

# **IF GARDENS COULD SPEAK**

**The Family of H4**



**Colin Eustace**

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## Acknowledgements

This book has been compiled from public records, anecdotes, notes and photographs. My thanks go mostly to my mother for the blue exercise book she left us, my wife for her sharp editorial eye and to my daughters for their input, feedback and advice.

# Foreword

## Leaving Stoke Poges

What do you do when we go, when we  
turn, walk to the car, say wasn't it nice  
to come and we must do it again,

and soon? Do you settle and listen  
to the clouds speak, reach out a hand  
to draw us back, wish we hadn't been?

Does the soil settle in its earth-spin,  
leaf-drift cover the grief that we  
came, spoke to you for a while,

left again? Do you count the hours  
we took to arrive, replay news  
you've already seen, think we look older

these days? And do we put our seat-belts  
on, decide what to have for tea, say  
how nice the gardens look

this time of year; stare out the window  
at the gates, the church, the road;  
cannot stay, cannot go, know

that while you're here, remembered,  
quiet, so are we; that when at last  
we leave, we take you home?

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# The garden

This is a story of an ordinary family; a family of achievements, legend and remembrances. It is also a family which has suffered heartache and hardship and these notes will hopefully serve as a testament to these things and provide a contextual template for future generations to build on.

The H4 mentioned in the title wants some explanation.

My Grandmother, Frances Eustace (née Weston, 1876 – 1957) purchased a plot of land in the Gardens of Remembrance at Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire in June 1944. The plot number is H4 and it cost her £200, which constituted half a year's salary in those days. Her youngest son John died of tuberculosis on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1944, and we know his impending death triggered the purchase.

Below is a picture of the main avenue in the Gardens<sup>1</sup>:



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<sup>1</sup> The memorial gardens cover nine hectares adjacent to Stoke Park. They are a cemetery for cremation burials only. The gardens were laid out to an innovative design, having none of the traditional buildings or memorials associated with funerary sites. Features include ponds, formal and informal gardens, fountains, knot gardens, a central parterre and tree avenues. In 1928 Sir Noel Mobbs gave a piece of gently sloping open parkland for a garden of remembrance. The garden was laid out by Edward White of Milner, Son and White, Landscape Architects, during the early 1930s. The layout was completed in November 1937. The site remains in use as a garden of remembrance. It underwent a major restoration programme, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, in 2002-04 and is run by the Local Authority. Address: Stoke Poges Garden of Remembrance, Church Lane, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, SL2 4NZ



To date all close Eustace family members who have passed on have had their ashes placed in H4. At the time of writing, my Mother (Kathleen Thelma Eustace, née Wyles, 1906 – 2002) and my Aunt, Gladys 'Pip' Eustace (née Chapman, 1917 – 2004) were the last to be interred there.

The gardens were maintained by the fund set up with the original purchase monies but funding is now through the Council and voluntary donations. The current custodian of H4 is my daughter, Claire.

H4 is a lovely little glade surrounded by trees overlooking the lake and Stoke Golf Club. Frances chose it because of its location and view. John had been a keen sailor and had owned the *Helina*, a 14 foot National sailing dinghy.

Below is a picture of H4 in summer:



The gardens are very well kept and if you look closely, you will see a chair in the shadows. This is still known as 'Grandma's Chair' although the original has recently been replaced after some sixty years of service. The chair was originally bought for Frances Eustace, who was known to me as 'Nanny Fan', to help her because she had a pinned hip. It now serves me when I visit with my replacement hip!

My Father (George Frank Eustace, 1902 – 1986) believed that the definition of 'family' was that if someone was a fifth cousin twice removed, they were close relatives! This history, however, is about people who are much closer to my immediate blood line. My aim is to try and answer the "Where do I come from?" question that a descendant of mine may someday ask.

# A bit of history

My Father's middle brother, Donald William Eustace (1908 – 1990) worked on the family tree for some forty years and founded the Eustace Families Association in 1976.

Don tended to bore us stiff each Christmas with tales of what he had found out about the family over the past year, but we must admire his dedication to the project and his establishment of a loose line of Eustaces back to 1066.

The Eustace Families Association still continues today, mostly driven by our American relations and its website is <http://www.roneustice.com/>. See page 7 for more details.

Don wrote two books during his lifetime on this topic, 'The Elusive Crown' published in 1988 by Justus Press (ISBN: 0950424617) and 'The Eustaces of the Chiltern Hundreds'<sup>2</sup>, copies of which are, at the time of writing, in the keeping of both my daughters.

Uncle Don's research of the family tree revealed evidence of connections back to 1066 and to Eustace, the Count of Boulogne 2.<sup>3</sup> There is, unfortunately, a two hundred year gap in the records in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, however, the name does continue in the same village during this period which leads me to believe that the family is the same one.

**There is some evidence that Eustace was a patron of the Bayeux Tapestry and this illustration is believed to show Eustace, Count of Boulogne, telling William to raise his visor so his troops know he is alive. He also carries the papal banner of Alexander II, which William of Poitiers claimed was given to William to signify the church's blessing of his venture.**



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<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/fhcatalog/supermainframeset.asp?display=titledetails&titleno=35694&disp=Th e+Eustaces+of+the+Chiltern+hundreds%20%20&columns=\\*,180,0](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/fhcatalog/supermainframeset.asp?display=titledetails&titleno=35694&disp=Th e+Eustaces+of+the+Chiltern+hundreds%20%20&columns=*,180,0)

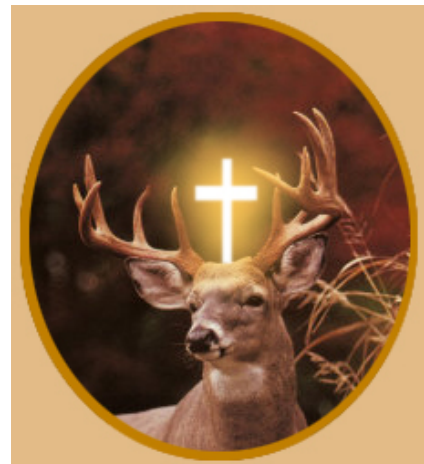
<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 1 for a history of the Count's life.



# Eustace Families Association

**The Eustace Families Association was formed in 1976 by the late Donald W. Eustace of Chiswick (London), and other family members with the intentions of:**

- Preserving for posterity the considerable knowledge now held in the histories of families originating in Flanders, Normandy and the British Isles who bear the name "Eustace" or spelling variants thereof and of their descendants throughout the world.
- Encouraging and assisting namesakes to research the story of their immediate family and to disseminate the knowledge gained to those interested.
- Developing and extending friendship and understanding between namesakes and welcoming visitors from overseas.
- Organizing family events and gatherings such as musters, tours and reunions.
- Membership is open to all bearers of the surnames Eustace, Eustice, Eustis, Eustance, Eustache and other variants as well as to descendents of these families.



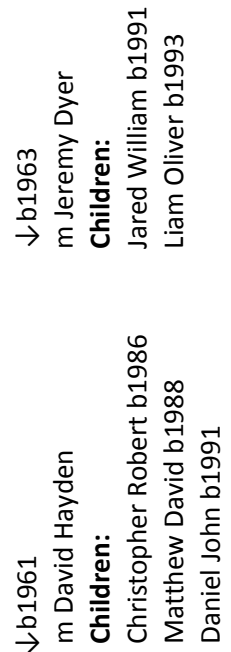
**These pages © Ronald & Margaret Eustice, 2010**

Another notable story is that my great-great-great-great-grandmother, Elizabeth Eustace, née Pocock, had twenty-two children, but I am afraid that despite putting an article in the family magazine asking for relatives to get in touch, no replies have been forthcoming. Elizabeth is buried in Chinnor Church yard and we do have a photograph of her, taken about 1880. Much of the records gathered by Don Eustace are of the family around Watlington, Pryton, Chinnor, in the Chilton Hundreds, hence the name Don gave to his book.

**The motif of the Eustace Families Association (right) show representations of St Eustace. Further details about St Eustace can be found in Appendix 2.**



Below is an extract from the modern day Eustace family tree. Those on the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth tiers on the left hand side are the inhabitants and/or custodians of H4.





# Each person has a story

## George Philip Eustace, 1872 – 1950

To my father's generation, my grandfather, George Philip Eustace was always known as 'Father'. He was a pillar of the Nonconformist Church at Gunnersbury, near Chiswick in West London.

He was teetotal until one Christmas when he asked for an orange juice and he got one laced with gin. Having tasted it he said to his son, my father, "Frank, this is very good orange juice!" We never dared do it again!



On his weekend visits to my parents' home, 'Levendale', 8 Ladymead, Guildford, Surrey, he would attend various churches. One weekend, he visited the Friends Meeting House, a place of worship of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). He was asked as he entered the room if he had a letter and, as he did not have one, he was asked to sit behind a barrier.

There was only one other person sitting behind this barrier, and Grandpa thought that they may have been placed there in disgrace. When my father later asked him what he had thought of the service, my grandfather replied that he did not think, if Jesus had attended the service, he would have had a letter!

Having married Frances in 1901, George Philip lived through three Wars, five monarchs, had three sons and three grandchildren. He relaxed by reading library books, but always kept them tucked in a leather cover, so we never knew what sort of books he liked. He rigged up a torch in his brief case so he was able to read in the train during the 'black out' during the War.

As a young boy I picture him cleaning the steel knives on an emery board in the kitchen on a Friday night; there was little stainless steel in those days. My other memories include his tin of sweets which had a padlock on the lid, hearing how he put out an incendiary bomb in the street outside their house in Ridgeway Road, in Osterley, Middlesex during World War II, and sleeping in his Anderson Shelter on my visits to my grandparents' house.

He retired in 1950 and he and my grandmother moved to 'Levendale' to live with my parents, but he died just three weeks later. My father always said that 'Father' had wanted to die to answer the question of whether there was or wasn't the existence of an afterlife. When clearing out my mother's flat in 2002 we came across a font presented by Gunnersbury Church (where I was christened) in memory of my grandfather. The inscription reads, "George Eustace 1872- 1950, Deacon 1897 – 1950. "He did part of his duty."" We are not sure where this inscription is from, but it is not to be found in the Bible.

When my parents and I visited this church when I was a boy, I was sometimes asked to pump the organ by hand. My cousin Peter took on this role after me. The organ was played by my other cousin, Eustace Escott and both he and his piano will feature later in this story. I am pleased to say that they did eventually fit an electric pump on the organ!

## **Frances Eustace (née Weston, 1876 – 1957)**

‘Nanny Fan’ had three sisters and an elder brother. Her Father was a leather merchant in London and, in fact, Nanny Fan was born within the sound of Bow bells and always claimed she was a Cockney. Her youngest sister Kitty lived a long life, reaching her 100th birthday in the 1970’s. After receiving a telegram from the Queen at her birthday party, a local reporter asked Kitty how she felt being one hundred years old and she replied, “Like always with my hands!”



To me Auntie Kitty was my ‘Giddy Aunt’, full of fun after a very hard life on the Canadian Prairies. They returned to England in 1937 and my mother and her father helped her daughter, Kath, a great deal after her husband, Dick O’Mahony, died as a relatively young man. In fact my wife, Elaine, and I had Kath to live with us for a number of years towards the end of her life because she had no direct family of her own. Sadly, for the seven years before she died, Kath lived in a residential home in Peterborough, suffering from dementia but I am sure she did not know where she was.

I was six in 1937 and I remember being taken at five in the morning by car to Southampton to meet the liner that brought Auntie Kitty and her husband, Walter Gray, back from Canada. All Auntie Kitty could say was, “Oh boy! Oh boy!” She certainly wanted to come home to England after some thirty arduous years in Canada. I can picture Uncle Walter carrying his fishing rods as we walked around the decks. I think we had lunch on board, but I am not sure on this point.

Frances’s brother, James Weston, had two sons, Frank and William, and five grandchildren. These cousins were all older than me but I often visited them with my parents at their homes in Iwer, near Slough when I was young. We nearly always had Marmite sandwiches for tea I recollect, which I did not like at all!

Frank’s children, Trevor and Pauline, and William’s children, Derek, Moira and Keith, maintained contact over the years, especially whilst my parents were alive, through Christmas cards and occasional parties.

I am afraid that of William’s three children, Moira is the only survivor and she lives with her husband Christopher Risdale-Smith in Burpham, near Guildford in Surrey. Trevor lives in St Ives, Cornwall and Pauline in Sevenoaks, Kent.

Back to Grandma: she was definitely a matriarch; a woman who was clever with her hands, making both a frog suit for me at primary school and a pigskin weekend bag when I was at boarding school. She would often say to me, "Real leather. Smell it boy."

Frances and George lived at 1 Arlington Gardens, Turnham Green, Chiswick, London, and the name 'Arlington' became well known in our family because when money was tight, Frances would borrow money from her sons which she would pay it back at building society rates. When I was a young man I also borrowed money from my father and my children have also benefitted from 'Arlington' type loans!

As a young woman Frances trained as a milliner and ran a hat shop for some time. After moving in with my parents and, on the death of her husband, she spent many hours in the garden and greenhouse at 'Levendale' putting her green fingers to work. My wife Elaine and I still have the bow-fronted sideboard and bookcase she brought with her to 'Levendale', and my daughter, Claire, has her eight day chiming bracket clock.



**I was very fond of Nanny Fan, and there is a photograph, which appears later, of my parents' wedding breakfast which features both George and Frances, and here is one with Nanny Fan in the garden at 'Levendale'**

**My grandparents had three sons, George Frank born in 1902, Donald born in 1908, and John born in 1915. I will start with the youngest John.**

## **John Philip Eustace, 1915 – 1944**

My uncle John was the youngest son of my paternal grandparents. He was a clever young man, qualifying as a quantity surveyor and, like his mother, very good with his hands. He built a model sailing boat which, to my great joy, he gave me one Christmas and which my father and I sailed on the Round Pond in Hyde Park. There was no radio control in those days!

John owned a 14 foot National racing dingy and tried to sail it along the south coast one summer holiday, but was beaten by tides off Portland Bill. After he died I had my first sail in this boat with his brother, my other uncle, Don, and we nearly capsized.



John and Don also built a Canadian Canoe which I repaired when I was sixteen years old and, with a friend, paddled from Guildford to Twickenham. Later we were to continue our journey in Don's 18 foot National The Foggy Dew to Whitstable on the Thames Estuary. It was on the crossing from Canvey Island to Whitstable that we entered a heavy rain storm and could not see a thing. I had been taking cross bearings on the chart so we had an idea where we were and so, with compass to the fore, we sailed on. However, we heard waves and beached only to find ourselves right opposite Whitstable Yacht club. Some of the other boats ended up in Margate and had to sail back the next day. How is that for a bit of navigation, or luck!

John married Molly, a nurse at the Ventnor TB hospital. After his death she had to retrain as a nurse under her maiden name because she had married an ex-patient. Molly later married a Scottish engine driver and became the District Nurse in a small village near Ayr in Scotland. They had one son and my father kept in touch with Molly right up to her death.

One snowy Christmas, John, his two brothers, and yours truly (aged about six), enjoyed being towed behind my father's car on a homemade toboggan until we were stopped by a spoilsport of a local policeman!

John's early death in 1944 from TB at the age of just twenty-nine triggered the purchase of the H4 in Stoke Poges Gardens of Remembrance.

## **Donald William Eustace, 1908 – 1993**

Uncle Don and my father formed the 8<sup>th</sup> Chiswick Scout Troop which, when combined with the Catholic troop, became the 8/15 Chiswick.

My father was called 'Skipper' and Don was called 'Pilot'. At many camp fires 'Pilot' would bring out 'Jimmy the One', a ventriloquist's doll dressed as a Sea Scout and, in the darkness, Don would hold very amusing conversations with Jimmy the One. Don had found the doll on a bomb site in London during the Blitz.

Don's family was very musical and his wife, Pip, played the guitar and piano and their children, Peter and Frances Mary still play instruments. At Christmas parties at 'Levendale', we had many concerts and Peter would often play a descant to the carols on his flute. Frances Mary became a professional bassoonist. After graduating from Cambridge, Peter worked in PR for BP and Cable & Wireless.



**This picture shows Donald with his wife Gladys 'Pip' Marie and their children, Peter Vaughan and baby Frances Mary, in 1956**



Don took part in the Normandy landings on D-Day after volunteering to man a trawler that serviced the invasion fleet at Spithead. In fact he was nearly taken across the Channel as the crew might have overheard the plans on the eve of D-Day. In fact they were forbidden to land for forty-eight hours and Don told us that whereas Spithead was full of ships the night before D-Day, it was completely empty by daylight on the actual date of the landings.

Don ran Escotts of Brixton, originally the wheelwright business founded by my paternal grandfather's brother-in-law, Jimmy Escott. When Escotts was closed down and the land sold, my cousin Peter and I benefitted from the Trust fund that had supported Jimmy's blind son, Eustace, throughout his life.

Jimmy Escott was an orphan who made good. He was a strong influence on me because each birthday and Christmas he would give me three or four classical music records which, I believe to this day, opened my ears to the classics. Eustace had a Bechstein piano which was given to my father's church (Guildford United Reformed Church, Portsmouth Road, Guildford) when Eustace had to go into residential care. Promoted by Peter and Jean Burge, the piano would later be refurbished via a legacy from my mother's estate, plus a large legacy from another family, and unveiled on 29th October 2006. All my immediate family were at the rededication service, and I know my mother would be pleased to think she had helped the church to maintain this strong musical tradition.

Don also had a major influence on my life, arranging for me to stay with a French family after the Scout Jamboree in 1947. Despite failing in French at school, this visit gave me enough basic French to survive a twenty minute interview (in French) with the Vice President (Technical) of the cosmetic company, L'Oréal, a few years later and to get the job!

My uncle also gave me the opportunity to crew his 18 foot National sailing dingy on many occasions and we participated in the National championship. I am afraid that being river people from Twickenham, we could not compete with the sea sailors of Whitstable and came well down the fleet, both at Burnham and Chichester regattas.

I repaired the *Kelpie*, a 12 foot lug sail dingy for Don and it was this boat which gave Pip's nephew, Tony Hatch<sup>4</sup>, the inspiration to write "*Mucking about on the River*", a hit song in the fifties.



**'The Foggy Dew'**

Don's son, Peter, has moved well up the scale in yachting, having sailed in the Fastnet Race and owning a 36 foot ocean going sailing yacht. Peter has even sailed to the Azores and back, but he did say, "Never again!" He is currently trying to qualify for the Fastnet race with his son, John.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony\\_Hatch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Hatch)

I met Don's first wife, Felix, at the Scout Jamboree in 1947. They had been separated on refugee duties after the war when they both ran camps for the refugees in Europe for the Boy Scout organisation. They later divorced.

He met his second wife, Gladys 'Pip' at a party where she sang the song, *"The Foggy Dew"*. They were married soon after and named their 18 foot National the "Foggy Dew", see photo on page 13. After Don's death, Pip continued to live in Staveley Road in Chiswick until 2004 when she moved to Suffolk. She died on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

At my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party, Pip reminded us all that her sister-in-law, my mother, always warned her not to go out with Don in the car without taking a can of petrol as he was very prone to running out of fuel. Indeed, I spent a journey or two on buses looking for garages when out with my Uncle Don!

## **Gladys 'Pip' Eustace, 1917 – 2004**

Pip was born Gladys Marie Chapman and grew up in Deptford, the third daughter of Sidney & Florence (née Kemp). The 'Chapman girls' were Florence, Eileen (mother of Tony Hatch), Gladys and Vera. Sidney Chapman was a butcher and had his own shop. He also opened a shop for his son but this was not a success, at least to start with, and for a few years during her childhood things were pretty tough. As a result, Pip used to spend her school holidays in Cornwall where she had relatives, the Tonkins, on her mother's side.

Pip was briefly married before the war, her first married name being Weekley. She qualified as a teacher after the war, moving to Chiswick to teach first at Belmont Junior School, then at Strand on the Green. It was while she was there that she met Don having been introduced as someone who might be interested in becoming a Lady Cubmaster via their mutual friends the Hawkeys.

The name Pip came about because she gave everyone the pip and the name stuck, with her preferring it to her legal name and, presumably, to the nickname, 'Mickey' which she had earned during her days at teacher training college because of her irrepressible optimism, like Mr Micawber!



**Photographs of their plaques**

# Take two people

George Frank Eustace, 1902 – 1986



**This is a picture of my parents' wedding breakfast. No, that is not me on the right. I was born two years later!**

From left to right:-

My mother's sister, Patricia (my mother's sister); Frances Eustace (Nanny Fan); Bob Emerson (he gave both my mother and her mother away at their weddings); My Mother; My Father; my mother's mother (Nanny Queen); my grandfather, George Philip Eustace; a page and a bridesmaid.

At the age of eight, my father was run over by a horse and cart in Chiswick High Road and a policeman wheeled him to hospital on a hand cart. Remarkably, they sewed up his liver and he lived to be eighty-four!

However, due to his damaged liver, Dad was not allowed to play sports, but he did well at school, gaining a place at a Grammar type school.



He worked initially for a French Bank, claiming that he walked into the Royal Exchange in London as if he owned the place! He also knew the numbers of many of the buses in London by heart as he had to take bills of exchange to the various banks.

He learnt the international language Esperanto. I am glad to say for us all that English seems to have taken on this role these days!

As I have already mentioned he supported the Scout Movement going to the home of scouting at Gilwell and eventually becoming District Commissioner for Heston and Isleworth.

In 1929 he married Kathleen Thelma Wyles and I was born in 1931.

Before World War II my father ran Dennis Contracts, a selling and hire purchase company from offices in Victoria Street London. His offices were bombed one weekend, and he transferred to the Guildford works, eventually becoming Company Secretary and a Director of Dennis Brothers Ltd.<sup>5</sup>

In Guildford, after much trouble with sitting tenants in their London home, Dad managed to purchase 'Levendale', but I'm afraid to say that my mother was disappointed with the house because it was not in what she considered to be a posh part of Guildford. After my father's retirement, my parents bought a flat in Rookwood Court on the Portsmouth Road opposite the church that Dad help relocate from North Street in Guildford during his time there as Church Treasurer. Unfortunately, 'Levendale' was later demolished to make way for flats. My mother's 'Levendale' tea parties and sweet trolleys were legendary and we still have her recipe books. Overleaf is a poem written by my daughter Claire, for her sister, in honour of the house.

My Mother always claimed my Father had 'committee-itis'. He did a great deal of work for the Rotary Club and Good Samaritans, as well as being a member of the choir and a Deacon of the Congregational Church, later the United Reformed Church.



**Here is a photo of me and my parents taken at 'Levendale' in 1948**

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<sup>5</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis\\_Specialist\\_Vehicles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Specialist_Vehicles)



# Brickdust

*for Jackie*

We watched the walls  
square their shoulders  
the day the wreckers came.

Glassless windows  
held their breath  
in the before-blow silence.

We could already see  
the bare brown earth,  
flat with anonymity,

hiding behind hoarding  
that read Care Home for the Elderly.  
We knew the traffic; rush-hour lights

watching from coving, seeing  
in a constant loop, the filmings  
of our past: deckchairs gathering

on the lawn, firewatchers shouting,  
batter beaten in kitchen bowls,  
silver cutlery gleaming;

blankets and warm toast,  
stories under the covers;  
the day our mother died.

We heard the hall clock chiming,  
Nan's miniature roses stretching,  
and when the house fell,

behind the roar came  
the brickdust, grainy on our lips.  
We drew it in like food.

©Claire Dyer

## Kathleen Thelma Eustace (née Wyles), 1906 – 2002

We are lucky that my mother left notes (in her famous blue exercise book) of what she knew about our forebears, and I have added these unaltered as an appendix to this story. However, I also want to tell a few tales of my mother's life.

She was a soldier's daughter and always had to be 'dressed for the occasion'. In fact, she would look me up and down, tut, and say, "You are *not* going into Guildford dressed like that."

For her first car ride, aged about twelve, she did not have a motoring veil and was distraught. Fortunately, as she stood by her front gate a car passed and a veil flew out. The car did not stop, and Mum had her veil for the journey!

In her later years, Elaine and I took Mum to Acacia Road in Chiswick, where she had grown up. It had not, in her day, been on the 'right side of the tracks' but was by then well-established 'yuppie land', very smart and upmarket! My mother could not believe the change and said, "It's actually quite nice now." Elaine and I could not help smiling at this, knowing how pleased my mother had been to have married a man from Turnham Green, which had then definitely been on the 'right side of the tracks'!

My mother had a great sense of duty and spent many hours keeping the home up to scratch and she looked after her mother, her grandmother and my father's parents. She also cared for my children during their own mother's long illnesses. She would, I am sure, have given her life for her grandchildren Jackie and Claire. Overleaf is another poem Claire has written. This is for her Nan, my mother, and, in a way I think it reflects the spirits of all the people that have predeceased us. These memories are of my mother's life, but we all carry different memories of the forebears we knew. Let us hope they all are resting in peace.



Pictures of my parents' plaques

## **Slipstream**

*for Nan*

It's cold up here where clouds thread white on blue,  
where crystals bead to the beat of wings  
and I am held in your slipstream;

want again the warmth of stories, lace and cake and polished oak,  
mangle creak in the yard – its sentinels of marigolds,  
your wash-day watchers;

wish for gingham and Monopoly, Morecombe and Wise at bedtime,  
poster paint and slate larder shelves, jars of pulses, shepherd's pie,  
for ten bob notes and postal orders, for Grandpa's old school tie.

They trail behind us these phantom things, give us lift  
and speed, and light. The clouds thread white on blue  
and it's cold up here, but I don't feel it now.

©Claire Dyer

## **Margaret Violet Alfreda Eustace**

### **(née Pennifold), 1933 – 1970**

My first wife's parents, John and Violet Pennifold, lived in Agraria Road in Guildford, but during the War were evacuated to Harrogate, Yorkshire with the Air Ministry.

'Pop' Pennifold, as he was known to us, rose rapidly up the ranks in the newly-formed Air Ministry after he joined it in 1918, eventually retiring in 1965 as Chief Accountant, RAF. He had been awarded an MBE and, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1959, was awarded an OBE for his services to the Ministry.

He was educated at the Central School in Guildford, but was promoted to the executive grade in the Civil Service. This was almost unknown because the executive grade was usually reserved for university graduates.

I am afraid Margaret's mother, Violet (née Stevens) or 'Weasel' as she was nicknamed by us (based on nursery rhyme "Pop goes the Weasel") deceived Pop into thinking she was ten years younger than she really was, a fact he discovered when he applied for their State pensions. I think many women did this after the First World War in the hope of finding a husband because so many men of their own generation had been killed. Violet suffered badly from dementia in her later years, but I will say that Pop stuck by her until her death in 1971. He married again in February 1972 having met Kathleen Grace Thorn whilst working at the Air Ministry, and I was pleased to be his best man. They had nineteen good years together until his death in 1991, living firstly in Pop's house 71, Wodeland Avenue and latterly in Mount Place, a retirement development on The Mount in Guildford.

Margaret went to the County School for Girls in Guildford and was academically bright. The class of 1944 has played a large part in my life, because I married two of its members and dated another (not in that order!) It is remarkable that twenty-two of these girls are still in contact with one another and meet for an annual lunch and have coffee mornings in Guildford every six weeks.

I met Margaret at a Town's Women's Guild Dance at the Lion Hotel in Guildford High Street in the early 1950's. Margaret and I were the only young people there and I think we danced every dance together. Her mother was President that year and, I think, my mother was Treasurer.

Margaret trained to be a Secretary in London and worked at a veterinary's practice in York Road, Guildford. After we were married she was asked to go back and sort out the mess the new Secretary had created, which she did at overtime rates.

In 1952, at the age of nineteen, she had two lumps removed, but was never told that they were cancerous. After she died, the consultant explained to me that he'd had a dilemma, not wanting to tell such a young woman that she would be lucky to reach middle age.

We were able to ignore the cancer for ten happy years and had two daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda, and then there followed, I'm afraid, seven years of increasing illness. This included a whole year when she had to live with her parents following a bout of tuberculosis caused by the drugs she had been given. This enforced absence was to protect the children, and I know that Margaret found this period very hard to bear. We were fortunate that my mother willingly stepped



into the void created by Margaret's absence to look after the girls. Margaret also had to have her spleen removed and after this operation, the only way we could communicate with her was in French. This had been discovered by her Intensive Care nurse who was French herself. After the operation, we all went on holiday to Bournemouth where Margaret convalesced.

Margaret had studied at the Sorbonne during a summer holiday when she had been younger and when I was working for L'Oreal, she was seated next to the new French Chairman of L'Oréal England at a dinner given in his honour. After two hours of speaking nothing but French to him, because Monsieur Glan had no English, Margaret looked absolutely shattered. This dinner took place about a year before she died.

We were living at 22 Dukes Ride, Leighton Buzzard when she died of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and Hodgkins Lymphoma in St Luke's Hospital, Guildford on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1970.

A memorial service for her was held in the Guildford Congregational Church and the Burpham Ladies' Choir, of which Margaret had been a member, sang wonderfully and many of her school friends were also present. Her casket was placed with the others in the family plot H4 witnessed by members of the family and by Angela Scott who represented the class of 1944.

Unless something unforeseen happens, this ends my story of the people of H4 and so I will begin my own story in more detail ...



**A living voice:**  
**George Colin Eustace**  
**(b 1931)**

My school motto was 'Omnia Vinces Perseverando' (Perseverance Conquers All) and I have certainly had to employ perseverance during my life, repeating exams and tests in order to get on in life. So I am a firm believer in if at first you don't succeed, try and try again!

I feel I was born into a lucky generation; one where our parents had been too young to fight in the First World War and too old to fight in the Second. Above all, we survived the Depression, the Blitz and a childhood affected by evacuation and rationing.

Just to paint a picture; at the start of my life there were no antibiotics, no TV, no Spitfire aircraft, no washing machines, no computers, no central heating, no plastic, and six (old) pence pocket money per week! But life went on, perhaps more slowly than it does now because it took longer to wash clothes for instance and it took a week to get to America and weeks to get to Australia. However, I was witness to some things in my childhood; steam lorries travelling along the Great West Road outside our house at Osterley, the Abdication of King Edward VIII and Neville Chamberlain returning to Heston airport claiming, "Peace in our time." We also had the radio and Uncle Mac, who was the main presenter of Children's Hour from 5.00 pm – 6.00 pm daily and who always signed off by saying "Goodbye children, everywhere," and books, comics, bicycles, gramophone players and lead toy soldiers, and, as there were very few cars, we could play in the street.

My parents (George Frank and Kathleen Thelma Eustace, see page 15) met at the Congregational Church in Gunnersbury near Chiswick in London. My paternal grandparents had been in the leather workers and milliners and my maternal grandfather and great grandfather had been soldiers in the Rifle Brigade.

## 1931 – 1939

One Christmas I got the fright of my life to find my teddy bear dressed in a cowboy's costume sitting in my Great Grandfather's chair by the window in my bedroom. Claire now has custody of the chair, but the teddy has not survived! Christmas must have been a difficult time for me because I remember another occasion when I had two friends (the Redman boys) sleeping over but we could not get to sleep because our neighbour Irene Unsworth (later Irene Pilbeam) had her father staying and he was singing his heart out in a deep bass voice in the lounge. I went downstairs to complain, only to find all the presents in the hallway, thus ending my belief in Father Christmas!

Dad had an 18 horsepower Sunbeam Talbot, registration number GBT 118 and recently I came across exactly the same model, registration number GBT 116, in Beaulieu Motor Museum. The car had two large spare wheels on the running board, large headlights and a pre-selective Wilson gearbox. Dad would let me steer the car along the back alleyway near our house and on one occasion he did 70 miles an hour, but not with my mother in the car!

When I was five, I had a bad brush with Nurse Bunny during a two week stay in hospital to have my appendix removed. I hated Nurse Bunny! My grandson, Liam, had the same operation in 2008 and was home the next day. There's progress for you! However, his doctor did tell him that when I'd had mine out in 1936, they used axes!

As noted earlier, Dad was a Chartered Secretary and worked for Dennis Contracts Ltd from offices in Victoria Street, London. He organised the sales and hire purchase agreements for Dennis lorries, continuing to work in London until the building was bombed in 1941, at which time he transferred to the Dennis main works in Guildford. Mum had been a Secretary for Citroën cars in Slough before her marriage, but spent the 1930's building up her home and looking after me and my father.



**This is a picture of my mother and me, aged 4 weeks, taken in November 1931. The christening gown came from India and was first used by my mother's mother for her firstborn son who sadly died in infancy. It has now been used for five generations and is currently being looked after by my daughter, Claire.**



**... and this is 'Durlston', 709 Great West Road, Osterley, Middlesex where I was born on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1931 (front bedroom on the left of the picture!).**



**Here I am, just on my feet! You will notice how smartly dressed I am; that was my mother's family's army training for you. We still have the chair and quite a few bills from the purchase of my parents' furniture survive, as do many of the actual pieces themselves. They certainly made things to last in those days.**



**I had a role selling Dennis tipper lorries when I was a child and, much to my mother's disgust, I was photographed dressed in a boiler suit operating the tipper control of a five ton Dennis lorry! The photo was called 'Child's Play'. However, here I am in the garden, obviously already a budding engineer.**

I had a very happy childhood until the War but, being an only child I did miss out on the companionship of a sibling or siblings. I was sent to a private preparatory school and was pleased, some sixty-five years later, to make my way there again and find that it's still a smart and successful place.

In about 1937, I had a huge adventure when Dad took me one Saturday to Heston airport and we had a five shilling flight. Mother would have had kittens had she known about it at the time!

Talking of flying, I was also taken to a number of air shows before the War at Feltham and Hendon, and as an air cadet at Caterham School, flew in the Air Training Corps from Kenley. I remember seeing the tail of an aircraft sticking out of the roof of a semi-detached house in Feltham as well as autogyros<sup>6</sup>, which seemed to crash frequently. I was

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<sup>6</sup> **Autogyro** (in Spanish **autogiro**), also known as **gyroplane**, **gyrocopter**, or **rotaplane**, is a type of rotorcraft which uses an unpowered rotor in autorotation to develop lift, and an engine-powered propeller, similar to that of a fixed-wing aircraft, to provide thrust. While similar to a helicopter rotor in appearance, the autogyro's rotor must have air flowing through the rotor disc in order to generate rotation. Invented by the Spanish engineer Juan de la Cierva to create an aircraft that could safely fly at slow speeds, the autogyro was first flown on 9 January 1923, at Cuatro Vientos Airfield in Madrid.<sup>[1]</sup> De la Cierva's aircraft resembled the fixed-wing aircraft of the day, with a front-mounted engine and propeller in a tractor configuration to pull the aircraft through the air. Late-model autogyros patterned after Dr. Igor Bensen's designs feature a rear-mounted engine and propeller in a pusher configuration. The term *Autogiro* was a trademark of the Cierva Autogiro Company, and the term *Gyrocopter* was used by E. Burke Wilford who developed the Reiseler Kreiser feathering rotor equipped gyroplane in the first half of the twentieth century. The latter term was later adopted as a trademark by Bensen Aircraft.



immensely proud, as were many other lads at the time, that Britain had won the Schneider Trophy<sup>7</sup> in 1929 and 1931. It's important to note that there weren't many aeroplanes in the skies in those days. Not like now when one aircraft passes over our old house in Osterley every thirty seconds and also our house in Wokingham when there's an east wind! I have, in fact, almost looked into my boyhood bedroom window when landing at Heathrow, and did see our previous house in Wokingham once on take off from Heathrow.

The army was not forgotten. Like Christopher Robin<sup>8</sup> I was taken to the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace, as well as most of the museums in London. I also went to the cinema often, seeing films like *The Wizard of Oz* with Judy Garland as Dorothy and with ice creams in the interval when a Wurlitzer<sup>9</sup> organ that would rise up from the pits all pipes blasting to entertain us during the intermission.

I think it was in 1938 when I was taken to the Fleet Review at Spithead and learnt that light travels faster than sound when the royal salute sounded from the Portsmouth Hill guns, ie. the flash came, then the bang!

The loss of the HMS *Thetis* in 1938<sup>10</sup> was a bitter blow. Many years later I saw a model of the submarine used at the enquiry into the sinking. It was from a private collection and on display in the Maritime Museum.

Being picked up from school by my mother in what she considered to be the latest fashion and what I considered to be a 'flower pot hat' was a cause of embarrassment and conflict between us when I had the cheek to request she didn't meet me wearing it!

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<sup>7</sup> The **Coupe d'Aviation Maritime Jacques Schneider** (commonly called the **Schneider Trophy**, or prize or cup) was a prize competition for seaplanes. Announced by Jacques Schneider, a financier, balloonist and aircraft enthusiast, in 1911, it offered a prize of roughly £1,000. The race was held eleven times between 1913 and 1931. It was meant to encourage technical advances in civil aviation but became a contest for pure speed with laps over a triangular course (initially 280 km, later 350 km). The races were very popular and some attracted crowds of over 200,000 spectators. Since 1977 the trophy has been on display at the Science Museum in London (see appendix for a picture). In 1981 the race was revived by the Royal Aero Club of Great Britain and, whilst the original trophy remains in the Science Museum, a full-size replica was cast and the race opened on a handicapped basis to any propeller driven land plane capable of maintaining 100 miles per hour in straight and level flight. The race venue has varied but is still flown on most occasions around a Solent-based course. See the Appendix for a photograph of the Trophy.

<sup>8</sup> **Christopher Robin** is a character created by A. A. Milne, appearing in his popular books of poetry and stories about Winnie-the-Pooh.

<sup>9</sup> The **Rudolph Wurlitzer Company**, usually referred to simply as **Wurlitzer**, was an American company that produced stringed instruments, woodwinds, brass instruments, theatre organs, band organs, orchestrions, electronic organs, electric pianos and jukeboxes. Over time Wurlitzer changed to producing only organs and jukeboxes, but it no longer produces either. Deutsche Wurlitzer, owner of the Wurlitzer Jukebox and Vending Electronics trademark, was acquired by the Gibson Guitar Corporation. See Appendix for a photo!

<sup>10</sup> **HMS *Thetis* (N25)** was a Group 1 T-class submarine of the Royal Navy which served under two names. Under her first identity, **HMS *Thetis***, she commenced sea trials on 4 March 1939. She sank during trials on 1 June 1939 with the loss of 99 lives. She was salvaged, repaired and recommissioned as **HMS *Thunderbolt*** serving in the Atlantic and Mediterranean theatres until she was lost with all hands on 14 March 1943. This makes *Thetis* one of the few military vessels that have been lost twice with her crew in their service history.

Christmas, however, was a great time when my mother would cater for seventeen for Christmas Lunch and Supper. Our house was not big, but Mother managed to seat us all in the dining room, having set the table three days before!

My father's father, Grandfather Eustace, was a Victorian born in 1880 and, on Saturday mornings, Dad would sometimes take me to his offices in Victoria Street, Westminster and, on the way in the car, we would pick up my grandfather and Uncle Don. As we passed the Albert Memorial, Grandfather would ask me to raise my cap to the memory of Prince Albert who had died in 1851. Prince Albert has been famous for many things, notably, the traditions of Christmas and the Great Exhibition of 1851 at Hyde Park and then the Crystal Palace<sup>11</sup>.

The day War broke out (1<sup>st</sup> September 1939) we were on holiday in Beer, Devon and spent the time filling sand bags on the beach. I didn't go home to the house at Osterley after that holiday but was evacuated by being left in Lyme Regis with my Aunty Kitty and then sent on to another aunt who lived at West Moors in Dorset. During this time I managed to attend four schools, one of which was just for one day!

I'm nearly done with my early years. Just one more story. During the War, I was showing the girl from next door plus one the air raid shelter that my father was building at the bottom of our garden. The electric light he'd rigged up was only a temporary affair and I was electrocuted. Luckily for me, my mother had come down to the garden at that moment to see what we were up to, rushed back into the house and switched off the current. Thanks Mum! I had a rather burnt thumb and still have the scars of that episode to this day.



I was teased at school because at the time the *Daily Mirror* published a cartoon called Useless Eustace (see caption). When I complained to my father, he replied that Eustace meant “Stand Fast” in Greek and that I should be proud to carry the family name. I think I am proud but it still rankles a bit!

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<sup>11</sup> The **Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations** or **The Great Exhibition**, sometimes referred to as the **Crystal Palace Exhibition** in reference to the temporary structure in which it was held, was an international exhibition that took place in Hyde Park, London, from 1 May to 15 October 1851. It was the first in a series of World's Fair exhibitions of culture and industry that were to become a popular 19th-century feature. The Great Exhibition was organized by Henry Cole and Prince Albert, the spouse of the reigning monarch, Queen Victoria. It was attended by numerous notable figures of the time, including Charles Darwin, members of the Orléanist Royal Family and the writers Charlotte Brontë, Lewis Carroll, and George Eliot.

## 1940 – 1950

The so-called 'Phoney War' between 1939 and 1940 tricked many children including me, into returning home only to face the Blitz in the autumn of 1941. We stuck out the Blitz for eight weeks, living in the air raid shelter my father had built. I would not allow myself to go to sleep until our guns had started firing in defence.

We did have a brush with a German bomber one Saturday. We had been out on the river in a punt and when we got back to the boathouse, the sirens sounded. We ran toward a shelter when a very low-flying Heinkel<sup>12</sup> flew over us and I could see the front gunner. Fortunately he was looking the other way! On another occasion we survived a stick of bombs, because luckily our house and shelter was in the one of the gaps. An unexploded bomb did drop onto the Great West Road opposite our house and Dad spent most of the night directing traffic around the crater. It was defused safely so our house was not damaged. In the meantime, my mother had taken my great-grandmother and myself to the country and we ended up in digs in Basingstoke. Shortly after this time, we all moved to Guildford.

Dad spent many nights during the Blitz at the fire station as he had volunteered for the auxiliary Fire Service, using the Talbot to tow trailer fire pumps. One of the trailer crews was sadly wiped out at the corner of Sion Lane in Isleworth by a direct hit. I did watch a fighter being shot down over the Thames at Isleworth. I remember standing on the steps of our air raid shelter with Mum shouting at me to come down. On another occasion, in 1942, I was running to the shelter at the Grammar School in Guildford and saw the plane that had just machine gunned my future wives' school<sup>13</sup> and Guildford High Street. He had, however, stopped by the time he got to the Grammar School. Again, it seems I was the lucky one!

Talking of luck, my father had a near miss. He was walking down the passageway to Westminster Bridge Road at Waterloo Station but decided to turn back and go to the Underground. Just as he would have arrived at the bus stop at the end of the passageway, a V1 bomb fell on a bus, killing all the passengers and those waiting at the bus stop. He was blown over by the blast but was otherwise uninjured.

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<sup>12</sup> The **Heinkel He 162 *Volksjäger*** (German, "People's Fighter") was a German single-engine, jet-powered fighter aircraft fielded by the *Luftwaffe* in World War II. Designed and built quickly, and made primarily of wood as metals were in very short supply and prioritised for other aircraft, the He 162 was nevertheless the fastest of the first generation of Axis and Allied jets. *Volksjäger* was the Reich Air Ministry's official name for the He 162. Other names given to the plane include *Salamander*, which was the codename of its construction program, and *Spatz* ("Sparrow"), which was the name given to the plane by Heinkel.

<sup>13</sup> The County School, Farnham Road, Guildford

It turned out that during the 1940's I attended another four schools, making eight in total, the final Guildford school being Guildford Grammar School when I was ten. I am sure the fact that I attended so many different schools is what held me back academically and thank goodness my mother went out to work so they could afford to send me to boarding school and, in 1945 I started at Caterham School in Surrey.



9354. CATERHAM SCHOOL. MAIN BLOCK.

I owe a lot to Caterham School. I learnt to work there, but it was not until I was about twenty years old that I felt I had caught up and even today am very reliant on spell check! We had fortnightly tests at school and I discovered that if you worked hard, you could move up a few places each test. To my utter surprise, I came top in a Physics exam at end of one term! I do regret, however, that my parents never visited me at Caterham. I used to travel on my own with my bike in the Guard's Van, changing twice (at Redhill and Purley). Once a month I would go home by bus to Redhill and then the steam train to Guildford. Returning to school on a Sunday I would always take some bread back with me. As the boys were in Evening Service, I would be mobbed by some jackdaws which some of the boys kept as pets. They would perch on my head or shoulder to be fed!

Mum would send me a tuck box once a fortnight containing a fruit cake, a tin of condensed milk and a bar of something. On one occasion, after I'd been in the Sanatorium, she sent me an egg. Assuming it would be hard-boiled, I put it in the pocket of my blazer. But it wasn't, it was raw. What a mess!

I'd been in the San after being given a typhoid injection in preparation for the Scout Jamboree in France. On getting back from the local doctor's surgery, the school nurse had asked me what I was going to do after the injection and I replied by saying I would be playing rugby. Well, about an hour later I staggered to the Sanatorium and the nurse said she'd been expecting me and that my bed was ready! I spent two very pleasant days being waited on hand, foot and finger!

I enjoyed boarding school; we had plenty of sport and even compulsory prep had its advantages as you had to go, so you might as well do so and get your prep done and keep out of trouble! Also, being an only child, I relished the fact that I had plenty of friends there.

The war years were characterised by rationing and although we considered it a rum deal, I'm sure we were healthier than we are today and unlike in France, there was enough to go around. Those who took the decision to build Liberty ships<sup>14</sup> should, in my opinion, get a medal as it was these ships

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<sup>14</sup> **Liberty ships** were cargo ships built in the United States during World War II. Though British in conception, they were adapted by the U.S. as they were cheap and quick to build, and came to symbolize U.S. wartime industrial output. Based on vessels ordered by Britain to replace ships torpedoed by German U-boats, they were purchased for the U.S. fleet and for lend-lease provision to Britain. Eighteen American shipyards built 2,751 Libertys between 1941 and 1945, easily the largest number of ships produced to a single design. The production of these vessels mirrored, on a much larger scale, the manufacture of the *Hog Islander* ship and similar standardized types during World War I. The immense effort to build Liberty ships, the sheer number of ships built, and the fact that some of the ships survived far longer than the original design life of five years, make them the subject of much study.



that saved Britain from starvation. Just think, my friend Captain Roger Black, served on a Liberty ship as a Bosun after the War and his ship was built, from laying the keel to sailing away under its own steam to cross the Atlantic, in just eighteen days!

There was a black market for food if you could afford the prices but we believed that turkeys were not rationed, which is just as well because one day, when my father was passing through Crewe station on his way to London, the Dennis agent posted a turkey through the window of the train for him to take home for our Christmas dinner! Mother would also pickle eggs to make them last the winter and I would ride my bike to the slaughter house to collect joints of our pig from the Dennis Pig Club. Mum always told the story of having to make brawn from half a pig's head when she had 'flu!

Construction work on Guildford Cathedral had started just before the War and I can remember the wooden cross which I believe is still there behind the Chancel. I spent many a time tobogganing down the approach road to Stag Hill against the backdrop of the boarded up shell that was, in time, to be the Nave. A fundraising initiative meant that you could 'buy' a brick and some bricks in the Cathedral therefore bear the Eustace name.

In 1947 I attended the Boy Scout Jamboree in France, followed by a stay with a French family. Although hopeless at French at school, as I could not spell, I found I could make myself understood with a limited vocabulary. This led, as I've mentioned earlier, to an interview in the 1950's in French with the Technical Director of L'Oréal and to getting the job, but more about this later.

I left school when I was sixteen to take up a management apprenticeship at Dennis Bros. of Guildford. Dennis's built fire engines, coaches, buses and lorries. My Careers' Master at school had told me that I was doing it the hard way; that going to university would be easier. He was right in some ways. It took me ten years to get my qualification but this did include two years' National Service.

## **The 1950's**

An apprenticeship is not easy. I had to work from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, plus 8.00 am to 12 noon on Saturdays. I got one day a week off to go to Technical College during term time and there was homework of course! This was a five year course of study. To gain membership of The Institute of Mechanical Engineers, I had to take three additional subjects. I earned 17/6d per week (about 88p in today's money) in the first year, rising to around £5 in the last year.

As I had failed mechanics twice at HNC level, I effectively did six years of study due to retakes but in the last year, Mr Dawes, the Municipal Director, asked me to work as his PA. We had great fun in cutting through the red tape to get a dust cart built in six weeks so that he could win a £5 bet by achieving delivery at a motor show which Mr Dawes subsequently won. As a reward, he sent me to be on the stand at the show and actually I was the only one on the stand who could operate the hydraulics, so it was a good job I was there!

I eventually passed Mechanics because a school friend, Roger Back, who had qualified as an aerodynamicist from Imperial College taught me to calculate the beam questions by calculus as I could never get the graphical method. Thank you Roger! He was later to be the best man at my wedding to Margaret.

As I said above I met Margaret Pennifold at The Town's Women's Guild Annual Dance at the Lion Hotel in Guildford. I think we were the only young people present at the dance and we danced every dance together! I had attended dance classes at Burpham Village Hall run by a Mrs Reece, the mother of a County School girl. My second wife, Elaine, I was to discover had also attended these classes earlier.

Margaret and I developed a method of seeing one another. We would meet in Guildford at lunchtime and buy Murray mints as this was all we could afford. In evenings I would work on my studies until nine o'clock and then visit Margaret at her home, travelling there on my 125cc Royal Enfield motorbike.

We did not see much of each other during my National Service and during the time I was in Rome (more about this later). However, much letter writing and hitchhiking home,

overcame the separations. Before my commission I would hitch hike from Honiton in Devon to Guildford to see Margaret and was given lifts by all sorts of people. The wife of a sea captain once asked me to drive the car for her as she was too tired, and a Brigadier in a staff car took me to his home for a snack and then asked his driver to drop me off at the main road so I could continue my journey. Once, a lorry driver stood me a supper on the way. People were very kind. I would travel back overnight by the mail train and then take a taxi from Axminster, with eight or so of us sharing one car. Mondays were normally spent on the range firing over the heads of new recruits; thank goodness they were in a trench and in no danger, as most of us were half asleep!

Margaret did visit me at the Honiton camp during her summer holiday and I managed to get a pass out. We took the bus to Seaton and had afternoon tea.

With my Higher National Mechanical Engineering certificate I gained a commission in REME but only served one year in the commissioned ranks, at 14 Command Workshops in Ashford in Kent. During this time I ran a Light Aid Detachment at Feltham in Middlesex repairing a thousand vehicles which had been used by the Territorial Army and were in a rough state. Three weeks before I was due to leave the army, I had to defend a soldier at his Court-Martial. He was found guilty and got three months in the 'glass house'. So much for being a barrister! I did catch the prosecuting officer out on his manual of military law, though, and the President said, "Well done," to me after the case.



**Margaret**

After National Service I was not keen to go back to Dennis Bros. as by this time, my father was a Director of the company. I was therefore lucky that I found and answered an advert for an engineer at the Beecham Group's basic research laboratories at Brockham Park, Surrey.

This was to turn out to be the most rewarding job I ever had. I was in charge of the Pilot Plant for the production of antibiotics. Eventually, after about four years, we hit the headlines with the isolation of the Basic Molecule of Penicillin, 6-APA, ie. the chemical compound 6-aminopenicillanic acid<sup>15</sup>. This substance was not very biologically active, but chemists could use it to create new types of penicillin that the mould process could not reproduce, one of which was later used to cure Claire's knee infection.

We also had a red letter day when our consultant called for what stock we had of a new penicillin for a fifteen-year old girl who had been given three days to live. The consultant used our stock and she recovered. We had a big party that day! I am proud that I am one of the few engineers to have co-signed a paper published in the scientific journal, *Nature*<sup>16</sup>, and I have a copy of the issue.



**Me!**

Having studied under Ernst Boris Chain, the Nobel Prize winner for his work with penicillin with Florey and Fleming<sup>17</sup>, in Rome, I flew back in one of the first jet turbo prop airliners, the Viscount. I had flown out in a piston aircraft but saw the Alps from over Paris at 10,000 feet but with no pressurisation, the landing at Nice was very painful on the ears!

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<sup>15</sup> The narrow range of treatable diseases or *spectrum of activity* of the penicillins, along with the poor activity of the orally active phenoxymethylpenicillin, led to the search for derivatives of penicillin that could treat a wider range of infections. The isolation of 6-APA, the nucleus of penicillin, allowed for the preparation of semisynthetic penicillins, with various improvements over benzylpenicillin (bioavailability, spectrum, stability, tolerance).

<sup>16</sup> *Nature*, first published on 4 November 1869, is the world's most cited interdisciplinary science journal. Most scientific journals are now highly specialized, and *Nature* is among the few journals that still publish original research articles across a wide range of scientific fields. There are many fields of scientific research in which important new advances and original research are published as either articles or letters in *Nature*.

<sup>17</sup> The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1945 was awarded jointly to Sir Alexander Fleming, Ernst Boris Chain and Sir Howard Walter Florey "for the discovery of penicillin and its curative effect in various infectious diseases".

I had been worried that the basic research we were doing would entail a great deal of mathematics and that I would find it difficult to keep up. However, the joke is that the most common expression we used was, "Let's try it and see what happens." I have therefore come to the conclusion that to do basic research, the best solution is to find young people who don't know too much about the subject, but who have enquiring minds, a lot of common sense and a scientific way of thinking! I hope I have some of these skills.



Margaret had to do most of the planning for the wedding as I was stuck in Rome, only getting back to England some ten days before the big day on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1957. My mother had wanted us to have the wedding at Easter because the weather was likely to be better. But we stuck to January and just as well because it snowed at Easter that year!

**At Brockham Park, The Team: Dr. Rowlinson, Ralph Bachelor and yours truly**

Margaret and I set up home in a flat in the upstairs of Margaret's aunt's house in Recreation Road, Guildford. I would travel by steam train to Brockham Park each day and Margaret worked for a time at the vet's practice as mentioned earlier. Eventually we were able to buy our first house, a three-bedroom, semi-detached house near to Brockham Park. It cost us £2,500. We'd been granted what was effectively a 100% mortgage because our fathers had stood as guarantors. We paid off the deposit in three years. I was also fortunate in that around this time Beechams decided that they weren't paying their scientists enough and I got a rise of 25%, taking me to a salary of well over the magical £1,000 pa.



**Wedding day, January 1957**

Our car at this time was an old Morris I bought for £45. I had to replace the clutch and it froze one winter because I had not been able to afford anti-freeze and I had drained it down. However, water had stayed in the block, and I patched the cylinder block up and sold the car two years later for £35!



Not a bad depreciation for a real banger that had a whole pot of mustard in the radiator to stop it from leaking!

Unfortunately Margaret suffered badly with her nerves whilst we were at Brockham. I think this was due to loneliness and was, perhaps, the first signs of the troubles ahead. She had to have electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) treatment which, whilst it knocked her sideways for a few days, did the trick.

## 1960 – 1970

We were advised by Margaret's doctors to move back to Guildford and, with a new car given to us by her father, I was able to continue working at Brockham. We purchased a house (13 Marlins Drive, Burpham) for £5,500, having made a small profit on the Brockham house. It was whilst we were living here that our daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda were born.

Also around this time I was transferred to Beecham's Overseas. I think Beechams thought we knew too much of the new process that we had developed for the production of 6-APA. They were later to break up the whole team when the new factory at Worthing was up and running. This new process was based on a ginger beer plant. In the Pilot Plant we secretly tried this out and to our surprise got a higher yield than the conventional method. I confessed to George Rowlinson and asked if Ralph Bachelor could repeat the experiment. He did and got the same result.

I was with Beecham's for some seven years and for a time was secretary of the Group Cricket Team under Ted Godden. One claim to fame is that I got Dennis Compton<sup>18</sup> caught behind off a slow off spun ball which moved the wrong way. Compton had retired at this point! I also once got a triple hat-trick (five wickets with five consecutive balls)!

Life with an overseas company was interesting. I travelled around Europe installing and operating packaging and manufacturing plants for shampoo and aerosol production, using my very limited French in Switzerland. One visit I confess I failed to cable Margaret to say that I had arrived. She had sold some things to a gypsy for ten shillings and found that a call to Switzerland would cost the same amount, so she telephoned me. The hotel proprietor said afterwards that he'd been surprised to learn we were English as he thought we had Parisian accents. How about that!

I was eventually made redundant from Beecham's and got a job with Johnson Wax at Frimley as an Industrial Engineer. I was promoted to Production Manager and had great fun running the fastest aerosol line in Europe. Although I could not see much future with Johnson Wax, with hindsight, I might have done better to stay. Instead I left and got the job of Works' Manager No 2 Factory for Gala, the cosmetics company, on the Kingston By-Pass.

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<sup>18</sup> **Denis Charles Scott Compton** CBE (23 May 1918 in Hendon, Middlesex – 23 April 1997 in Windsor, Berkshire) was an English cricketer who played in 78 Test matches, and a footballer. He spent the whole of his cricket career with Middlesex and most of his football career at Arsenal F.C.

Jackie was born in July 1961 at the Jarvis Maternity Home in Guildford soon after we moved to Burpham and was baptised at the Congregational Church in North Street, Guildford. She bellowed her heart out in the first few weeks and Margaret and I wondered what we had taken on! However, the Health Visitor suggested we weaken the milk mixture and Jackie soon began to feed better and sleep at nights and therefore so did we!

Claire arrived in April 1963 and also sobbed, but this was not due to her feed but due to an infected cyst in her knee. 'Broxhill', one of the new penicillins developed by Beecham's was used by the doctors and fortunately Claire recovered.

As the girls grew up, and much to Claire's disgust, at the age of five Jackie started school. I remember our au-pair, Maribel, trying to comfort Claire while Jackie paraded around the garden in her new school

uniform. It was not long, however, before Claire joined Jackie at the primary school in Burpham. My mother would be called upon from time to time to look after the girls as Margaret became increasingly unwell, but despite this, we managed to live a reasonably active life.



**Neil Scott's christening, Elaine, and myself were godparents. The proud father, Brian, is looking over my shoulder, with Margaret next to him. (see page 36)**



**The girls, about 1967, butter wouldn't melt, eh?! Or would it!**

I'm afraid I lost confidence in Gala when the owner addressed a staff meeting and said that the company was not in trouble financially. I decided to get out and it went bust shortly after I left.

Looking back you realise how much that happens in your early days can affect the future. As I said above I went to stay with a French family after the Scout Jamboree in 1947 and Mme Duparc, the matriarch of the family, who did speak some English, wouldn't pass me any food or help me unless I made a reasonable attempt to speak to her in French. This gave me a bit of confidence and, with bad grammar, Franglaise and sign language, I got by!

In the mid to late 1960's I applied for a job with Golden Limited, the UK manufacturing company for L'Oréal in Paris. My final interview was in Paris and, after speaking solid French for the first twenty minutes of the interview, I got the job. During this visit to Paris I stayed in the Continental Hotel which had been the Gestapo's headquarters during the War. There followed a three month study period in France and sure enough, my French improved!

As Margaret's health deteriorated in 1969 and 1970 I spent a lot of time commuting from our new house 22 Dukes Ride, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire to the hospitals in Guildford and my mother and father, having rented out 'Levendale' to tenants, came to live with us to look after the girls.

A picture of 22 Dukes Ride is overleaf.

Margaret is remembered with much affection by those who knew her. Angela Scott, her childhood friend and my and Elaine's friend still, was the last person to visit Margaret before she slipped into a coma and passed away.



**22 Dukes Ride is on the right. The cedar tree was ours!**

## **1970 – 1980**

Another move occurred in 1975 when Golden Limited announced that they had been secretly planning and building a new factory at Llantrisant in South Wales. I had to go there to get it started up while the factory in Leighton Buzzard was closed down. This was a busy period with trips to Paris every two weeks during the planning stage and site visits to South Wales during the building phase. I was pleased when I visited the site some thirty-five years later to find that the factory was still active and much the same as when it was built.

Before the move to Wales was decided upon, the company had purchased some land near Burnley in Lancashire. A rumour started doing the rounds that there was a disused coal mine under the land and, because the Coal Board were being very unhelpful, I was sent incognito to suss out the situation. Well, through a friend I knew one person in Burnley and arranged a meeting with that person and learned that the Librarian at Burnley Library was helping a former miner write a history of mining in the area. This proved very useful information as I then met the miner and he showed me the indentations in the land where the pillar and stall mining had taken place in days gone by. I calculated that there was about a million tons of coal about only sixty foot down. The company sold the land pronto!

After Margaret's death I was fortunate to get to know Elaine March, who like me, had been a godparent to Neil Scott, Angela's eldest son (see page 34). Elaine had been in the same class as Angela and Margaret at the County School and had visited Margaret during the period she was living with her parents following TB.

Elaine's parents came from Peterborough. Her father (Austin Leo March) had been an ex-apprentice at Baker Perkins and her Mother (Elsie Irene March) had been a primary school teacher before her marriage. Elaine and her brother, David, were born in Peterborough, and the family moved to Guildford just before the War.



Elaine's father built Wellington Bombers and Spitfires at Vickers of Weybridge, spending long hours working there during the War and surviving the bombing raid on Weybridge, but losing his Panama hat in the blast. He was an excellent fitter and often was given the difficult jobs.

Elaine, a member of the famous class of '44 at the County School in Guildford along with Angela Scott and Margaret, did me the honour of agreeing to marry me and took on what I consider now the tough job of step-mother to the girls. She should be proud that nearly forty years on, we are a close knit family helping one another through life.

As we were both working, our courting was mostly limited to weekends, either at Leighton Buzzard or Guildford. Aunt June (June Woodford), the wife of a colleague of mine at Brockham Park had not only her own three children, but also Jackie and Claire in our caravan at Bognor in the summer of 1971. My parents also took the girls on a caravan holiday to the seaside so the girls spent most of that summer by the sea and Elaine and I had a little time on our own to get to know one another.



**Elaine's father (far left of photo) with a four bladed propeller Spitfire. This is believed to have been taken at Vickers' satellite airfield at Wisley.**



**Courting 1971**

I remember a very pleasant weekend on the Isle of Wight with David, Elaine's brother, and his wife Wendy. Elaine broke an apple in half with her bare hands, and David warned me to watch my step! I think the children and I were being vetted during this time and thankfully, we must have passed!

It was a spectacularly cold day the day we married and we both had a good whisky when we got to the reception and our chief bridesmaid, Elaine's niece Caroline, drank her wine straight down and got very pink cheeks!

We joke now that I married Elaine for her money because she had sold her flat and I had an overdraft, but we got rid of the overdraft by having a very cheap holiday in our caravan in Wales and Elaine's flat money actually proved to be the start of our nest egg.

Elaine had green fingers and was an expert gardener and made a great difference to the garden at Dukes Ride, so much so that we got a good price for the house when we had to move to South Wales. In Wales we purchased a new build house on what had been a paddock in the lane leading down to the beach in Llantwit Major.

Elaine had spent hours going around South Wales looking for a house and I can still remember the look on her face when she informed me she had found the solution to our housing problem.

We stayed in Wales for four years and this involved creating a garden from scratch. Elaine built 150 yards of stone walling and I moved 80 tons of 'stuff'! All the stone was dug out of the garden and each wall was signed by an ammonite fossil. Elaine won the village's 'Best Kept Garden' competition in our third year there. The name we chose for the house translates as 'The Valley of the Birds'.

After eight years hard work, I lost my position at L'Oréal and decided to resign, securing a position in Slough, Berkshire working for Bristol Myers. I was pleased that my replacement at L'Oréal only lasted two years and was replaced by a chap I had recruited.

Moving again was another upheaval and we bought 34 Reading Road in Wokingham. The girls attended The Holt School with Jackie leaving to start work in a bank and from there to her nurse's training and Claire to do a year's secretarial course after her A Levels and then on to Birmingham University to study English & History. Elaine returned to teaching at a number of local schools, including The Holt, and we were able to save her salary and pay off the mortgage to further increase our savings for our old age.



**Wedding day, April 1972**



**Cwm-yr-Adar, Mill Lane, Llantwit Major**

Elaine's green fingers were in evidence in Wokingham too. She grew all the plants in the flower bed overleaf from seed and when we costed it up, we reckoned that there was some £80 of plants in this one bed for the price of a few seeds, and much work on Elaine's part.



**Elaine in the back garden, 34 Reading Road, Wokingham**



**34 Reading Road, Wokingham in winter**

## **1980 – 1990**

After yet another management revamp, I was made redundant after only a short time with Bristol Myers. To their credit, they did try to help me by engaging a professional firm to assist us in finding new jobs.

I was fortunate that despite the economic climate at the time, I secured a temporary post with a firm of Quantity Surveyors, Northcroft Neighbour & Nicholson Ltd., working under contract to sort out an industrial claim in the oil industry. To my surprise, I was offered a permanent job with them soon afterwards. Some four years passed with work in Portugal and Peterborough. It is interesting to note that Elaine was born in Peterborough and her father had worked for Baker Perkins as I was to do; not only as a consultant, but later as an employee. It was at this time that I began to become au fait with computers and took the second one into Baker Perkins, utilising a Project Management Critical Path program.



For about three years I stayed in Peterborough during the week and joined Elaine and the girls at the weekend. I haven't mentioned much about the girls as I hope they will write their own histories but there are two stories worth mentioning here, both of which concern limbs in plaster!

I am immensely proud of Jackie. She left home at a young age to train as a nurse in Oxford and, a few years later when, at her prize giving ceremony and, with her leg in plaster after a knee operation, she fairly stormed up the steps to get her certificate. She had continued to train after her operation and also surprised herself, I think, by passing her SRN qualification; with her future husband providing help with the revision.

The second story is that when the clutch cable broke on the car Claire was driving at the time (Elaine's father's Mark 1 Escort), I fixed it by lying on the garage floor with my leg in the air saying that I felt like an eighteen year-old inside despite having my leg being in plaster from falling down onto a icy pavement in London!



**Our boats**

Once again the garden at 34 Reading Road was a picture and Elaine did a great job holding the fort during my absences. At this time we had two boats on the Norfolk Broads and Elaine would drive up to Peterborough and we would go across to Wroxham to sail them. Oh to be young again. It was fun at the time!

1986 was our 'annus horribilis'. We held a party for Cousin Kath's birthday at our house and invited the man for whom she had worked in Cornwall for many years. During the party he offered to sell me his precision engineering company in Penzance and here I made a big mistake. I didn't listen to the accountant's warnings that the company was in a far worse state than we had been led to believe, including some dodgy business practices. Fortunately, after about four weeks, I decided to get out and we managed to do so with only a small loss of capital. The firm went bust shortly after.

So much for trying to be a business man! For a while, however, I was with no job and no house. Lloyds Bank eventually took action by forcing a bankruptcy and in fact we got the money back some time later, which had been earmarked as a deposit for the company. Getting this money back meant we could start a new life in Peterborough. I was offered a permanent job with Baker Perkins and we bought a house – all in one day!

I spent six happy years with Baker Perkins and did quite well financially when I was made redundant for the final time. Just after leaving Baker Perkins I was called to do jury service for three weeks so decided to retire completely. I was awarded a disability pension because of my hip and this helped the period between ages 62 and 65, when my other pensions kicked in.

Talking of retirement, I think it is a good idea, if you have worked all your life, to have an interest to replace the time spent at work; something you are interested in, that can be worked on as and when time permits. This prevents boredom from setting in. In my case I tried to learn to play the organ. I achieved some success in that I got through "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," and fulfilled a boyhood dream of playing the first few bars of Handel's Largo on the organ in the Portsmouth Road church. Electronic organs have a distinct advantage in that by using earphones nobody can hear what a mess you are making of a piece!

During this time we took Elaine's mother, Elsie, in to live with us. After a short illness she was taken into hospital where unfortunately she broke her hip. It was replaced but she never recovered from the operation and died in the autumn of 1988. We arranged for her to be buried in Merrow churchyard alongside Elaine's father and asked the undertaker to ensure he kept his speed to no more than 40 mph on the journey from Peterborough to Guildford as Elsie had often instructed her husband, Leo, to do likewise when Elaine and her brother had been small and on their journeys to Peterborough or Coventry to visit relatives!

Cousin Kath was next. She had no family of her own and her uncle had made it quite clear that as the money he had lent her parents to emigrate to Canada before the First World War had not been repaid, he didn't want himself, or any of his family, to have anything to do with Kath or her parents. This goes firmly against my ideals of family co-operation. The money was lost due to acts of God, not personal negligence. Hail storms destroyed the farm's crops two years running and Aunty Kitty's brother should have accepted this risk and the ensuing loss.

Unfortunately as noted earlier, Kath suffered severely from dementia during her later years and ended her life living in a care home in Peterborough. At her funeral, my grandson Liam who must have been about four at the time, looked at the crematorium chimney and then at this mother and asked, "Is Aunty Kath going up the chimney now Mummy?"

## **1990 – 2000**

I had been having trouble with my hip for some time and in 1992 I had it replaced. I must say the operation was well worth it and some eighteen years later, it's still going strong. I was warned not to wear it out, so my golfing career bit the dust and, as I have never liked walking, the car went to the top of my list! I took up sailing model racing yachts and must say that the models are much cheaper than the real thing, but just as much fun and one doesn't get as wet!

I became Chairman of the Peterborough Model Boat Club and when we left Peterborough, was very pleased to be given a life membership. After selling our house on Thorpe Park Road in Peterborough in 1987 we moved to Glinton and during our time there Elaine served as President of the WI and I was Treasurer of the Village Hall and a Parish Councillor. We greatly enjoyed village life.



Given that our house was next to the church, when the bells were repaired we managed to secure an agreement that if they were due to be rung for more than half an hour, the neighbours should be notified. Our daughter Claire got married in the church in June 1988.

Our first grandchild had arrived in 1986, our second in 1988 and three more were to arrive, two in 1991 and one in 1993. By this time we had five grandsons.

Christopher, the eldest, became famous in family folklore soon after Jackie had passed her driving test and stalled on a hill. Aged about three, apparently Christopher called out, "A little more accelerator, Mummy!" Another story is that at roughly the same age, Elaine and I took him to a small aerodrome near Peterborough and Christopher was playing on some swings when a light aircraft landed and taxied up to the fuel pump. The pilot got out to refuel and Christopher said, "I didn't know there was a man in it!"



**St Benedict's Church, Glington (Pond House (right) is on the left)**



Matthew, Jackie's second son, was I think the inspiration behind Peterborough Model Boat Club designing and building 'The Moppy'. This was a model sailing boat for grandfathers to make for their grandchildren, even if they had no previous experience of building a model. They were called The Moppy because they were loosely based on the The Mirror and Optimist sailing dinghies. Matthew helped me build his, although he was often lured away by the attractions of computer games! He has, I believe, gone on to do a bit of real sailing on his travels around the world.

Daniel, Jackie's youngest, had a near squeak when he contracted meningitis at three weeks old. Fortunately Jackie's training made her alert to the signs and he was rushed to hospital to have what I term the 'Domestos' treatment. Elaine and I were on hand to provide Jackie with moral and practical support with the boys and I'm glad to say that Daniel is now a strapping young man studying at Brighton University.

I've already mentioned Liam, Claire's younger son and one story that sticks in my mind about her older boy, Jared, is that when we entering Peterborough one time with him in the car, aged about three, he pointed to a building and shouted, "Toys R US". He obviously had his priorities right and had learnt to read at an early age!

Elaine and I enjoyed having the boys to stay in Glington, both with and without their parents!

## 2000 – 2010

We always seemed to be driving backwards and forwards to Guildford at this time to visit my mother and the girls.

Mum had continued to live in the flat at Rookwood Court until she was 95 and then finally agreed to come and live in Glinton with us. This was a huge step for her as she'd always been a great home-marker and it was very difficult for her to leave.

Unfortunately, soon after she came to us, she fell in the bathroom and broke her arm. The hospital were unwilling to re-set it due to her age and from then on her health declined and she spent the last month of her in a nursing home in Peterborough. She died on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2002.

We'd seen the effort Claire and Jez put in when his parents became ill in Seaford and didn't want to impose this worry on the girls should it happen to us with us still in Glinton. Also, Elaine and I wanted to move nearer to her brother and his family and so we decided to move back to Wokingham. House prices were some 25% higher than in Peterborough, but with the money we'd inherited from the sale of my mother's flat, we were able to afford a reasonably nice house and after seeing thirty possible candidates, we eventually chose 15 Luckley Wood.



**15 Luckley Wood, Wokingham**

We spent three years getting the house as we wanted it and then took up bowls at the Wokingham Bowls Club. This, plus a small kitchen garden, kept me occupied. We had a big holiday with Brian and Angela Scott in Norway plus a number of other HPB holidays. When our passports needed renewing though, we decided we didn't want the hassle of foreign travel, so now only holiday in the UK!

A utility room was built onto the side of the house and has proved very useful, the house itself is well built and the estate is picturesque and tranquil. It's good to be back near the family. Elaine's brother and his wife live nearby and Claire lives about twenty minutes away and Jackie just over an hour. When he was 45 Jackie's husband, David, suffered a severe stroke which left him unable to work. Both he and Jackie have coped amazingly in difficult circumstances and we are very proud of them.

Due to a bad back, Elaine's gardening activities have had to be reduced. She still offers advice and I try to reach her standards, but my fingers are not as green as hers.

At Christmas in 2008 it was discovered that Elaine had suffered a mini stroke herself some years ago. She was then diagnosed with bowel cancer but this was operated on and I'm glad to say that all is well so far. The position of the cancer was favourable and no chemotherapy was deemed necessary. In 2003 she had broken her ankle and unfortunately arthritis has set in, making walking difficult but with help from Social Services, a disabled badge for the car and stick, she is able to get about.



I am very proud of my family and hope that my descendants will be as proud of theirs.



**The family in 2011 (from left to right, back row: Jared Dyer, Jez Dyer, David Hayden, Daniel Hayden, Christopher Hayden middle row: Claire Dyer, Jackie Hayden front row: Liam Dyer, Colin Eustace, Elaine Eustace, Matthew Hayden.**

Today we have people to clean the house, Tesco deliver our shopping which I order on the internet. I do the cooking and gardening and Elaine washes up and does the laundry. However, we are feeling our age, especially when neighbours call in on snowy days and ask if we need anything, and there are our walking sticks of course; they are constant reminders that time has passed!

## **2010 onwards**

I hope, if I don't pop my clogs, to add another ten years' worth of tales to this story. If I can't, just let me say this:

### **Papa's Top Tip!**

*Live for today, but don't jeopardise tomorrow and good luck!*

**Papa.**

## Appendix 1

**Eustace II**, (c. 1015-1020 – c. 1087), also known as **Eustace aux Gernons** (*with moustaches*) was count of Boulogne from 1049–1087, fought on the Norman side at the Battle of Hastings, and afterwards received a large honour in England. He is one of the few proven Companions of William the Conqueror.

He was the son of Eustace I. His first wife was Goda, daughter of the English king Æthelred the Unready, and sister of Edward the Confessor. Goda died circa 1047, and he quickly married again (about 1049). From his second marriage with Ida of Lorraine (daughter of Godfrey III, Duke of Lower Lorraine), Eustace had three sons, Eustace III, the next count of Boulogne, and Godfrey of Bouillon and Baldwin, both later monarchs of Jerusalem.

In 1048 Eustace joined his father-in-law's rebellion against the Emperor Henry III. The next year Eustace was excommunicated by Pope Leo IX for marrying within the prohibited degree of kinship. It's likely the pope's action was at the behest of Henry III. The rebellion failed, and in 1049 Eustace and Godfrey submitted to Henry III.

Eustace paid a visit to England in 1051, and was honourably received at the Confessor's court. Edward and Eustace were former brothers-in-law and remained allied politically. On the other hand the dominant figure in England, Earl Godwin, had recently married his son Tostig to the daughter of Eustace's rival the count of Flanders. Furthermore Godwin's son Sweyn had been feuding with Eustace's stepson Ralph the Timid.

A brawl in which Eustace and his servants became involved with the citizens of Dover led to a serious quarrel between the king and Godwin. The latter, to whose jurisdiction the men of Dover were subject, refused to punish them. His lack of respect to those in authority was made the excuse for outlawing himself and his family. They left England, but returned the next year (1052) with a large army, aided by the Flemish.

In 1052 William of Talou rebelled against his nephew William of Normandy. Eustace may well have been involved in this rebellion, although there is no specific evidence, for after William of Talou's surrender he fled to the Boulonnais court.

The following years saw still further advances by Eustace's rivals and enemies. Count Baldwin of Flanders consolidated his hold over territories he had annexed to the east. In 1060 he became tutor of his nephew Philip I of France. In contrast Eustace's stepson Walter of Mantes failed in his attempt to claim the County of Maine. He was captured by the Normans and died soon afterwards in mysterious circumstances.

These events evidently caused a shift in Eustace's political allegiances, for he then became an important participant in the Norman conquest of England in 1066. He fought at Hastings, although sources vary regarding the details of his conduct during the battle. Sources suggest that Eustace was present, with William the Bastard at the Malfosse incident in the immediate aftermath of the battle, where a Saxon, feigning death leapt up and attacked him, and was presumably cut down before he could reach William.

Eustace received large land grants afterwards, which suggests he contributed in other ways as well, perhaps by providing ships.



In the following year, probably because he was dissatisfied with his share of the spoil, he assisted the Kentishmen in an attempt to seize Dover Castle. The conspiracy failed, and Eustace was sentenced to forfeit his English fiefs.

Subsequently he was reconciled to the Conqueror, who restored a portion of the confiscated lands.

Eustace died *circa* 1087, and was succeeded by his son, Eustace III.

It has been suggested that Eustace was the patron of the Bayeux Tapestry.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eustace\\_II,\\_Count\\_of\\_Boulogne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eustace_II,_Count_of_Boulogne)

## Appendix 2

**Saint Eustace**, also known as **Eustachius** or **Eustathius**, was a legendary Christian martyr who lived in the 2nd century AD. A martyr of that name is venerated as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church, which, however, judges that the legend recounted about him is "completely fabulous." For that reason Eustace was removed from the Roman Catholic calendar of saints to be commemorated liturgically worldwide on the former feast of "Saint Eustace and Companions." The saint continues to be honored on the calendar of the Melkite Catholics on December 13, as the "Commemoration of the Holy Martyrs Eustrates, Auxentius, Eugene, Mardarius, Orestes and the Virgin Lucia."

Prior to his conversion to Christianity, he was a Roman general named Placidus, who served the emperor Trajan. While hunting a stag in Tivoli near Rome, Placidus saw a vision of Jesus between the stag's antlers. He was immediately converted, had himself and his family baptized, and changed his name to Eustace (Greek: Ευστάθιος *Efstathios*, "good stability" or "fruitful"). A series of calamities followed to test his faith: his wealth was stolen; his servants died of a plague; when the family took a sea voyage, the ship's captain kidnapped Eustace's wife Theopista; and as Eustace crossed a river with his two sons Agapius and Theopistus, the children were taken away by a wolf and a lion. Like Job, Eustace lamented but did not lose his faith. He was then quickly restored to his former prestige and reunited with his family; but when he demonstrated his new faith by refusing to make a pagan sacrifice, the emperor, Hadrian, condemned Eustace, his wife, and his sons to be roasted to death inside a bronze statue of a bull or an ox, in the year AD 118. The **d'Afflitto** dynasty, one of the oldest princely families in Italy, claims to be the direct descendant of Saint Eustace.

The story was popularized in Jacobus de Voragine's "*Golden Legend*" (c. 1260). Eustace became known as a patron saint of hunters and firefighters, and also of anyone facing adversity; he was traditionally included among the Fourteen Holy Helpers.

As with many early saints, there is little evidence for Eustace's existence, even as a martyr. Elements of his story have been attributed to other saints (notably the Belgian Saint Hubert).

Saint Eustace's feast day in the Roman Catholic Church is September 20, as is indicated in the Roman Martyrology. In addition, a celebration of Saint Eustace and his companions was included in the Roman Calendar from the twelfth century until 1969, when it was removed because of the completely fabulous character of their *Passio*, resulting in a lack of sure knowledge about them. Some traditionalist Catholics continue to observe the pre-1970 Roman Calendar.

He is one of the patron saints of Madrid, Spain. Scenes from the story, especially Eustace kneeling before the stag, became a popular subject of medieval religious art. Early artistic depictions of the legend include a wall painting at Canterbury Cathedral and stained glass windows at the Cathedral of Chartres. There is a Church of Saint Eustace in Paris. The island of Saint Eustatius in the Caribbean Netherlands is named after him.

The novels "*The Herb of Grace*" (US title: *Pilgrim's Inn*) (1948) by British author Elizabeth Goudge, and *Riddley Walker* (1980) by American author Russell Hoban, incorporate the legend into their plot.

The saint's cross-and-stag symbol is featured on bottles of Jägermeister. This is related to his status as patron of hunters; *jägermeisters* were senior foresters and gamekeepers in the German civil service at the time of the drink's introduction in 1935.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint\\_Eustace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Eustace)

## Appendix 3

My mother's notes from the blue exercise book (with my notes in italics)



**My maternal grandparents, Harry & Eliza Sworn**

### **Eliza (Lizzie) Blackwell's Family**

James (62) & Hannah (59) Blackwell, 83 Stanley Road, Acton (1881)

7 children

1. Martha married Mr. Brown (King's Messenger, lived at Clapham), 3 daughters, 1 son.
2. Fanny married Mr. Cox (ran a laundry in Acton), 2 daughters, Rose & Ella. Rose married cousin Bob Gillespie.
3. Annie married Mr Cushing (ran a laundry in Ealing), 2 daughters, 1 son. Sydney, Edith & Kathleen. Kathleen married Mr. Jackson, a builder in Ealing and they had 2 sons, Donald (Chartered Accountant who lived at one time at Epsom) and Douglas who got the MC in WW2 and who married a Dutch girl.
4. Louise (Lucy) married Mr Morgan, a policeman and they lived at Newhaven. 7 children. Harry (who married Ivy Sworn's (née Fletcher) Aunt Dorrie (New Zealand) whose sister,

Ruth, was married to Jack Sworn – double relationship), Percy, Frank, Lewis, Charles, Minnie and Alice. Alice married Eddy Oram and had 1 daughter Dorothy who married Maurice Stevenson and had 2 children David and Clare.

*I only knew Alice & Eddy and we're still in touch with Dorothy, now living in East Dean in Sussex. I spent a number of holidays with Dorothy as a boy in Eastbourne and I particularly remember the local bakery's white bread late in the War as only brown bread was usually available.*

5. Sophia married Mr Terry and they had 8 children – Will, Elsie, Alice, Jim, Bob, May, Lily and Freddie who died young.
6. Minnie – died young (had curvature of the spine).
7. Lizzie married Mr. Harry Sworn and they had 1 son and 2 daughters. Jack married Ruth and had 2 daughters, Ivy and Hazel. Emigrated to New Zealand. Kate married Mr Arnaud late in life (1915) and moved to Canada. Louisa Minnie (known as Queenie) married Henry Walter Wyles. 1 son, 2 daughters. Son died aged 3 months. Kathleen Thelma born 1906, Patricia born in Woolwich.

*Ivy visited my parents twice after the War. They came over by cargo boat, taking some weeks to do the distance but also took small liners if no cargo boats were available. They stayed six months, purchasing a car which was shipped to New Zealand. New cars were in very short supply at the time.*

*Kate married a farmer and my early memory of her is her wheeling me in my baby carriage to Lampton Express Dairy to buy me an ice cream. There was some talk of me being sent to Canada to stay with Aunt Kate during the War. It was a good job this didn't happen, as some evacuee children were lost on the liners because of the U-Boat's.*

Kathleen Thelma married George Frank Eustace in 1928. 1 son, George Colin married Margaret Pennifold, 2 daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda. Margaret died in 1970 and Colin remarried Elaine March. Jackie married David Hayden, 3 sons Christopher, Matthew, Daniel. Claire married Jeremy Dyer, 2 sons, Jared and Liam.

Patricia, my mother's sister, married Leslie Spencer in 1933. 3 children. David married Dorothy, 2 sons, Jeremy and Christopher. Jeremy married ..., 2 children, Ben & Bethany, Gillian married Albert Page, 1 son, Andrew. Lesley married Peter Stubbings.

*Pat and Leslie lived for a time in Risedale Gardens in Osterley and on occasions I was left with my aunt when my parents went out. On one occasion I kicked up when Mum was about to leave. I did get over this tantrum and spent a good time with my cousins, David and Gillian.*

## Harry Sworn's Family

Mr & Mrs George Sworn (the Black Bear Hotel, Wareham, Dorset and at Bournemouth.)

The story is that George Sworn was the son of the Earl of Stamford. The Earl married his cook and had a son. When his first wife died the Earl wished to remarry, this time into the aristocracy. The Earl got his first son to renounce his claim to the title which he did, receiving an annuity for life and taking the name Sworn.

6 children

1. Harry Thomas married Eliza (Lizzie) Blackwell (*my Nanny Isa*) and they had 1 son and 2 daughters. Jack married Ruth and had 2 daughters, Ivy and Hazel. Emigrated to New Zealand. Kate married Mr Arnaud late in life (1915) and moved to Canada. Louisa Minnie (known as Queenie) married Henry Walter Wyles. 1 son, 2 daughters. Son died aged 3 months. Kathleen Thelma, born 1906, Patricia born in Woolwich.



**Nanny Isa**

*Harry and Eliza were in the Rifle Brigade and lived for a time in Aldershot and Winchester. Harry was in charge of the Officers' Mess and HRH The Duke of Connaught was their Colonel in Chief. It was he who gave them the Travelling Clock, inscribing it with the following: "Sergeant Sworn, 1<sup>st</sup> Batt. Rifle Bdg. Lt. Col HRH The Duke of Connaught, May 29<sup>th</sup> 1880." They went to India in May 1880 when Louisa was 4 months old. They returned in 1885 but Harry died on board ship and was buried at sea. (NB Eliza was born at sea when her parents were returning from South Africa). Harry was to be given charge of the Officers' Mess at Winchester, but did not live to take up the post. Eliza was widowed when she was 33 years old and had to find work, eventually buying a hand laundry in Gladstone Road, Acton Green. It is thought that the building was bombed in the Second World War. 'Granny Sworn' was a wonderful woman, living until 92 years of age, spending the last 8 years living with Thelma and Frank. "Everyone loved her." I was pleased to sit up with her during her last illness. My 'stint' was from 9.00 pm to midnight, when my Dad took over. I was about 13 at the time. We still have the clock despite it going to India in 1880s and being passed down the family ever since. It still goes but needs winding 5 days as the spring is a bit tired after 130 years or so.*

Kathleen Thelma married George Frank Eustace in 1928.

1 son, George Colin married Margaret Pennifold, 2 daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda. Margaret died in 1970 and Colin remarried Elaine March. Jackie married David Hayden, 3 sons Christopher, Matthew, Daniel. Claire married Jeremy Dyer, 2 sons, Jared and Liam.

Patricia married Leslie Spencer in 1933. 3 children. David married Dorothy, 2 sons, Jeremy and Christopher. Jeremy married ..., 2 children, Ben & Bethany. Gillian married Albert Page, 1 son, Andrew. Lesley married Peter Stubbings.

2. Frank married Sarah. Frank died young and Sarah went to live in Acton near Lizzie Sworn.
3. Kate married Mr Pickett and lived in Oxford and London. They had 1 son and 2 daughters. Harold, a Chemist with a shop on King's Road, Chelsea, Gussey and Dolly who did not marry.



**Kathleen Thelma  
Eustace (née Wyles)**

4. Louise (Lucy?) married Mr Milnes and lived in Kidderminster. Several children but only 1 known, ie. Harry who had 3 daughters, Grace, Rennie & Ella. Grace married late in life. Rennie married Mr. Goodbody and had 1 son. Ella married Mr Digby, no children.



*The Goodbody's lived near the Silly Islands at Esher and Mr Goodbody was a Home Office official looking after the estates of people in prison.*

5. Nancy? married Mr Meadis and only 1 daughter, Rose, is known (she went to live in America) but there may have been more children. They lived in Bournemouth at Fisherman's Walk.
6. Fanny married Robert Emerson and had 1 son. They lived in Chiswick. Bob Emerson built the flats in Sutton Court Road. (The Redmonds lived there for a short while before they moved to Osterley). Bob gave Queenie and Thelma away at their weddings.

### **Henry Walter Wyles's Family**

Mr & Mrs Wyles were in the First Battalion of the Rifle Brigade (Green Jackets) and lived for a time in Dublin where Henry was born on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1871 or 1881. In early 1872 or 1882 they went to India when Henry Walter was 4 months old. Mr Wyles was in charge of the Sergeants' mess and Mrs Wyles was Matron of the Hospital. They had 4 children.

1. Henry Walter was left in India as a boy soldier at the age of 14. He went to Singapore at 18 and to Hong Kong for three years, returning to England when he was about 24 years old. He met Louisa Minnie Sworn and they married, moving to Malta where their son was born and died. Kathleen Thelma (*my mother*) was born in Valletta in 1906. They returned to England in April 1907 and lived in Ireland for a time. Henry was then posted to The Royal Academy at Woolwich where they lived until 1912 when he left the army. He rejoined the army in August 1914 and spent most of the war in France. He was given a commission on the field and returned to his own regiment which was unusual and an honour. He was mentioned in Dispatches for bravery on the field and wore the oakleaf on the ribbon showing his medals. He saved a man from drowning in the Irish Sea.

*I never knew my grandfather because he died in 1925. I do have his medals and my grandmother's silver locket (see photo above). I believe he died from the after effects of being gassed in the First World War and his wife was left nearly destitute. She unfortunately committed suicide in 1935/6 and I remember waiting outside a mental hospital in Walton-on-Thames while my mother visited her. Henry retired from the Rifle Brigade in 1912 but re-enlisted in 1914 and was commissioned in the field. He therefore never got an officer's pension, as he was commissioned during the war, but did have his OR's pension. He came from a Rifle Brigade family. The Brigade doesn't exist anymore, having been amalgamated into the Green Jackets and today I believe is known as The Rifles.*

2. William married Ethel and had 1 daughter, Mabel. Lived in Charles Street, Reading. Lost touch many years ago.
3. Fred who had several children by his first wife. He remarried a few years after his wife died. Lost touch about 1918. They lived at Myrtle Villa, Binfield Heath near Shiplake.
4. Annie married Mr. B. Wetheral (his parents lived at the New Inn, Tadley). They had 1 son, Edward and 1 daughter, Ivy (?). The family was divided because Annie had epilepsy. Edward lived with his parents at Grandpa Wyles'\* house and Ivy lived with the Wetheral's at Tadley. Thelma spent summers there with Ivy until she was about 14 years old.

### **George Philip Eustace's Family**

George Philip lived with his Mother and Sister in Chiswick. His father had died when he was quite young and his Mother bought a house at 1 Arlington Gardens, Chiswick. It is thought that his father's

family came from Chinner, Oxfordshire. There is a tombstone in Chinnor Churchyard to the memory of George Philip's great great great grandmother (Elizabeth Pocock) who had 22 children.

George Philip's sister, Lizzie, married Albert Escott and had 2 sons. Albert Escott had 2 sons. Eustace Escott, who was born blind and spoiled by his parents. He was a good pianist and his piano was given to the United Reformed Church in Guildford. He never married. Lesley Escott married and had 3 daughters and 1 son. Only the son, Timothy, is known about.

George married Frances Weston and had 3 children:

1. George Frank married K Thelma Wyles and had one son, George Colin married Margaret Pennifold, 2 daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda. Margaret died in 1970 and Colin remarried Elaine March. Jackie married David Hayden, 3 sons Christopher, Matthew, Daniel. Claire married Jeremy Dyer, 2 sons, Jared and Liam.
2. Donald William married Gladys (Pip) and had 2 children. Peter married Sheila and had 2 children, John and Elizabeth Mary. Frances Mary married twice, no children.
3. John Philip married Molly but died young. Molly remarried and lived in Scotland.

### Frances Weston's Family

Frances Weston (Nanny Fan) was born in Bunhill Row, London within the sound of Bow Bells. Her father's name was William Weston and he was a leather merchant.

*William had a brother, Frank whose first wife died leaving him with 3 sons, one of whom had a bicycle shop in Farnham. Very little is known of the other sons. Frank was a buyer for Lilley & Skinners and remarried Winnie.*

William Weston and his wife had 2 sons and 4 daughters:

1. Henry Jacob married Lavinia and had 2 sons and 1 daughter. The daughter, Amy, married and had 1 son, Dennis (*I was evacuated to Aunt Amy in 1939 for about 3 months*). Her husband was a post master in Slough but died young. Amy remarried Harold Hatchard and went to live in Bournemouth. Henry & Lavinia's first son, Will married Marjorie Thorpe and had 1 daughter and 2 sons. Moir married Christopher Rysdale-Smith and had 1 daughter (Clare, now married) and 1 son, Mark who had a son, Paul. Derek married Sheila and had 1 son, Timothy, who himself married with one son. Keith married Wendy and had no children.
2. Frank married Jessie Hards and had 1 son and 1 daughter. Trevor married Marilyn and have 1 son, Timothy, who lives in Australia. The daughter, Amanda, is a doctor who has 2 sons and lives in Yorkshire. Frank and Jessie's daughter, Pauline married Kingsley Lovell and have 1 son, Mark and 1 daughter, Anna. Pauline lives at Otford, near Sevenoaks, Kent.
3. Nell married and went to live in America (the name of her first husband is unknown). When he died she returned to England and married Frank Williams, who was a buyer for Dent Gloves. They had no children. Aunty Nell was a favourite Aunt to her nephews and nieces and had a very nice house at Chorleywood called Mountford.
4. Alice married Arthur Faulkner and had 2 sons and 3 daughters. Arthur was a corn chandler. Their first son, Reg, married with no children and went to live in Australia. Their second son, Cecil, married Helen and had 2 sons. They lived in Twickenham and ran shops owned by their father. Their first daughter, Elsie married Alec Dean and lived in Greece. They had 2 sons, Peter and Tony. They came to England for a holiday and unhappily their elder son died

of typhoid when on holiday in Bournemouth. Their second daughter, Dolly, never married and lived in Devon. Their third daughter, Vi, married Will and they had 1 son, Roger. Unfortunately, Will died at the same time as Peter from typhoid whilst on holiday in Bournemouth. Vi remarried Mr. Cotton and when he died she sent to live near her sister, Dolly, in Totnes.

5. Kitty married Walter Gray and emigrated to Canada in 1910. They had 1 daughter, Kathleen who married Dick O'Mahony. Kath & Dick returned to England in 1932 and Kitty and Walter followed a few years later. Kitty & Walter lived in Lyme Regis and after Dick's death, Kath and her parents moved to Par in Cornwall. Aunty Kitty lived to be 101.

6. Frances (Fanny) married George Philip Eustace and they had 3 sons:

George Frank married K Thelma Wyles and had one son, George Colin married Margaret Pennifold, 2 daughters, Jacqueline Elaine and Claire Amanda. Margaret died in 1970 and Colin remarried Elaine March. Jackie married David Hayden, 3 sons Christopher, Matthew, Daniel. Claire married Jeremy Dyer, 2 sons, Jared and Liam.

Donald William married Gladys and had 2 children. Peter married Sheila and had 2 children, John and Elizabeth Mary. Frances Mary married twice, no children.

John Philip married Molly but died young. Molly remarried and lived in Scotland.

## **Appendix 4 – Papa’s other top tips**

### **1. Be prepared**

It always pays to think things out beforehand, meetings, repair jobs, etc. Study the likely difficulties and get solutions planned out in case they occur.

### **2. DIY**

Collect tools, do repair jobs yourself. Save money!

### **3. House agents**

Always appoint estate agents on a non-sole agent basis, thus retaining the power to go elsewhere.

### **4. Money**

Always have a contingency sum available. Invest one third where you can get at it quickly, one third where it is 100% safe investments and one third with a little risk attached. Try to pay off all loans by the time you’re 40 and start saving for old age. I do feel sorry for University graduates who are now forced to enter employment with debt. However, this isn’t new. In my day, people had to borrow to go to college and pay it back later, ie. Elaine.

### **5. Budgets**

These are well worth doing and I work on a principle of plotting our expenditure against the budget to check we have enough for the year. It consists of the following parts:

Cash out (Estimated)

Cash in (Estimated)

Cash flow (Subtract monthly out from in)

Actual bank balances, adding estimated balance from cash flow to past actual expenditure one arrives at your end of year position.

I find with this on a spread sheet I can sleep at nights and can take action if required.

Capital (Capital are savings, from which large items are taken such as cars, Big holidays, Redecoration).

### **6. Arlington loans**

An Arlington is a loan from one family member to another and repaid at building society interest rates.

**7. Insurance**

Don't over insure. Do insure big items but if your funds will allow you to replace your fridge, don't insure the old one!

**8. Religion**

I sit on the fence. Many people, far more intelligent than I, believe in a God, but I'm afraid that despite being brought up in a Non-conformist tradition, I find it impossible to believe in an after-life. However, I would never try to influence other people as I believe one has to make up one's own mind on this important question. I still have, I hope, an open-mind and could be convinced if some proof could be provided. I believe that the Ten Commandments are a good basis for life and should be obeyed.

**9. Integral garages**

Avoid these; they take up too much floor space on the ground floor.

**10. Mortgages**

Have one only if you can afford it and only buy one thing on hire purchase at a time. Don't necessarily increase your mortgage thinking that tax incentives will help.

**11. Write your own history down**

Leave notes for your descendents; it's the only way they will know some of what you've lived through.

**12. Looking after old people ...**

... is not easy but I believe you should give them the best you can. After all, our parents looked after us when we were young. With people living longer however the younger generation may not be fit enough to cope, as we found out with my mother in her last months; we were too old to cope, but I still believe one should try!

**13. The importance of family**

Family is an important part of life. If you think you can get through life on your own, you're wrong! Family ties are strong and can provide support in times of trouble.

**14. Perseverance**

Remember my school motto: 'Omnia Vinct Perseverando' (Perseverance Conquers All)

**15. The grass is never greener on the other side; the grass is always as green as you make it!**



## Appendix 5



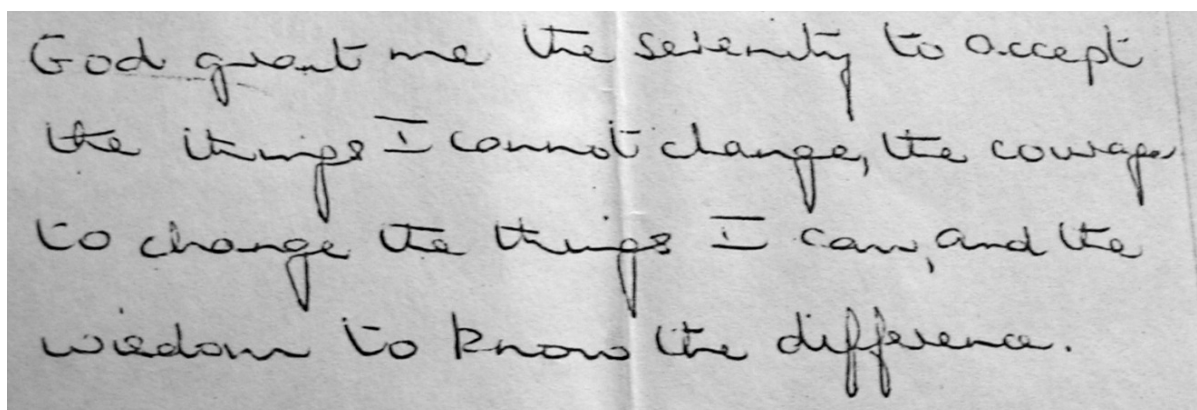
The Schneider Trophy on display at the London Science Museum (see page 25)



A Wurlitzer organ (see page 25)

# Afterword

I would like to end with the inclusion of Margaret's prayer<sup>19</sup>. This is written in her own hand and framed, sat by her bedside table during her last illnesses. It gave us much comfort during difficult times and should you experience any, I hope it will do likewise for you.



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<sup>19</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892 – 1971