justifiably proud. But then it did not stop there; until the end of her earthly life she was gathering friends on her journey, and all who met her were touched for the better. She understood the meaning of Eliot's question:

"What life have you if you have not life together?
There is no life that is not in community,
And no community not lived in praise of GOD.

"There is no life that is not in community,
And no community not lived in praise of GOD."

And one of her ways of making community, as she did not find Church-going easy, was through painting, which led to the founding of the Carson Road group of artists. Now painting was her own thing in the family, and she had

a most pleasing talent with watercolours. I have an example here which accompanied the loan of a book – let me read the message on the back:

"I thought the enclosed might amuse you. This is an example of a 'Paltry Painting' – the sycamore tree at the bottom of the garden. I do them mainly for my sons abroad to show them how my garden grows. Love, Margo."

The self-effacement so typical of Margo.

Her recent trip with Bill to Washington to see her son Peter and Annie was just another example of her exploratory instinct, but also of her courage.

On her return from Washington with a broken arm, she had a recurrence of her abdominal symptoms and I had the privilege of taking the Sacrament to Margo and Bill in hospital. And what courage she showed: after much treatment a decision that her Lord was calling her to the next life then and there, coolly and rationally taken, enabling her to say her farewells to Bill and her family and so many friends. And who can but marvel over the 24-hour devotion shown to her by Bill, Andrew and Peter over the last four days?

Even in such circumstances her sense of humour did not desert her. In the middle of prayer her morphine syringe became disconnected; fortunately my Margaret was able to reconnect it, much to Margo's amusement. And then we resumed in prayer. But that was another example of the mix of the sacred and the frankly funny which so appealed to Margo.

I could go on, but I would not be able to do justice to such a remarkable being, however much time you and I had.

So let me close with John Bunyan's words as he prepared for the next life:

"I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are ended. I am going now to see that head that was crowned with thorns, and that face that was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself."

I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too.

His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes, His voice to me has been most sweet; and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His word I did use to gather for my food and for antidotes against my faintings. 'He has held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath he strengthened in his way'.

Now, while he was thus in discourse, his countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him; and after he had said, Take me, for I come unto thee, he ceased to be seen of them.

But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the Pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city".

PRAYERS

NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end,

Amen.

BLESSING

APPENDIX 'E' – TRIBUTES TO MARGO

"What light Margo spread wherever she went and how welcome will her laugh and chuckle be in Heaven."

"From all I have learned, these last days with Margo, the many visitors she has had, and the thoughts for others which she has expressed ... have been very blessed ones."

"We will miss her laughter and her impish sense of humour."

"With Margo there was no communication gulf, no discomfort, with her there was an immediate spark and, as she would say, 'boy oh boy' did it ignite us all ... We cannot thank her enough for all the life she triggered in us."

"I think of Margo's effervescent life, so loving, so filled with people, her joy in painting and creating lovely food – her openness about herself which created such a rapport with old and young alike."

"She was a remarkably attentive friend to so many. I often found myself amazed at her meticulous care for folks whom we also knew."

"She chose the time of her going just as she chose the way she lived her life, with determination, dignity, and a sense of what was fitting. How much I shall miss her laughter, her indomitable spirit, her compassion, and those bright blue eyes that seemed to see into one's heart."

"What an original, adventurous and affectionate person she was."

"Margo was a wonderful friend, a woman of valour and the deep understanding which comes from an honest heart; she knew how to look suffering in the eye – not run away from it."

"When she held your hand, she held your heart."

"When you talked to her you never thought you were talking to an 80-year-old, you felt you were talking to a 20-year-old."

"Margo was so loved by so many kinds of people, from teenagers, neighbours, the man who came to tidy the garden, generals and their wives. She was so effective in these friendships because her sense of gratitude to God for what He had done for her was a solid rock in her life. She lived eternally vulnerable, conscious of – and ready to tell you about – her frailties."

"I was very grateful for lovely meals Margo prepared and the care you gave us when we were newly married."

"She was a marvellous woman and fitted in so well everywhere."

"I can never remember anything but kindness from her; also her shining example of life; her love and loyalty to all who knew her, and her courage in surmounting ill health in the latter years."

"I think meeting Mrs Stallybrass touched my life for the better. She was an incredible personality with a wonderful zest for life."

"She was one of the liveliest and jolliest people I have ever met with a wonderful sense of humour and enormous kindness."

"It is sad for us all to lose someone so sweet and loving."

"She was a delightful, warm, generous person and it was a privilege to know her."

"I am grateful for the many riches she gave to our lives."

"She was so outgoing and had such a lively interest in all those she met, perhaps especially the young."

"Margo was a valiant trooper and a faithful friend. Her honesty and her joie de vivre were refreshing. We will miss her colorful letters and treasure the painting she made for H when he was ill. It hangs in our bedroom."

"We will very much miss her painted cards and letters full of interest and amusing observations."

"Margo's simple honesty about her own nature was refreshing and challenging."

"What a rich personality she was."

"At this time of her entry into unimaginable peace, how many memories of the graces given to you both in your long journey together must come to mind – the blessings which you shared with so many."

"What came across was her warmth of heart and her spirit of savouring life to the full – a mark of great grace considering her health difficulties."

"She always made it easy to go back in memory to that wonderful closeness we'd had as young children whenever we met."

"My impressions of her were always of humour, spunk and originality."

"I remember the meal we once had in your home when she decorated the plates with flowers from the garden. She was like a breath of fresh air."

"She has left a trail of blessings on her earthly path, and I am sure she'll find her heavenly path paved with those."

"A bright spark has gone from our lives. Margo was special. So enthusiastic and determined in what she did, she inspired others to greater heights ... With Margo we lose a special character. Full of stories of a more romantic time, but so enjoying the present and making the most of every minute. So many happy times we have spent together full of laughter."

"I always appreciated Margo's unguarded and humble honesty ... But my over-riding memory will always be of her enjoyment of life."

"Margo's valiant spirit is treasured by all who knew her."

"Margo's fearless questioning of motives and values was a challenge to my lazy inclination to take things for granted."

"Margo was such a 'giver'. She was such a vital, living person."

"She was so brave and uncomplaining and battled on most nobly, having had such a succession of illnesses, but always to return to her bright self again."

"When my husband ... died, she rang me every morning for a while. It helped me so much."

"Margo was a unique person, well known for her warm heart, loyalty, transparent honesty and absolute straight speaking."

"I remember Margo so full of life and joy, always ready for the next step in spite of her health problems. She was so courageous."

"She seemed to treat her illnesses with disdain and kept living her life, in mind actively until the end."

"We are grateful for the memories we have of Margo – ever open-hearted in these last years, full of enthusiasms, and extraordinarily relaxed as she lived ever at risk."

"How much we will miss those envelopes with the distinctive handwriting, remembering the important days and anniversaries in our lives, and always written with a warmth of heart that was contagious."

"So many wonderful memories ... Her laughter – sense of fun and encouragement were of enormous value to me ... I still have the letter she wrote when ... I got engaged. Over the years I have quoted it many times."

"The news of her death makes me most anxious to say how much meeting her, just that once, means to me. I saw then how her lifelong talent for, and practice of goodness and love, were triumphing over physical frailty. I remember her with deep admiration."

"More often than we could possibly recall we have been encouraged, stimulated, provoked to deeper thought, fascinated, intrigued and most often inspired by your Mom's passion for souls, her constancy in learning, her caring and her reaching out to young and old. What a great lady!"

"Margo's inclusion of all we single ladies meant a lot to me. So I only accepted my husband ... on condition he would welcome unmarried friends as Margo did ... she was a tonic to meet and know."

"I never met your Mother, Andrew, but almost felt I had as you wrote so vividly of her contribution to Caux a couple of years ago. She seemed to be intergenerational; a lot of humour and on the give."

"The world seems an emptier place without her and Carson Road is denied its most loved resident. I feel though that all our lives are enriched by having known her. She ... lived her life so fully and so full of love that one can only say that she had a wonderful and lasting effect on all who knew her."

"I only met her a few times but she was such a friendly and vivacious personality that I felt from the outset totally at ease in her company and that I already knew her well. She always behaved entirely naturally and without making any attempt to appear otherwise than she really was."

"I'll always remember her as such a lively person, always ready to make new discoveries, such an enquiring mind – in spite of her physical infirmity. And such courage!"

"Her 'joie de vivre' and her conviction and dedication filled my heart."

"I don't think I have ever known anyone with such a zest for life and of making everyone around her happy as well."

"What an irrepressible adventurous spirit she had, what a dependence and confident trust in the Guidance factor."

"Her sense of fun, imagination, artistry and sheer guts, as well as her gentle charm will live with me always."

"Meeting her even for the first time one quickly became conscious of what a rare person she was. So generous and affectionate, so interesting and interested in others."

"What fun we had! That is what I'll always remember of Margo: her fun and humor. She was an original person and was always unexpected."

"She was such a remarkably warm and generous person and was always such a good listener that she unfailingly left one feeling brighter and better."

"Margo struck me then ... as a person who was wonderfully unafraid of sharing her vulnerability and humanity – and hence someone with whom one felt greatly at ease and instantly connected."

"We found a happy common ground in reminiscence of the days when young were young. I loved hearing her talk of her own childhood – and her youthful enthusiasm for everything, overlaid with wisdom, is a memory I shall cherish. She told me that painting could be something for life and urged me on with the task. When I said I could never approach her talent she replied, in effect, 'Well dear, you will have learned to look at things in yet another way, and that is always a pleasure'."

"I have kept a very nice letter that Margo sent to me in October 1995. It's such a caring letter! I read it again this week. Margo shares about herself and finishes with these words: 'God will know your daily commitment to him and we all love you'. Her words touched me a lot and still do."

"She was a vivid personality, with her warmth and outgoingness.... She made us feel so much part of the family."

"I well remember those very happy excursions to your home, and the uncomplicated and terribly warm-hearted reception we received from her."

"She had a deeply questing spirit for the full truth on whatever was being talked about and I remember feeling how carefully she had prepared. Being with her was bracing and encouraging. And I also remember her sense of humour and of the ridiculous."

"We have such fond memories of Margo and especially her lovely letters – often with a beautiful illustration – (a recipe for marzipan was accompanied with a cheeky cheery robin!). She was indeed a very special person and Carson Road will never be the same again."

"Margo has been such a bright light for us all and has gone on giving herself through thick and thin."

"Unforgettable, unpredictable, totally original, loving and loveable Margo. What a life!"

"I only got to know Margo as an elderly lady, but the twinkle in her eye soon won me over."

"I always appreciated Margo's warmth of welcome and delightful laugh."

"I didn't know Margo very well, but I vividly remember 'experiencing' her dynamic and lively personality."

"She really was like a second mother to me and I felt I could tell her anything and she would understand and not judge."

"It was a privilege to know Margo and I well remember our first meeting and the links with Liverpool."

"I have very fond memories of Margo. I always remember the day I went to see you both when the children were pretty small and I felt rather exhausted by being a mother! You and Margo lived in Ascot then and the house had a wonderful garden ... That day spent with you both stays in my memory because you looked after me and the children in such a nice way and I treasure to this day the warmth and fun of those hours spent together ... In London ... again the same warmth and graciousness that made Margo such a lovely person. I am indeed lucky to have had her as my godmother!"

"I loved her sparkling eyes and the tongue-in-cheek expression. To me she was the walking description of a rascal, and I can think of no higher praise. She gave an air of joy and passion."

"Your Mum was always such fun – such a bright spark! ... I think of her as being a 'sound' person – earthy-wise. For such a diminutive person she leaves a whopping great gap! (Fortunately she passed on many of her qualities to her sons so the world hasn't been totally deprived of them.)"

"Margo's humility and honesty brought complete healing."

"We were so pleased to have been able to visit her in hospital, and will never forget the experience. She was so wonderfully cheerful and funny and her blue eyes shining – it somehow put death into its place in a most convincing way ... Her letters were always very special, although at times they hurt – however always from the heart – a quality that is so often missing these days."

"Margo was an exceptionally brave, affectionate and kind-hearted soul. I cannot remember any occasion when she was depressed or dispirited ... She had the rare quality of absolute love which so many of us talk about and so few really possess it."

"I remember Margo as so outgoing and caring for others."

"What a triumph! We are so grateful for her and all she gave in life."

"... that shining smile and sparkling eyes. She loved many people and many people loved her. I never failed to feel refreshed after a visit with her – it always included a good laugh as well. She was a tonic to many and I believe still is. She had an inborn sense of adventure that took many interesting turns – for instance the way she threw herself into becoming a better artist spoke of an enthusiasm few can maintain – but she went all out in her search."

"Margo was such a vibrant person and I loved seeing you both ... with lots of young people. We had such an honest and open talk. I'm sure so many people, young and old, have felt it natural to say some of the deepest things with you both."

"What I remember most about Margo was her indomitable spirit, her wicked sense of humour and her generosity. I've told many a friend and family member of the time I came to live at Milcote Cottage! A vase of fresh herbs, home made shortbread, essentials in the fridge and of course new paint and curtains. The first of many thoughtful gestures and gifts."

"We shall never forget how she produced a ring for me to mark our engagement in London, when I had no such item and no resources to get one either. And the other thing that moved us both was her extraordinary generosity in sending to my mother, with us, a lovely piece of porcelain – a plate, with roses on it. That meant such a lot to my mother, who has always had a very great love of fine china, something she inherited from her grandmother. Her comment about Margo was, 'You must have been staying with some lovely people!'"

"Nous vous souviendrons toujours de son sourire chaleureux, de ses yeux pétillant d'une intense énergie intérieure et de son authentique intérêt pour les gens."

"Fidélité dans l'amitié, générosité dans l'oublié de soi, bienveillance à l'égard des autres, imagination dans toutes les entreprises, tout ceci caractérisait Margo et bien plus encore."

"Je garde un beau souvenir de votre femme, de son hospitalité, de son accueil généreux et joyeux dans votre foyer."

"Sie war für uns nicht nur ein lebenssprühendes, kobholdhaftes, britisches Wesen, die pure Verkörperung von gutem Willen und positivem Denken, sondern auch eine Botschafterin *par excellence* für die Ideen von MRA, ganz einfach, weil alles ungeschminkt daherkam."

"Margo hat mir viele wichtige Dinge für's Leben beigebracht und ich werde sie nie vergessen."

APPENDIX 'G' – (from the Journal of the Pakistan Military Academy, 1989)

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE

This was the topic of a talk given to the Senior Intake on 13th May 1989 by Bill Stallybrass, formerly Senior Lecturer in Languages at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and Director of Studies of the Ghana Military Academy, and by his son Andrew, a member of the Institute of Journalists and of the Editorial Staff of the magazine *For a Change*.

Bill Stallybrass:

As Christians we are deeply sorry for the unnecessary division which has arisen between your faith and ours. As a family we aim to put right whatever wrongs we have done. We respect the motto of the PMA, which I gather means in English, "When God is with you victory is near". We also respect the motto of the RMA Sandhurst, "Serve to Lead". We try to live our lives based on the four standards of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. In all this, we feel there is no division between us and you. We believe it is the best means of understanding human nature and of bringing much needed change to the world around us.

My introduction to Islam came when I was asked as a Sandhurst lecturer to take a special English class for the first officer cadets to arrive from Malaysia, all of them of the Malay race. In an essay on 'My Country' one of them wrote: 'The only good Chinese is a dead Chinese'. I am glad to tell you that, about three years later, I had an excellent letter from him telling me how proud he was to command a platoon drawn from all races, including the Chinese. Some 25 years later, as a retired Major General, and as Ambassador to the Netherlands, he invited my wife and myself to stay with him in the embassy and, at a dinner party, he told his guests including ambassadors from several different nations, how much his time at Sandhurst had meant in his life.

The class of Malay cadets was severely disrupted by the arrival of four Jordanians, who created an unpleasant atmosphere of hostility. Our Malay friend told us that a tactless remark by an instructor had given the Jordanians the impression that we British in general were pro-Jew and anti-Arab. At his suggestion, we invited to our home the one who appeared to be the ring-leader and his particular friend. We included Andrew, my son here, then aged four, and his younger brother, aged two, in planning their visit. Andrew decided to learn their names beforehand and that he and Peter would play games with them and make them happy. While my wife prepared supper, the cadets helped me to bath the boys and put them to bed. Andrew then invited them to say prayers with him. I felt embarrassed, but they knelt down by his bed without any hesitation. Andrew thanked Jesus for a happy day and one of the Jordanians called on Allah in Arabic for a blessing on our family. Then he said, 'We are deeply moved, Sir, by the way you bring up your children in your faith. There is no great difference between your faith and ours. We believe in the same fundamental principles'. From that moment on, there was no further trouble in the classroom. The four Jordanians returned home no longer hostile to Britain and shortly afterwards their monarch, HM King Hussein, came to Sandhurst as an officer cadet.

My time at Sandhurst was not just an interesting career, but a life of many different facets to be lived to the full. In charge of the Mountaineering and Exploration Club, I used to take parties of officers, lecturers and cadets to a Climbers' Club hut in the mountains of Wales. Each cadet would be given a

special responsibility: cooking, catering, cleaning, equipment, transport, etc. Occasionally a particularly weak cadet would be encouraged by his Company or Battalion Commander to join us in the hope of improving his leadership qualities. One such cadet volunteered to cook breakfast each morning. Two mornings running he forgot to make the tea and, to make matters worse, moaned about the difficulties he was expected to cope with. I explained to him that, as an officer, he would be expected to get jobs done, not doing everything himself but including others. I suggested: 'While you're cooking the breakfast, someone is sure to look in; grab him and get him to make the tea'. Next morning I looked in to see how he was getting on. A wicked grin appeared on his face. 'Ah, Sir, will you make the tea?' He had learned his lesson.

50 years ago, I was an unsuccessful school teacher, defeated by my own outbursts of bad temper. I had lost whatever faith I had in God and was convinced that nothing could ever change someone as self-centred as myself. A simple decision to seek God's help and to try to live by those four standards has led to 50 years of continuously adventurous and satisfying life with friendships built in many different countries around the world, a life in which my wife, our two sons and their wives play a very full part.

Andrew Stallybrass:

It is said that you can tell an Englishman anywhere, but you can't tell him very much. My only excuse for standing here in front of you today is that I try to be a different kind of Englishman. We British tend to think that we know best, because we are white, because of our culture and our traditions, just because we are British. But the truth is we don't. We have progressed materially, but we are losing the art of living and the meaning and purpose of life. Before God I believe that all our countries stand in equal need of change. We in the West do not have all the answers; we cannot say 'follow us'. But perhaps we can all learn from each other.

Human nature is one of the great common factors in the world. We all have some of it and wherever you go in the world, it is very much the same. A friend of ours used to say, 'Crows are black the whole world over. You

can't stop them flying over your head, but you can stop them nesting in your hair'. I think there is a great truth in this.

The first essential in understanding human nature is to know your enemy. If you look in the mirror (holding up a mirror), you see yourself. And I think our first great enemy is ourselves. Most of us here in this room shave every day and have at least one good look at our enemy every day. We have one great advantage here over our lady friends, our wives and our mothers. Part of the purpose of all the moral codes of all our faiths is to help us to know ourselves, and moral standards such as those my father mentioned can help us to see ourselves as we really are. Like an X-ray they can help us to see into our hidden motives.

I once shared a room with another young man. I quickly came to hate or at least to dislike him very intensely. I noticed that we often used polite words to hide the real truth. I felt that most of his behaviour was geared to be the centre of attention for all the ladies. But when I was really honest with myself, I saw that I was jealous, that he was better at flirting and showing off to the girls than I was. When we talked it out we became friends and both of us became less flirtatious.

Most of us are several different people. We play different parts to different audiences. We are one kind of person with our friends and another with our parents or when the General is around. An important thing in life is getting to know ourselves as we really are and then trying to be the one person that God means us to be.

If we are realistic about ourselves, we may be realistic about others. Many of us tend to be very good at making excuses for ourselves on the very rare occasions that we fall short of our ideals and yet be unforgiving with others who have similar weaknesses.

Several years ago I lived in France for a while and, as you know, we British do not always get on very well with the French. When a Frenchman did something that I did not understand or did not like, my reflex was to say, 'typical of these French. They are all so unreliable, unpunctual, unpleasant'. But with a British friend I would only say to myself 'Old Fred, he's like that.

You have to make allowances for him'. This kind of attitude is the beginning of racism – the kind of attitude that says, 'I am not really a racist; I just don't like foreigners'.

The fact is that it is very easy for us to be logical about other people's and other countries' problems. The further away and the less involved we are, the easier it is. But as soon as you come closer to home, emotions cloud my judgement and I suspect yours too. Certain subjects come up and our pulse rate goes up. So reason is not enough; we need to study the power of unreason and emotion in ourselves and in others. Others need more than good advice; they need our good example.

If we are honest about ourselves we may sometimes help others. My natural reflex is to lie and cover up to protect the good image that I hope others have of me, rather than instantly confess a mistake or admit that I have not had time to finish some task. Yet lies and cover-ups lead you into ever more lies and usually end up in the daylight for all to see. I have been amazed at the number of political scandals that have shaken countries in the West; so often they could have been avoided by a little pre-emptive honesty. Honesty builds trust, whether in the home with parents or a wife, or beyond. The bravest thing I have ever done was to measure my life against these four standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love and to be honest with my parents and with my younger brother about all that I was most ashamed of. My wife and I had a similar painful but healing time of honesty with each other before we got married. It is a great freedom to have no skeleton in the cupboard, no horrible secrets left hidden.

If we are firm with ourselves, then we may have the moral authority to be firm with others. That is the importance of using absolute standards as a measuring-rod. It means measuring our actions by such standards and not just by comparing ourselves with others. I have seen several of you wearing a parachute badge. I am sure that none of you would want to use a parachute that opens most of the time. Similarly none of us would like to fly with a pilot who almost knows how to fly or to be looked after by a doctor who is almost competent. We can always ease our conscience by finding others who are worse than ourselves. But we may need to ask ourselves, 'Am I absolutely honest?' rather than 'Am I better than many others that I see around me?'

(At this point Andrew illustrated the difference between theory and practice with a colourful visual aid and a mime of sewing on a button.)

I want to conclude with a brief example from my own experience of how a change in people and in their motives can play a part in changing nations. Zimbabwe, in Southern Africa, became independent in 1980 after a bitter civil war that lasted eight years. At least 25,000 people were killed, 250,000 were wounded and about a million people were made refugees out of a population of only eight million. I lived there for the last 18 months of that war. The white settler regime of Ian Smith was desperately trying to put off the day when black rule would come. Alec Smith, the white Prime Minister's son, was a drop-out. He was in trouble with the police over drug taking and drug smuggling. He was kicked out of university. Then he had an experience of faith that helped him clean up his life; he started to see the situation in his country with new eyes and felt that his faith was leading him to do something about it. He won the trust and confidence of some of the black nationalists. He and his friends helped prepare the way for talks between the white government and the black nationalists. In internationally supervised elections the black nationalist leader, Robert Mugabe, won.

Before the results were announced, the country was on a knife-edge. The whites in the Army wanted to launch a coup d'état. Alec Smith and one of his black friends, led by God, sought to bring his father and Robert Mugabe together. They had never met privately; they had only attacked each other in public and fought on the battlefield and in negotiations. But they met in private by night and came to an understanding. Ian Smith then went on television urging the whites to stay on and serve the new country and to trust her new leaders. The coup d'état was called off. Some journalists called it a miracle.

Alec Smith, the former addict, went on to become a chaplain in the new Zimbabwe Army. And the new Army is made up of black and white soldiers, some of whom had served under the old white regime, others of whom had fought as guerrillas of two rival nationalist groups, all welded together into one force, thanks partly to a British Army training mission. Alec Smith described to me the almost dream-like quality of the presentation of colours to the first Commando Battalion. The new black Prime Minister, Mugabe,

presented them to a white Colonel, his sworn enemy of a few months before; between the two men stood the son of Mugabe's greatest enemy blessing the colours as an Army chaplain.

Human nature can be changed, and changed human nature can transform hopeless situations. I have seen it happen with my own eyes and it can all start with that good look in the mirror every morning.

There followed a question and answer session:

Question:

Sir, what are your views about the India people and their mentality?

Andrew:

I think it is always very dangerous making great generalisations about other people. I have many Indian friends and I have visited India. The more I get to know them and their country, the more I realise that I don't know. The great privilege of our time here in Pakistan has been to get to know some of your countrymen quite well. I just hope that all of you will have a chance, at some point, to do that with Indians for yourselves.

Question:

There are people having dual nature and one cannot judge their personality. In that case what has one to do to understand their nature?

Andrew:

I think a very important part of this point relates to understanding yourselves well. The more we understand ourselves, the less judging we get about others.

Bill:

I remember three separate occasions in the army during the war when there were fellow officers with whom I just could not get on at all. After a time I realised that the things I criticised in them were very much in myself and needed putting right. When I did that simple act of looking at myself in

the mirror and putting right what was wrong in myself, I found that those officers, each in turn, became my best friends.

Andrew:

We were talking last night about the concept of Jihad and I think that there is an inward Jihad that you have to fight all your life long. There are certain things that we can change and be free from for ever. There are other things that are so deeply part of our nature that they will always be there and we will always have to fight with them.

Question:

My question relates to apartheid in South Africa. Is it in accordance with human nature or do you think there is a need for a change as far as these Africans are concerned? What do you think about the *Intifada* going on in Palestine, that is, the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territory? Do you think they are really justified in their stand and they should get their rights?

Andrew:

As a white person, I think apartheid is wrong and it must change. It will change, but whether through violence or through peaceful means I do not know. But I think it is important for all of us to see that the same things that we criticise white people in South Africa for may be in our own hearts as well towards other people, perhaps in our own country, who belong to different tribes, areas or castes. Attitudes of superiority and racism are part of human nature and are universal. What is particularly wrong in South Africa is that those wrong attitudes are enshrined in the laws of the land.

About the Palestinians and their situation at present, I feel that a lot of it is based on hatred because of past wrongs. As I see it, hatred breeds hatred and one act of aggression breeds another. I see the only hope in a change in human nature, where people from both sides can begin to get together and build the sort of teamwork that will ultimately bring peace.

What I saw in Zimbabwe was that there was a war to change injustice. My own personal view is that there had to be that war, otherwise white

attitudes would not have changed. But there comes a point in every conflict situation where enough people on all sides are ready to start thinking and talking about peace. Our work was to help to prepare for that moment.

Question:

What do you think about the attitudes of Christians or the British towards the Muslims?

Bill:

We both feel deeply sorry for the arrogance that our country and the West has often shown towards your country, culture and faith. Somehow deep in our bones we think we know best, and one of the hardest kinds of superiority to deal with is the unconscious kind. I hope that we are growing in wisdom and understanding, partly because our own society has so many of your faith in it. One of the largest mosques in the world is in London and we are blessed with some great leaders in the Muslim community in Britain who are doing their best to help us white British to understand your faith and appreciate it. Our media, too, have played a positive part.

We have had some very good television programmes about Islamic art, architecture and culture.

With regard to the unfortunate publication which has recently created division throughout the world, writers have supported Salman Rushdie on the grounds that we must have free speech. But I am glad that at least one prominent writer has pointed out that free speech carries with it responsibilities. It is difficult to deal with these things through legislation, but we can encourage writers everywhere to use their writing to bring healing rather than division.

Question:

Do you preach pacifism or are you a pacifist?

Bill:

I studied in Germany and had many German friends. When war broke out, I hated the idea of fighting against them and wanted to be a pacifist, but one day I had the thought, 'You think of becoming a pacifist, but you have no peace in the school where you are teaching, no peace in your home and no peace in your heart'. I apologised to the most difficult class in the school for my bad temper and laziness in preparing my lessons and to my stepfather for my rudeness to him when he had tried to help me face my alcohol problem. Peace came into my heart and pacifism as a theory disappeared. I saw it as my duty to fight, not only to defend my own country, but also to defeat the evil that had overtaken the Germany that I loved. I consider myself a peace-maker, which is quite different from a pacifist.

Question:

How, in your opinion, can we change and influence others just by changing ourselves?

Bill:

Change can only come from above, from God, from Allah, and that is why religion or faith is so important. I cannot change other people myself, but perhaps through my example I can help others experience what I myself have experienced.

Andrew:

That is the point of demanding a lot of yourself, of being firm with yourself and having a certain discipline in yourself. Of course there is violence and dishonesty in human nature. There are all these vices in all of us, but goodness is also a very attractive quality and as people see goodness in you, they will want that goodness for themselves.

APPENDIX 'H' – "HANGING BY A THREAD"

Reflections by Andrew Stallybrass, 'For a Change,' Oct/Nov 1998

I'd just stopped and turned to my brother; 'Careful,' I said, 'I think there's a crevasse just ahead.' And as I was saying it, the snow crust beneath my feet

crumbled, and I was falling into another crevasse which had been hidden without a trace a few seconds before.

I dug in my ice axe and hung on, with my head and shoulders out of the hole. I kicked my cramponed boots into the soft snow above the icy void under my feet. My brother held me by the rope that joined us. I'd twisted my knee as I'd fallen, and we were both frozen still for a few seconds. Then he pulled hard, and I scrambled, hauled, heaved, and I was safe, out of the hole, my mind still on the massive crack that I'd seen beneath, where I could so easily have left my life.

Carefully, still almost in shock, we made our way back up the glacier, following our own footsteps. We wound our way between other crevasses, painfully working our way back to where we saw other tracks, going another way.

I have a guardian angel, and he's my brother. Life looks and feels a little different! We faced the worst, and with luck, and thanks to correct equipment and training, we both came through it. Only hours before, we'd been wondering how we'd face such a test, if it came. We'd questioned others: how had they handled such dangers? Now we've seen. Without seeking it, our baggage of experience has been richly increased.

It is slightly paradoxical. We, particularly we men, seem to be made for risk and danger. Risk sports are booming: canyoning, bungee jumping, paragliding – and climbing. But while some of us seek out risks, the daily experience of millions is made up of unavoidable danger.

Terrorist attacks remind us all of the cruel fragility of life. I live a protected life in a peaceful and prosperous country, but most of humanity, for most of our history, has lived through wars, famines, natural disasters. The norm has not been my largely untroubled experience, but precariousness and vulnerability.

I was saved by my brother, by the rope that joined us. But is there not an invisible cord, linking us all together? Can I learn that sensitivity to others' dangers, to others' needs, to hold others back from the brink? Our western civilisation has encouraged us to be autonomous individuals, but we are also

called to live in community, to depend on one another, to be guardian angels, without wings – just as we are, but aware of each other, members of the same family, humanity.