

## *Forebears and Cousins*

This is a proof edition. I need help with it.

As you read, please make a note of all errors of fact, including things which don't sound true, which I can then check. Also, mark any bits which should be removed because they are either boring or upsetting.

It would be nice if you could also mark any bits you enjoyed, especially if you find topics on which you would like more information.

Finally, please send me your own material. The easiest way is by email to

[travturf@bigpond.com](mailto:travturf@bigpond.com)

Failing that put it on a disk. Please, no handwritten MSS. Poppy can get Susie to help with the keyboarding.



*Dorothy and Wilfred Hudson*

# *Forebears and Cousins*

An egocentric family history  
compiled for the great grandchildren of  
Wilfred and Dorothy Hudson  
by

Nick Hudson

HUDSON  

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NEWSTEAD

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## PART 1

### Ancestors

*For Amy, Robin, Alec and Grace Kendall,  
Sophie Doyle, Poppy and Anastasia Kendall  
Matilda and Henry Shaw and Kaila Hudson,  
and all further arrivals  
in memory of their great grandpaents,  
Dorothy and Wilfred Hudson,  
known to their parents as Gaggy and Abba,  
and to us, their grandparents, as Mum and Dad*

## Introduction to the First Edition: Why bother?

One of my great regrets is that I know so little about my grandparents, and still less of the generations which came before them. I thought I might at least set down what I do know, so that you, the great-grandchildren of Wilfred and Dorothy Hudson, will have a few clues to follow up if you ever become interested.

Most of it is based on my own memories of the people, or of things I heard about them from my parents. Anecdotes are inevitably trivial, but they have the great merit that they depict real, living people. Sometimes we see them doing things which are almost incomprehensible, the world having changed so much in the interim. But then they do something which could have happened yesterday, and they suddenly seem very close. At least, that's what I hope these trivial stories will do.

I also say something about some people I never met, thanks to having had the luck to be sent a large box containing the family archive of Bill Hudson, of whom more anon. It is from this archive that I have been able to construct most of what I know about the early history of the Hudsons. For the Reynolds, I have the invaluable help of a huge family tree compiled by Michael Reynolds, to whom we all owe an immense debt of gratitude. I have done very little research myself.

Memory can be fickle, and I am sure I am grossly unfair to some of them. The old adage says we should never speak ill of the dead, and I am afraid my memories of some of the ancestors are not flattering. But at least they are true reports of what I remember and what I heard.

A more important caution is that other people may know things which prove my memory wrong. This booklet is an unedited compilation of unchecked facts. I hope that its readers will help with the editing and checking process, and send me back copies covered with corrections and additions.

## Introduction to the Second Edition:

Soon after the first edition was printed, I got a deluge of new material, particularly on the Hudson side. I have to thank my first cousin Francis Pook, who lent me a large number of letters, postcards and photographs, plus a detailed diary of three years, 1926-1928, kept by his mother Ruth, your great-grandfather Wilfred's beloved sister, who died of peritonitis in 1934, two months after Francis was born.

The diary is remarkable for at least three reasons: firstly, it is an astonishingly sophisticated document considering that she was only eighteen when she started it in 1926; secondly, it is full of fascinating detail about ordinary daily life at the time; thirdly, it depicts a very lively intelligence, with succinct and devastating comments on the many books she is reading, the plays and concerts she attends, and the office in which she works as a shorthand typist. We see her fall in and out of love, and we see her meet the man she later married.

We get glimpses of many other members of the family, including her brother, your great-grandfather Wilfred, then a medical student at Guy's Hospital. We see him bringing home his new flame Dorothy, your great-grandmother.

I would like to say that it also throws clear light on the problems of her father and younger brother and sister, about whom I had so many unanswered questions, but they remain shadowy figures. This is perhaps itself profoundly significant.

The second coup was to discover (via the Silsden website) my second cousin once removed, Hugh Hudson, who is engaged in a similar venture about his part of the family. He is doing a proper job, exploring parish registers and so on, and has filled in many of the gaps in my original version. I have plundered his records shamelessly.

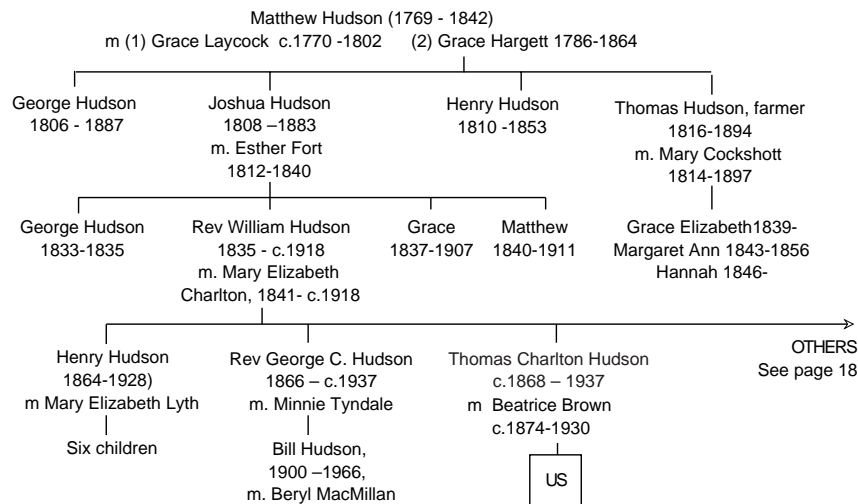
His records enables me to identify and correct on of the most appalling errors in the first version – your great-great-grandmother was called Beatrice, not Bertha – God know how I got that wrong – and hence to identify a character 'Bea' who appears in a photograph.

# 1. The Hudsons

All stories have to start somewhere, and ours can start in 1769 in the village of Silsden, near Keighley in Yorkshire, where the churchyard is apparently full of Hudsons. In that year, your great-great-great-great-great-grandfather Matthew Hudson was born.

Silsden was a wool town, and the Hudson family were on the lower rungs of the associated social ladder – the parish records show them as woolcombers, weavers and agricultural labourers. Matthew’s first wife, Grace Laycock, died without giving him an heir, but he had better luck the next time around, marrying another Grace, this time Grace Hargett. With her he had four sons, George, Joshua, Henry and Thomas. One of them, Joshua Hudson, was to become your great-great-great-great-grandfather.

Joshua married rather well - his wife, Esther Fort, came from a family of farmers. His second son, William, was to become your great-great-great-grandfather. The photograph (1.1) is of Hays Hill Farm, the house in which he was brought up, according to a note written on the back. However, it seems more likely that this was the home not of Joshua but of his mother’s family, the Forts. Either way, some ancestors of yours lived there.



1.1 Hay's Hill Farm, Silsden, Yorkshire, c. 1850

When William was five, his mother died giving birth to the fourth child, and William was handed over to his paternal grandmother. Meanwhile, a note on the back of the photograph of his Uncle George (1.2) says that it was he who brought William up.

Quite likely both these stories are true: it would be very natural for the boy to have been handed over to the grandmother when his mother died, and equally natural for an uncle to step in as the boy approached manhood. But why was he not returned to his father? A possible clue lies in the photo: whereas Joshua was still a woolcomber, George had become a farmer. The photo is of a prosperous middle-class individual, unmarried, and with nobody to spend his money on but his nephew.

One thing is certain: your great-great-great-grandfather William was



1.2 George Hudson c. 1850



1.3 *The Rev William Hudson and* 1.4 *Mary Hudson, c. 1875*

never faced with a life as a farm labourer. He left Yorkshire, and we find him next an ordained Minister in the Methodist Church, working in the Durham circuit. So it was as the Rev William Hudson (1.3) that he became the husband of a dark-eyed beauty called Mary Charlton (1.4). His ministry took them all over the country – their children were born at Worksop, Sheffield, London and Lincoln, and by 1901 they were living near Tonbridge. His final position was, I think, as minister of the Wimbledon Methodist Church. They later retired to Finsbury Park, a northern suburb of London, where his grandson, my father, was visiting on the occasion of the Zeppelin air raid on 1 October 1916, when for the first time a Zeppelin was shot down over London. It was an awesome sight that my father never forgot, a great pyramid of fire high in the sky which lasted fully three minutes before falling as a flaming wreck to the ground.

William and Mary had no less than eleven children. I have a complete list of their names and birthdays, thanks to the fact that one of them, Lucy, kept a birthday book which has survived and is now in the

possession of Hugh Hudson. Of most of them this is almost all I know, but I can say a bit more about three of them:

*George Hudson*

The elder son, George Charlton Hudson (1.5), was probably the first family member to come to Australia. He was a qualified pharmaceutical chemist. He came to Australia after a spell in South Africa, where he followed his father in becoming ordained as a Methodist minister. He also married “Minnie”, Jane Isabella Tindall (1.6), daughter of a formidable line of missionaries who had run the Nisbet Bath mission in Great Namaqualand. And if you don’t know where Great Namaqualand is, do what I did and google it. In fact, googling Tindall + Namaqualand is better still – the family clearly made life difficult for the indigenous inhabitants for some sixty years.

As far as I know George never earned a living as a Minister, and his licence as pharmacist in his chemist shop in Croydon (1.7) was renewed in 1931, shortly before his death in 1935. They were then living in a house with (according to



1.5 *The Rev. George Hudson*  
1.6 *Minnie Hudson, c. 1905*





1.7 Hudson's pharmacy, Croydon, Victoria, c. 1919

a note on the back of the photograph, 1.8) a fine view of the Dandenong Ranges, but I do not know its address.

Of more importance, they visited England in 1933, and it was in



1.8 George Hudson's house in Croydon, c. 1932

their photo album that I found the earliest photo I have of my father and mother as a married couple and the earliest one of me, just a few weeks old (photo 7.1).

George's son Bill Hudson (1.9) worked all his life with the Reserve Bank of Australia, and I actually met him at his home in Hunters Hill, Sydney, shortly before his death in 1966. It is through the family of his wife Beryl, née Macmillan, that I have his archive, including all the pictures in this chapter so far.



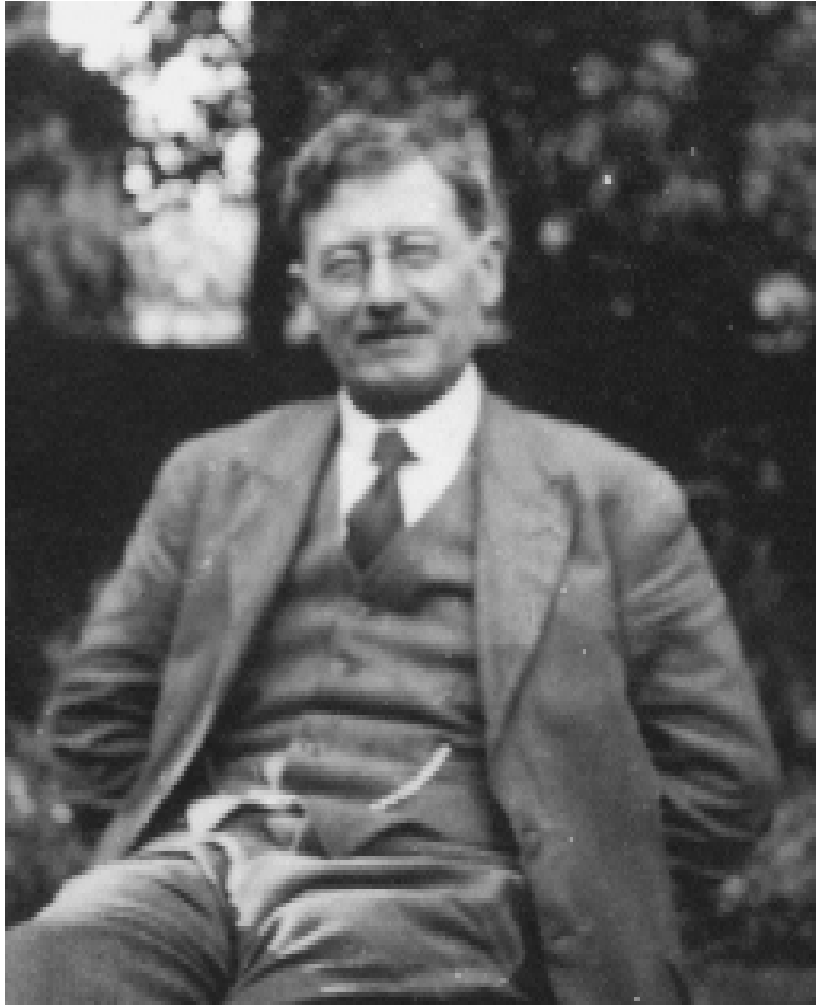
1.9 Bill Hudson, c. 1940

*Thomas Charlton Hudson*

We are more interested in William's second son, your great-great-grandfather, Thomas Charlton Hudson, generally known as TCH. I know a bit more about him, though he died in 1937, when I was four, and I have no memories of him. But we had a great trunk full of his papers in a cupboard under the roof at 28 Dashwood Road, Banbury, where I grew up. Most of them were academic papers which were beyond me, but there were also bundles of printed copies of appalling poems – patriotic and pious doggerel. It did not appeal at all.

This was unfortunate. He was by all accounts a very bright young man, and went to Cambridge to study Physics. There he caught the eye of Prof. J. J. Thompson, who is mentioned in any worthwhile Senior Physics textbook for his so-called 'plum pudding' model of the atom. Thompson was apparently very impressed by young TCH, and recommended him for employment at the Greenwich Observatory just outside London, where he rose rapidly through the ranks and was all





1.10 Your great great grandfather, Thomas Charlton Hudson, c. 1926

set to become the boss, the Astronomer Royal.

However, he started acting very strangely. He was never a raving lunatic, but he had the habit of being extremely rude to important people, which is not acceptable in an Astronomer Royal. So they transferred him to the staff of the Nautical Almanac, a periodical publica-

tion which contained the exact times of the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter and other astronomical events which enabled navigators of ships to check their chronometers in the days before radio, and later satellite navigation, took all the skill out of it. This was a good job for him, as TCH was fascinated by calculating machines, the forerunners of computers, and wrote a number of papers about these and about a major use for them – calculating the orbits of moons.

In 1923 he was certified as a manic depressive, a condition now known as bipolar disorder. This forced him into early retirement, but he went on with his intellectual activities, writing a paper in which he calculated the possible velocities and heights of man-made satellites in orbit round the earth. It was a surprising topic for study, because at the time, 1926, there was no rocket powerful enough to get anywhere near sending a satellite into orbit. Not only this, but the paper concluded with a note on ‘stationary orbits’, that is, orbits in which the satellite would be travelling at exactly the same speed and in the same direction as the earth below was revolving, so that from the Earth it appeared to be stationary.

Thirty years later Russian scientists sent the first ‘sputnik’ into orbit, and it was not long before your great-great-grandfather’s dream of a satellite in stationery orbit was realised, giving us our satellite phones, satellite TV and GPS navigation aids. But by then computers had been developed which in a few seconds did all the calculations on which he had laboured for years.

The writer of his obituary in the Royal Astronomical Society’s journal is full of detail on his work, but breaks off suddenly in the middle, saying ‘And that, perhaps, is enough about our wayward friend.’

If you want to learn more, try Googling “T.C. Hudson” + “Nautical Almanac”.

*Edward*

Hugh Hudson writes

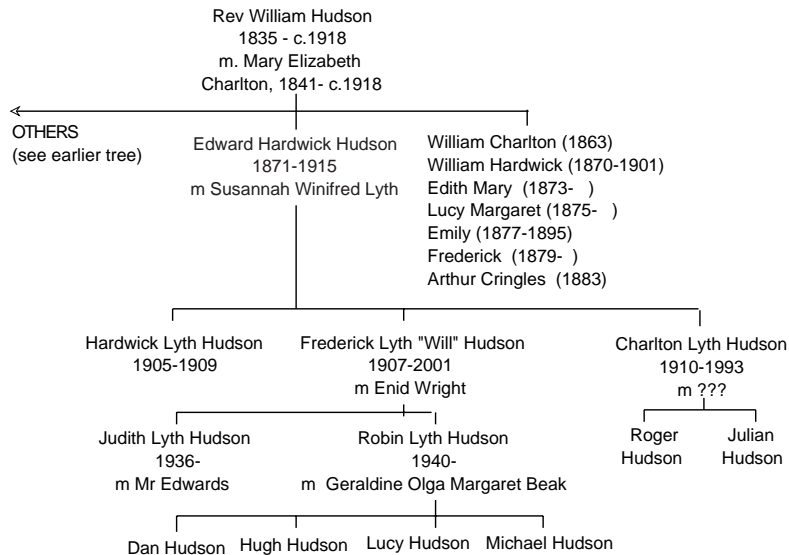
My great-grandfather was Rev. Edward Hardwick Hudson (1871-1915). He married Susannah Winifred Lyth in 1902 – this wedding was not registered in the UK and it is quite likely that they married in South Africa. Edward was another Methodist minister. Their first son Hardwick Lyth Hudson (1905-1909) was seriously ill throughout his



1.11 "Edward and Susie"

short life. The second son was my grandfather Frederick Lyth "Will" Hudson (1907-2001). He was a paper scientist, initially in the private sector but later at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, where there is now a small paper science library which bears his name. Edward's third and final child was Charlton Lyth "Chas" Hudson (1910-1993).

My grandfather's childhood was troubled - initially because his mother was preoccupied with caring for his sick elder



1.12 Frederick Lyth "Will" Hudson



1.13 Robin Lyth Hudson

brother, and then because his father died when he was still very young. He spent much of his childhood in the care of his mother's family (the Lyths) and consequently regarded himself as more of a Lyth than a Hudson (he signed his name as F. Lyth Hudson). Susannah Winifred Lyth (Hudson)'s father was Rev. John Lyth, who knew William Hudson well and was also very eminent in the Wesleyan Methodist hierarchy. The Lyth and Hudson families knew each other very well, and Edward was one three Hudson brothers to marry members of the Lyth family. A Lyth family history was privately published in the late eighties - this includes a very comprehensive list of John Lyth's descendants.

So just to complete the story of how I fit in, Will married Enid Wright in 1932, and they had two children Judith Lyth Hudson (now Edwards), who was born in 1936 and my father Robin Lyth Hudson, born in 1940 (who is a semi-retired university professor). Robin married Geraldine Olga



1.14 *Hugh, Lucy and Dan Hudson*

Margaret Beak in 1962, and I am the second of their four children. I live in Nottingham and work as a computer analyst programmer.

My family are still in touch with Charlton Lyth Hudson's children (Roger and Julian) and their families, but knew very little of the Hudson story. I haven't yet got round to asking whether they know anything more.

[That's the end of Hugh's contribution at the moment.]



1.15 *Michael Hudson*



1.16 *William's family, c. 1890*

*And what about the other seven children of the Rev William Hudson? Here are four of them, Edith, Lucy, Emily and Frederick, with their parents. But apart from Frederick, which one is which?*

## 2. The Browns

TCH's wife, your great-great-grandmother Beatrice, was by all accounts a wonderful woman, but she died in 1930, three years before I was born, so I never met her.



2.1 Your great great grandmother, Beatrice Brown

When I say 'by all accounts' I have three: those of my father, who adored her from a distance; of her daughter Ruth, whose diary depicts a very sensible, down-to earth woman, and of her husband's obituarist, who says she supported the 'wayward friend' valiantly though the years of his decline.

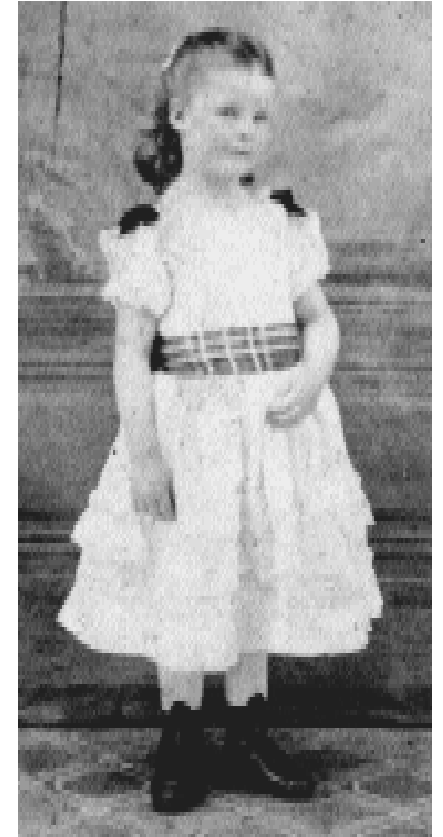
Her maiden name was Brown, but of her parents I know nothing except their names. However, I have strong memories of three of her sisters, Ada, Alice, Adelaide, known collectively as The Aunts, and her brother Jack.

### *The Aunts*

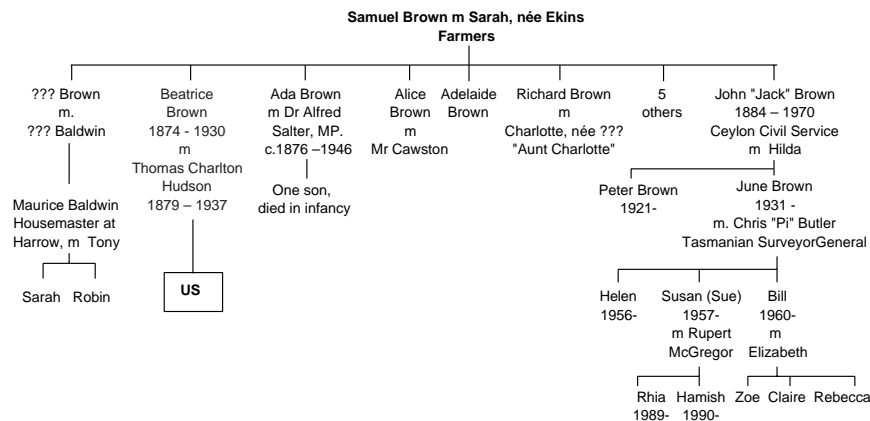
Alice's full name was Mrs Alice Cawston, and thereby hangs a tale. Alice trained as a nurse, and, as nurses do, married a surgeon. She went to work with him in his private clinic. Unfortunately, it turned out to specialise in abortions, which were totally illegal at the time, and one day the police arrived and shut it down. Mr Cawston escaped and disappeared, never to be seen again.

I had always understood that all this happened very soon after her marriage, which would have been soon after the turn of the century. However, in 1929 we find "Mr and Mrs Cawston" on Ruth's a wedding present, so obviously the event took place some thirty years later. Room for research..

Alice used to call me Maurice, because she confused me with my father Wilfred, whom she confused in turn with his cousin Maurice



2.2 Beatrice Brown as a child



Baldwin. I remember her lying in bed in her nursing home with a fly swatter. The conversation was punctuated by thumps and crashes as she whacked the blankets with this alarming weapon. Then she turned to me and said, in a loud conspiratorial whisper, ‘Maurice, you can’t trust these people. They creep up and down the stairs all day. They’re Roman Catholic Jews, you know.’

Adelaide, by contrast, was totally on the ball, highly intelligent and in control. Before she retired she had risen about as far as women then could in the Civil Service, and she left me her Remington portable typewriter. I really liked Adelaide. The two sisters had lived together in Balham ever since the disappearance of Dr Cawston, and that was where I first met them. There was no doubt about who was in charge.

Adelaide and Alice finally landed up in the Tracey House nursing home in Banbury, and shortly afterwards Adelaide fell from an upstairs window and was killed. Obviously there was talk of suicide, and my mother was worried that this might be distressing to Alice. Banbury had two local newspapers, and my mother took her the Banbury Guardian, handing it over with the reassuring comment that it had a very simple, strictly factual account of the affair. Alice reached down under the bedclothes and flourished the other one, saying “There’s a much better account in the Advertiser.”

I will leave Ada until last, for reasons which will shortly become obvious.

### Jack (John Duncan Brown)

The youngest of Beatrice’s siblings was John, generally known as Jack. He read Mathematics at Clare College, Cambridge, and then joined the Ceylon Civil Service, ending up as Governor of the Northern Province. By the time he had got up the courage to propose to his beloved Hilda Robinson it was 1920, and their daughter June is roughly the same age as me. Their son Peter, born in 1921, was one of the first RAF casualties of WW2 when the Hampden bomber on which he was second pilot and navigator was shot down over Belgium.

When Jack retired in the 1947 they moved to Hobart. I visited them once with Caroline, in about 1962, when she was four. She sat quietly in a huge armchair throughout an extraordinarily boring tea party. You can get some idea of the conversation from Caroline’s comment as we drove away. “Daddy, you’d let me marry a black man if I really loved him.”

While we were in Hobart we also visited their daughter, June. She was married to a totally delightful man called Chris Butler, generally known as Pi ( $\pi$ ), who was the Tasmanian Government Surveyor-General. I believe that there is a waterfall under the horizontal scrub which he discovered and which bears his name. They had a daughter, Susan, almost exactly Caroline’s age, and Caroline went with her to kindergarten when I was out doing business. They had a lovely house in Bracken Lane, Fern Tree, on the lower slopes of Mount Wellington. They were burnt out in the 1967 bush fires, but promptly rebuilt an even nicer house on the same site.

Pi was tragically killed in a car accident in 2001, when a man coming the other way fell asleep at the wheel and slammed into him head on. The man was fined \$200 for crossing a white line, his barrister having argued successfully that as he was asleep at the time he could not be charged with any responsibility for the resultant death.

June now lives in Battery Point, Hobart, and visited us recently in Newstead with her elder daughter Helen (1.2). Helen has degree in Pharmacy and Fine Arts and lives in Glen Iris, Victoria, with her partner, Peter Gower, a PhD-wielding geologist. Her younger daughter Sue has a Fine Arts degree and is married to Rupert MacGregor, a landscaper. They live in Kingston, just south of Hobart. Their daughter Rhia is currently working full time at Centrelink as her gap year prior to



2.3 June Butler and



2.4 Helen, 2005

going to the university to do arts/law next year. Their son Hamish is in year 11 at school. Finally June's son Bill has a Masters degree in Engineering and is married to a physiotherapist called Elizabeth. They have three daughters, Zoe, now in year 12 at school, Claire in year 10, and Rebecca Kate in year 7.

#### *Others*

June Butler tells me that her father said he was the youngest of a family of twelve, and that his eldest sister had already had a child when he arrived, so he was born an uncle. This enables me to answer a puzzle: where do the Baldwins fit in? Maurice Baldwin was a housemaster at Harrow in the 1940s, nicknamed The Bomber for his powerful voice. He was a first cousin of both June and my father, so clearly his mother must have been one of the older unknown Brown girls, possibly the oldest one. Maurice's wife was called Tony (presumably for Antonia, but I remember her as being distinctly mannish), and they had a daughter Sarah and son Robin, a bit older than me.

Then there was also Uncle Dick, whom I never met, but I did meet his wife, whom we knew as Aunt Charlotte. She spoke with a rich Irish brogue, and was a wonderful story teller, with a wealth of yarns about

being a medical missionary in China. I remember my father showing her with pride a plant he called *Verbascum*. "Verbascum, indeed!" she said. 'When I was a girl, we called it Old Man's Flannel, and it grew everywhere.' She was, I think, one of the first women to qualify as a medical practitioner.

#### *Ada*

By 1915 or so, Beatrice really had her hands full. She not only had an unreliable husband who needed constant attention, but also her third and fourth children, Nina and John, were proving difficult. As a result, her eldest son (your great-grandfather and my father, Wilfred) was farmed out to her sister, his Aunt Ada, who was married to a doctor, Alfred Salter, and lived in the London dockside suburb of Bermondsey. They had lost their only child in infancy, and for all practical purposes became his parents.

Bermondsey was a very run down suburb, with rows and rows of tiny houses for the workers on the London docks.

Ada worked tirelessly to make Bermondsey a more tolerable place for the dock workers who lived there. She was elected to Council, and served several terms as Mayor. Of the many things she did, the best remembered are her tree planting programs, which included trees down the streets and the development of parks and small gardens wherever there was a spare bit of public land. There is still an Ada Salter Memorial garden in Bermondsey.

In all this she was greatly assisted by her husband Alfred. He was a member of the Society of Friends, the Quakers, and as Quakers are going to play



2.5 Dr Alfred Salter, M.P., c. 1935

quite a large part in this story, I had better say something about them.

Quakers are generally regarded (by themselves as well as others) as a Christian sect. However, theirs is a very odd sort of Christianity. They have no creed and no priests, which means that they are not concerned with all the theological problems which beset most Christian sects, and have no one to tell them what they are supposed to believe. I would guess that few Quakers believe in the virgin birth or the resurrection, but none of this matters to them. What matters is something they call 'that of God in every man', a deep seated awareness of right and wrong, which helps each of us to decide what is the right thing to do and then gives us strength to do it.

Similarly, it doesn't matter whether Jesus Christ was one of several Gods, a third of one God or just a very wise and good human being. What matters to Quakers is not his divinity but his humanity: if we all have a bit of God in us, Christ had a lot of it. For Quakers, the main message of Christ was what we might now call social conscience – basically, that we should try to help one another, and failing that at least not to harm one another.

So, if there is no creed and no priest, what do Quakers do on Sundays? The answer is that they hold a Meeting for Worship. They gather in a large room and sit in silence, periodically broken when one of them stands up and says something – a story, a prayer, a comment on the news of the day. If nobody says anything, it can at first be very boring. However, you soon find that sitting in silence in a group of people stimulates thought. In other religions this is called 'meditation'. Often it gets so absorbing that you get annoyed when somebody breaks the silence and interrupts your train of thought.

I said that Quakers do not have a creed; but they do have a number of things they call testimonies. These are general statements of principle about things which are more or less in conflict with 'that of God in every man'. There are two testimonies which are most often associated with Quakers, the testimony on war and the testimony on intoxicating liquor. Many Quakers are pacifists and some are teetotallers.

I would not call myself a Christian, because this implies belief in a whole lot of propositions which seem to me to be either absurd or (if you believe in God) blasphemous. How would you like to be told that a huge job on which you have been working for fifteen billion years

had been done a week? As I see it, science, so far from being in conflict with religion, is our best path to understanding the mind of God.

No, I don't think I am a Christian; but I don't mind being called a Quaker.

Anyway, Uncle Alfred was one of these. The most important outcome was that he sent Wilfred, your great-grandfather, to a Quaker school, Leighton Park, in Reading. Later Wilfred himself became a Quaker, which is important because that is how he met your great-grandmother. But that story belongs a bit later.

In 1921, Alfred Salter stood as Labour candidate for the seat of Bermondsey, and was elected. He retained the seat in every subsequent election until his death in 1946. Sadly, by the time the Labour Party came to power in its own right following the 1945 election he was very ill; otherwise he would almost certainly have been in Cabinet.

There is a very good book about him, *Bermondsey Story*, by Fenner Brockway. Try Googling "Ada Salter" or "Alfred Salter" + Bermondsey. You will probably be astonished to see how well he and his wife are remembered.

### 3. Wilfred and his siblings

Thomas Charlton Hudson and Beatrice (your great-great-grandparents) had four children: Wilfred, Ruth, Nina and John. I will deal with Wilfred, your great-grandfather, after dealing more briefly with the others.

#### Ruth

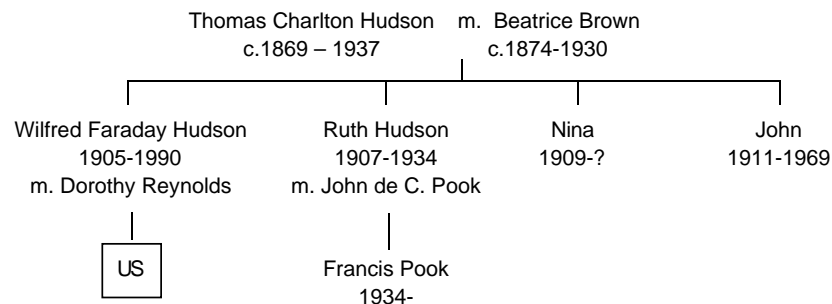
I never met Ruth, my father's favourite sister, from whom Caroline got her second name. However, her son Francis has lent me three volumes of an extraordinary diary she kept from 1926 to 1928. She comes over as highly intelligent and articulate, but also as great fun. She read voraciously, two or three books a week, and gives very perceptive comments on many of them. She loved music and attended a lot of concerts as well as singing in her local church choir, and seems to have been at the theatre once a week or so as well as performing with a local drama group.

The page I have chosen is interesting less for what she talks about than for what she does not talk about. The event of the day is her brother's 21st birthday party, but we hear almost nothing about him or the party. Surely her brother got other presents besides the very handsome cheque from Uncle Alfred. What did Ruth herself give him? Surely the rest of the family were there, but mother and father and two siblings get no mention at all.

It is as if she is hurrying through the account of the party to get to the bit which really interested her (and me, as it happens): her report of Alfred Salter's reaction to the General Strike. A less savvy reporter



3.1 TCH and his family, Christmas 1916: left to right: Nina, TCH, Ruth, John, Beatrice (your great great grandmother) and Wilfred (your great grandfather).



might well have simplified the story to its outcome: that he supported the strike. But she is aware that he was, like many other Labour party stalwarts, deeply concerned that the strike, however justified it was by the way the miners were being treated, was a bad strategy. Not many eighteen-year-old girls would have included such material in their personal diaries, and even fewer would have been able to summarise his position so succinctly.

However, the real surprise is the reference to a move for David Lloyd George to join the labour Party. Lloyd George's Liberal Party was in decline following a split between its two ex-Prime Minister leaders,



(141-224) (SHORT LAW STRINGS 002)

Packed up nearly all my clothes in the large suitcase. It was dreadfully heavy, being made worse by putting all the music I had here (among which Mendelssohn's songs without words, weighing about a ton) which I went back on Miss Mann's bike in the lunch hour to fetch.

Was perfectly tired when I got home (after it was the doctors are now normal) my cold was bad.

It was lovely at home. Uncle Alfred & Auntie's idea were there & Auntie Adelaide came on later. Played ball in the garden & walked. The garden was splendid & we stayed out until dusk. Wilfred had several presents including a cheque for £10 from Uncle & Auntie.

Uncle looked pretty, & was against the S. as he thinks it is a clumsy way of doing things but he backed it up since there was no. He said what a bad thing it was if Lloyd George joins the Labour Party. They don't want him.

3.2 Entry from Ruth's diary for 21 May 1926, the day of your great grandfather's 21st birthday. She was in the process of moving to a new flat, but came home for the party.

Asquith and Lloyd George, and something had to happen. History records that shortly after the General Strike the dispute was resolved: Asquith was elevated to the House of Lords and Lloyd George resumed the leadership. I had never heard of any negotiations between Lloyd George and the Labour party, but Ruth makes Alfred speak as if he was commenting on the news of the day. I am trying to find out. Maybe we have found a footnote to history.

One thing is clear: Ruth was much more interested in her uncle's political chatter than in the birthday boy and the party. Yet I feel pretty sure that none of her friends were aware of her serious side. Ruth was no blue stocking. She loved dancing, and was clearly very good at it, and this is how she met her future husband, J. de C. Pook. It was not love at first sight:

Tuesday, January 19 1926

Mr Pook called in for some dancing instruction. His mother is most anxious for him to take up dancing so as to get to know some nice eligible girls. He was hopeless at first but improved greatly and could waltz quite well when he left. He said that three other people had tried to teach him and failed."

Three months later he was still 'Mr Pook', twenty years older than she was, but something had changed:

Mr Pook was awfully nice as usual. When I first knew him, I wasn't half so interested, but now I think he is even fascinating. He never looks sad. I wonder if he ever thinks of his late fiancée. Of course he must, but he never shows it.

Finally, he asked her to accompany him to the National Gallery



3.3 John Pook and Ruth Pook, née Hudson, clearly pregnant, c. 1933

Summer Exhibition. Ruth had been invited to a tennis party that day, but as she writes "I love tennis, but I think I will go out with him."

A couple of years later they married, but it was five more years before their son Francis was born. Then came tragedy. Ruth contracted peritonitis and died just six weeks after the birth.

It is through Francis that I have the photographs of TCH and his family. Astonishingly, my father seems not to have had any; or, if he did, they were not on display. Francis also has a great many letters which have enabled me to correct and expand the original version of this story.

Francis is now retired, and lives in his father's house in Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. We all owe him a great debt of gratitude for lending me this material. His mother surely was a remarkable woman, and I can understand why my father loved her so dearly.

#### *Nina and John*

I met my father's other sister, my Auntie Nina, when she came to stay with us in 1937. Although I was only four I knew she was peculiar, because when she had cornflakes for breakfast she poured the milk in first followed by the cornflakes. I was therefore not too surprised to learn that she had retired to a home for the bewildered, along with the youngest child, John, whom I never met at all. And that was more or less all I knew - until I got Francis Pook's material.

There are still a lot of gaps in the story, but Ruth's diary records them as pretty normal children; they argue a lot, but there is no hint of psychiatric problems. Nina followed Ruth at Blackheath High School (which despite its name is in fact an independent school) and emerged with an ambition to be a actor, for which she seems to have displayed unusual talent.. In 1926 she went briefly to RADA (the Royal Academy



3.4 Francis Pook in 2007



3.5 Nina Hudson c. 1927

of Dramatic Art), but doesn't seem to have got far there. In 1928 there is then a letter from her to Ruth written in a training college for missionaries, reporting that she had heard God telling her she must go to France.

We next hear of her in a letter written by your great-grandmother Dorothy to Ruth just after Francis's birth. She wrote: "Nina sounds happy and settled. Perhaps it is a good think that she is more or less faced with this or nothing. It may help to bring her to some sort of reality." But what "this" is we do not know.

Soon after she was admitted to Warlingham Park as a voluntary patient, where she spent the rest of her life.

As for John, Ruth's diary has little to say about him, though again he seems to have gone to a normal school. The first hint of abnormality is that he failed ALL his subjects at School Certificate, a remarkable achievement which must have disturbed his brilliant father.

In the letter mentioned above, Dorothy says that John was staying with them "We hope [five underlines] to fix him up with a job in the near future." Later, there is some talk of finding him a place in a sheltered workshop or a 'job' in The Retreat, a Quaker psychiatric nursing home in York. And the next I know of him is in a letter from Wilfred to John Pook, dated 4.8.69. "You will I know be sorry to learn that my brother John died in his sleep at his lodgings in Colchester. ... He was a gentle and kindly soul..." It says something, perhaps, that he did not tell me or (as far as I know) and other member of the family of this event. But quite what it says is less certain.

### *Wilfred*

Your great-grandfather Wilfred's childhood was not easy. He was about ten when the decision was made to hand him over to his Auntie Ada and Uncle Alfred, and however good they were to him he felt rejected, missing his mother and sister.

Moreover, while Ada was a gentle, loveable person, Alfred was pretty terrifying. He had a formidable intellect and a towering rather than engaging personality.



3.6 *Wilfred and Beatrice in front of the family home in Finchley, 1906*

3.7 *Wilfred with his Aunt Edith, Wimbledon.*



3.8 *Wilfred c. 1922, with Ada Salter, or perhaps his mother. Who knows?*

Hospital, he was known as 'Red Hudson', though perhaps this was more for his hair than his politics. Nevertheless, I do know that he voted Labour in the 1945 general election, much to the astonishment of his children, Janet and myself, who were at the time True Blue Tories, as only innocent young teenagers can be.

The lessons on botany made a deeper impression, and delivered a more practical

message. Alfred saw trees and flowers as allies in his battle with the ugliness and despair of the London slums. He never had a garden of his own. Wilfred, by contrast, saw trees and flowers simply as things to love and cultivate. Gardening was not just a hobby for him, but was a major part of his life. He found time to be a very good doctor, but gardening absorbed him.

In 1923, about the time Wilfred was to leave school, his father was diagnosed with a certifiable manic depression, as we have already seen, and had to retire from his job. His mother decided it was time she gave some attention to her son, and the two of them went on an extended tour of Germany and Austria. It is perhaps significant that he talked more about these three or four weeks than about all the rest of his early life put together. He loved his mother, and had the happiest memories of this brief period when, for the first and last time, he had her completely to himself.

TCH's retirement had another less happy result. The family fortunes, such as they had been, collapsed. Wilfred had long since decided to follow in Alfred Salter's footsteps and become a doctor, but his father had always talked of his doing the preclinical studies at Cam-

bridge. Now there was no money for this, and Wilfred enrolled at Guy's Hospital, within walking distance of the Salter home in Bermondsey.

He visited the family home only occasionally. His sister Ruth records in her diary an example of 'Wilfred's weak jokes' on one such visit. He was going into the bathroom, and Ruth called out "Don't be long there!" He replied "I don't belong here." A slightly bitter joke perhaps.

He was a pretty good student; not brilliant, but certainly above average. He won one of the Golding Bird Gold medals of his year, though I am not sure which – they were awarded for at least half a dozen subjects. Incidentally, if you wonder what a Golding Bird is, it is a person. It seems that there was a Mr Bird who for some reason called his son Golding, and he became the famous Dr Golding Bird of Guy's.

Wilfred made many friends at Guy's and they stayed in touch throughout their lives. They called themselves the "28 Club" (having all qualified in 1928), and they met every year for a dinner in London. Robin and I visited one of them, Sydney Abrahams, in 2004. He and his still ravishingly beautiful wife Marion were about to celebrate their 75th wedding anniversary. I find this very impressive, having never managed to make a marriage last much into double figures.

Meanwhile Wilfred had, as mentioned earlier, joined the Society of Friends, the Quakers, and on one fateful weekend he went out to attend a gathering at Jordans, a Quaker meeting house near Beaconsfield. There he met Dorothy Reynolds.

But that is the stuff of Chapter 7.

## A Mathematical interlude

My mother once told me that the Reynolds came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066, or at least that their ancestor Eo de Gurnai did. This is almost certainly true. If Eo de Gurnai existed and has any descendants living today, it is a virtual certainty that we are among them.

Why? Simple maths. The number of our antecedents doubles every generation: 2 parents,  $2^2 = 4$  grandparents,  $2^3 = 8$  great-grandparents, etc. The numbers in each generation go up like this:

Generations	Year of birth	Number of people in generation	Relationship to you
0	2000	2 to the power 0 = 1	You
1	1967	2 to the power 1 = 2	Your parents
2	1933	2 to the power 2 = 4	Your grandparents
3	1900	2 to the power 3 = 8	Your great grandparents
4	1867	2 to the power 4 = 16	Your great (x2) grandparents
5	1833	2 to the power 5 = 32	Your great (x3) grandparents
6	1800	2 to the power 6 = 64	etc
7	1767	2 to the power 7 = 128	etc
8	1733	2 to the power 8 = 256	etc
9	1700	2 to the power 9 = 512	etc
10	1667	2 to the power 10 = 1024	etc
11	1633	2 to the power 11 = 2048	etc
12	1600	2 to the power 12 = 4096	etc
13	1567	2 to the power 13 = 8192	etc
14	1533	2 to the power 14 = 16384	etc
15	1500	2 to the power 15 = 32768	etc
16	1467	2 to the power 16 = 65536	etc
17	1433	2 to the power 17 = 131072	etc
18	1400	2 to the power 18 = 262144	etc
19	1367	2 to the power 19 = 524288	etc
20	1333	2 to the power 20 = 1048576	etc
21	1300	2 to the power 21 = 2097152	etc
22	1267	2 to the power 22 = 4194304	etc
23	1233	2 to the power 23 = 8388608	etc
24	1200	2 to the power 24 = 16777216	etc
25	1167	2 to the power 25 = 33554432	etc
26	1133	2 to the power 26 = 67108864	etc
27	1100	2 to the power 27 = 134217728	etc
28	1067	2 to the power 28 = 268435456	Your great (x26) grandparents
29	1033	2 to the power 29 = 536870912	Your great (X27) grandparents
30	1000	2 to the power 30 = 1073741824	Your great (x28) grandparents

This table allows three generations per century, i.e. it assumes that the average age of your parents is 33 years more than yours, and your

grandparents 67 years older. If anything, generations are shorter than this, so the numbers of ancestors actually increase if anything even more rapidly than in the table.

Anyway, the table shows that in the year 1066, the year of the Norman Conquest, you had AT LEAST  $2^{28} = 260,435,456$  ancestors alive and having children. But there's a problem here: the population of England in 1066 was just 1.1 million. So each of these 1.1 million people has to appear in your family tree on average 236 times. In fact, it is a lot more than that, as some of the 1.1 million will have had no children. So instead of it being remarkable to find that you ARE descended from Eo de Gurnai – or William the Conqueror himself, for that matter – it would be remarkable if you were NOT.

I say this simply to put genealogy in perspective. The further back we trace our ancestry, the more meaningless it becomes. On the next page you will find a family tree with names covering 10 generations. It is the product of some astonishing research work by my second cousin Michael Reynolds. Maybe one of you will pick it up where he left off, and start extending it. Soon some names would occur which we have heard of: writers, scientists, explorers, politicians. Unquestionably we would soon find the forebears of the Pilgrim Fathers, as they were Quakers, and the list already contains many of the old Quaker families: Sturges, Glothiers, Clarks, and so on.

And this is in fact the problem. We are about to look at a tree which goes back nine generations from James Bryant Reynolds. If it were complete, there would be  $2^9 = 512$  names on the top line. In short, it is less than one five hundredth of his story. But you are four generations on. It shows only one of the  $2^{13} = 8192$  ancestors you had in that generation.

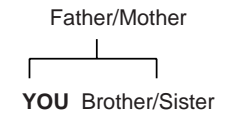
If we go back far enough, we find common ancestry with the whole human race. We would not need to go far back to show the mathematical certainty of our being descended from Julius Caesar, the Queen of Sheba, Aristotle and Moses. Or, to be more precise, that either everybody alive today is, or nobody is.

The interesting corollary of this is, of course, that we are all cousins: The mathematical odds are 100-1 or better that we are 24th cousins to all people with British ancestry, 30th to all Europeans, 40th to all Africans and Asians, 100th to all American Indians, and 360th to all Aus-

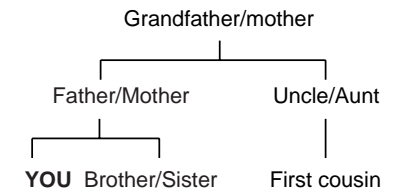
tralian Aborigines, the first group to become isolated by the rising of the sea at the end of the Great Ice Age, ten thousand years ago.

So, what do we mean by first, second and third cousins? And what is a first cousin twice removed?

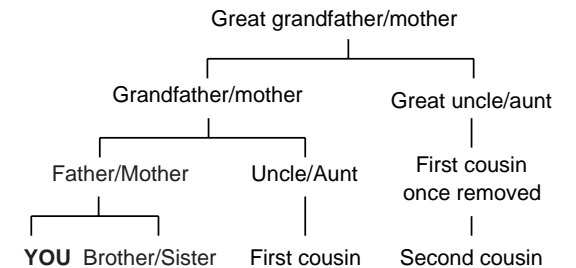
- 1) If two people have the same parents, they are siblings - brothers or sisters.



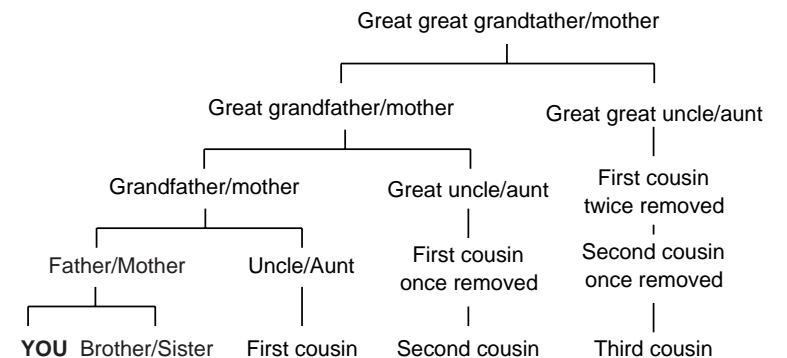
- (2) If two people share grandparents, the grandparents' children are their parents, uncles and aunts, and they are first cousins.



- (3) If they share great-grandparents, the sequence is the same, but the uncles and aunts are great uncles and great-aunts, and the first cousin is a first cousin once removed, 'removed' meaning that you are a generation apart.



- (4) Once you know these rules, they can be applied to any relationship. Here is the next stage:



To find out the relationship between any two people on a tree, you start by finding the closest common ancestor. You then count the number of generations until you come to the first of the people you are interested in::

- 2 generations from the common ancestor ..... first cousin
- 3 generations from the common ancestor ..... second cousin
- $n$  generations from the common ancestor .....  $(n - 1)$ th cousin

If the people you are interested in are not in the same generation, they are 'removed'. You count the generations between the first and the second:

- 1 generation between them ..... once removed
- 2 generations between them ..... twice removed

Now, let us consider the relationship between you and an Australian Aboriginal whose family has had no contact with any recent visitors or invaders.

It is certain that you and the Aboriginal must have common ancestors in the humans who migrated out of Africa some 100,000 years ago. This was roughly 3000 generations ago, so it is impossible for you NOT to be 2998th cousins.

As it happens, the relationship is likely to be much, much closer. It is a mathematical inevitability that the Aboriginal will number among his or her ancestors the last of the immigrants who crossed over from Asia at the end of the Great Ice Age, roughly 12,000 years ago, just before the sea rose and the migration route was cut. This last arrival would inevitably have been closely related to somebody who stayed behind, and this somebody inevitably appears somewhere on your family tree. So you and the Aboriginal have a common ancestor who lived some 12,000 years ago, just 360 generations. So you can offer big odds that you and the Aboriginal are 358th cousins .

The Brotherhood of Man may be an illusion, but the Cousinhood is a certainty.

Tonight's homework project: work out the relationship between you and June Butler's youngest grandchild Rebecca Butler (page 25).

## 4. The Reynolds ancestors

The chart below is all about the forebears of James Bryant Reynolds. He was my grandfather and I had rows and rows of Reynolds relations, so the name means something to me even if it does not mean anything to you.

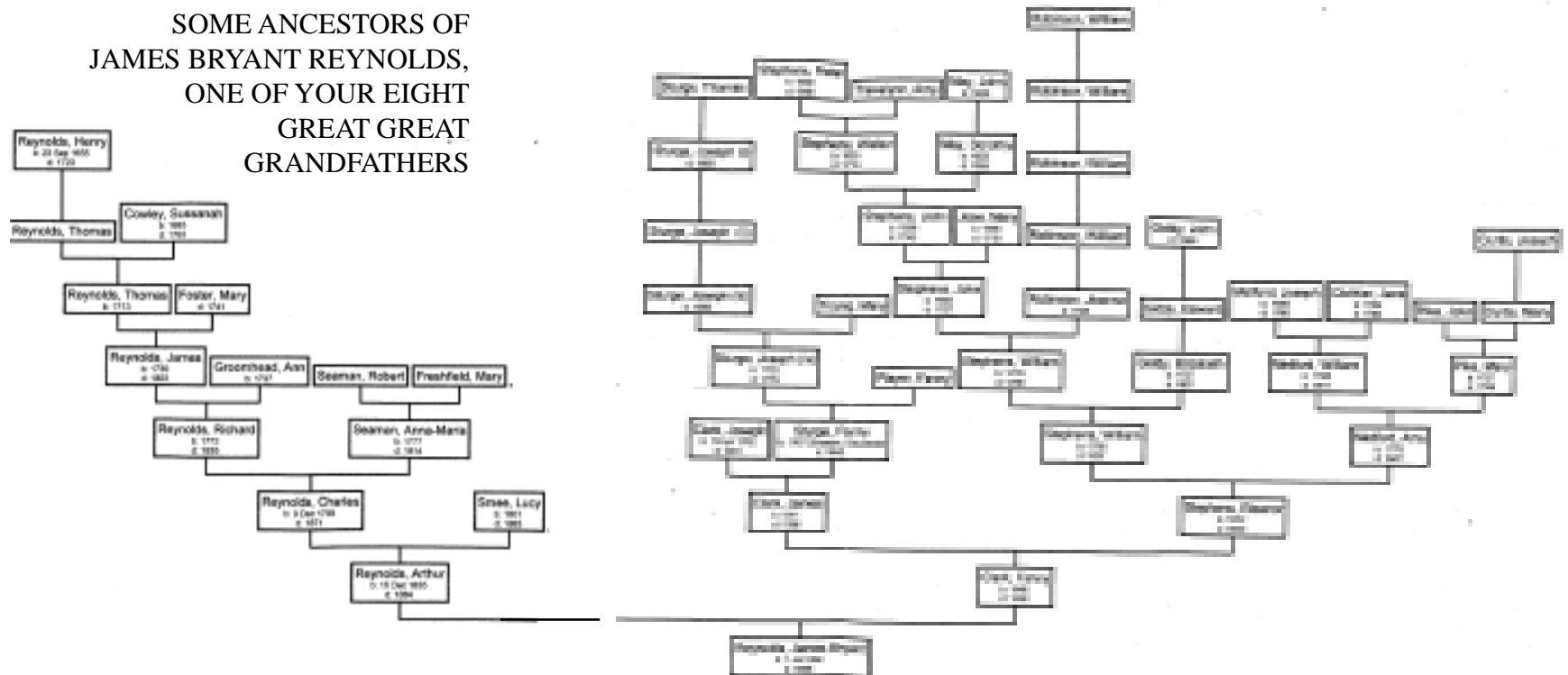
I suspect that the family had lived for many generations in the Dorset town of Bridport and the adjacent seaside village of West Bay. I know this only because in the trunks of family papers in our boxroom at Dashwood Road were several letters addressed to various Reynoldses in Bridport, where they seem to have been drapers and to have been very active in civic life.

There were still plenty of them in the area in the 1930s and West Bay was one of our favourite places for summer holidays. In fact, we were there on 3 September 1939, when we all gathered round the radio to hear the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announce that we were at war with Germany. But that's another story.

Some seventy years earlier your great-great-great-grandfather, Arthur Reynolds, had the good fortune to marry Fanny Clark, which gives us something to talk about: the Clarks.

James Clark, Fanny's father, was a brother of

SOME ANCESTORS OF  
JAMES BRYANT REYNOLDS,  
ONE OF YOUR EIGHT  
GREAT GREAT  
GRANDFATHERS



Cyrus Clark, the genius behind Clark's Shoes. Cyrus took James in as a partner very early in its history. The firm still has a dominant place in the shoe trade, and as this is probably our closest approach to fame and fortune, perhaps a word about them would be in order. And I am afraid that it has to start with a further word about Quakers, because the Clarks and the Reynolds were Quaker families.

Until about 1850, it was very difficult for anyone in England who was not an Anglican to get to University or enter the professions – law, medicine, etc. As a result, bright young non-Anglicans tended to go into business, and in particular the new businesses which arose with the industrial revolution. The Quakers were particularly successful in banking (Lloyds, Barclays, Gurneys – their name preserves the link to Eo de Gurnai), in confectionery (Cadburys, Frys, Rowntrees) and leather goods (Clarks, Clothiers, Morlands).



4.1 *Cyrus Clark, c 1850*

Cyrus Clark, the founder of the firm, was from the Somerset village of Greinton. The firm started as a maker of fleecy rugs, making slippers from the offcuts; but the slippers proved so popular that they rapidly became the major product. From there it was only short step to the full range of shoes and slippers that Clarks still make.

I called Cyrus Clark a genius. This is not an empty judgement. He had in his head a grand design for the firm, one in which the welfare of his workforce played a very large part. Recognising the horrors of the mean slums which most employ-

ers provided for their workers, he planned a model village, an idea which he turned into bricks and mortar on a tract of land outside Glastonbury. The site spanned an ancient paved causeway across the marshes known as The Street, and the new industrial village was called Street. Cyrus Clark then put Street on the map (literally) by financing the Central Somerset Railway, which opened in 1850. A hundred years later the Clarks sent out invitations to all the direct descendants of Cyrus and James Clark to ride on a special centenary train to Burnham-on-Sea. There were at the time 500 of them, of whom over half turned up, including my mother and me. Also on the train were 250 current factory staff. It was a fairly riotous occasion, if a teetotal outing can ever be called riotous.

They could never repeat it: the railway has been torn up, the manufacture of shoes has been entrusted to the Chinese, and all that is left in Street is a modest head office and a lot of memories. Oh yes, and a lot of elderly Clarks.

There's a fair amount about Cyrus Clark on the internet, and about many of our hundreds of Clark cousins. The trouble with cousins is that they are like ancestors: if you go past third or fourth cousins it starts getting silly. Your closest Clark relations would be fifth cousins.

I wish I knew more about the other people on the chart, but I don't. The best I can do is to tell you that family folklore, as reported by my mother, included a story of a Spanish sailor washed up after the Armada in 1588, and some amorous activity by James, Duke of Monmouth, on the eve of the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685. This apparently involved a lady my mother knew as the Giddy Girl of Greinton, which she took to be a label attached to some village good-time girl. However, on the family tree the word Giddy appears as a surname. Greinton is very close to the battlefield of Sedgemoor, so perhaps there is some germ of truth here...

The Duke of Monmouth was an illegitimate son of Charles II, so maybe this is a link to the Tudors and Stuarts and thence line back to William the Conqueror. If not, there are about  $2^{25}$  more to explore. Genealogy is a study which has no ends.



# 5. The family of Arthur Reynolds

Arthur Reynolds raised a large family, as can be seen on the tree across the bottom of this page. Don't worry if you can't read it – we will see enlarged versions of parts of it over the next few pages.

The small white area in the middle contains you, your siblings and your first and second cousins. The grey area contains your third cousins. The rest is all fourth cousins.

For almost all of the detail on it I am again indebted to Michael Reynolds, but I will in general tell you only my own memories of these people.

The eldest son was my great-uncle Sylvanus. He lived in Reading, just round the corner from Leighton Park, where I was at school, and I was periodically in-



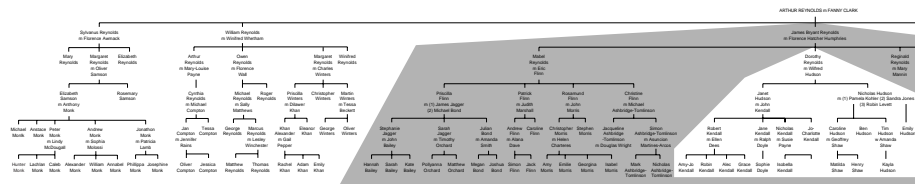
5.1 Arthur Reynolds

vited round for afternoon tea, so I got to know them quite well. His wife Flo was a total delight. She was completely blind - the eye sockets had closed over – but she gave directions entirely as a sighted person might: “The blue tin over there on the sideboard”. I don't know how she remembered not only where everything was, but also what it looked like.

Her daughter Mary was huge. Not fat, just massive. She was known at Leighton Park as Horsey Reynolds, and I'm afraid this was an understatement. It was made rather worse by the fact that she got around in a short hockey tunic, which is not the most flattering garment if you happen to be a middle-aged monster with legs like the doric columns on a town hall. I had heard tell that her career as goalkeeper for a water polo team had ended when an opposing team appealed against her involvement on the grounds that she totally filled the goalmouth. I once asked Flo whether Mary still played polo. “Only very occasionally”, said Flo, smiling sweetly, “just to fill up.” Was she telling me that the story was true? I will never know. But in any case, Mary was in fact a gentle giant with a heart of pure gold.

The problem was Sylvanus, who was quite simply a repellent old man. He had a straggly white beard and moustache perpetually stained with relics of the last few meals, and treated Flo and Mary like slaves. I never saw him raise a finger to help in the house. If Mary was out, Flo would be commanded to lay the table, get out the biscuits and make the tea, and God help her if she got non-matching cups or the wrong biscuits.

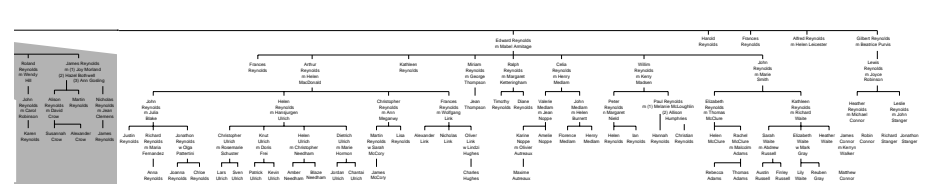
I wrote Sylvanus up once for a London magazine called *Punch*. The article was entitled ‘Uncle Amos and the Basket of Summer Fruit’, and every word of it is true. The core of the story involved a drive out into the country to pick blackberries. At the end of a long afternoon, I had



See Chart 1

See Chart 4

See Chart 5



See Chart 4

See Chart 2

See Chart 3

Your great great great grandparents

Your great great great uncles and aunts

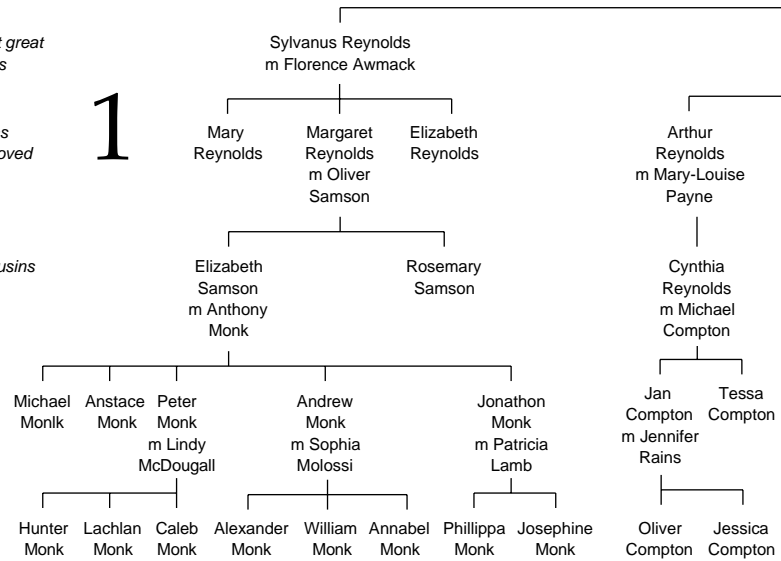
Your first cousins  
three times removed

1

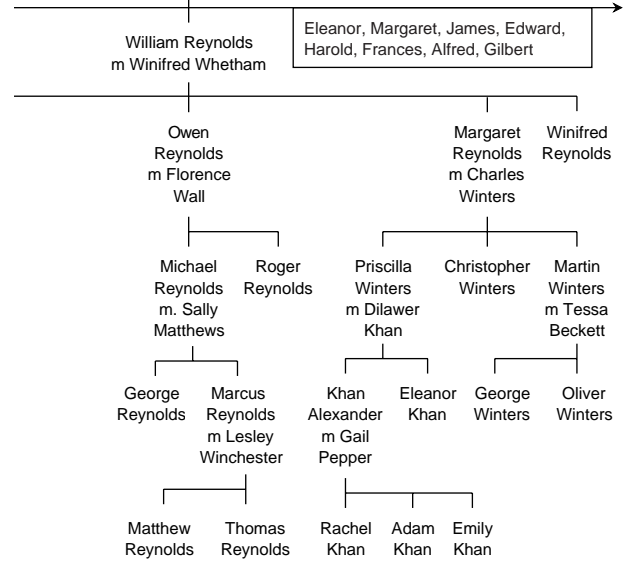
Your second cousins  
twice removed

Your third cousins  
once removed

Your fourth cousins



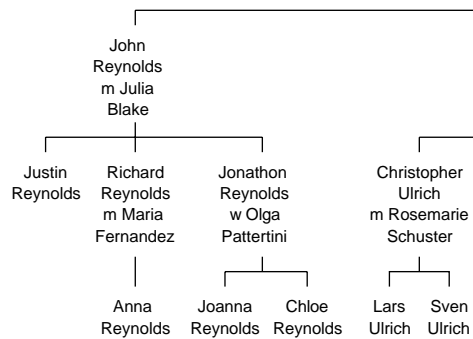
ARTHUR REYNOLDS m FANNY CLARK



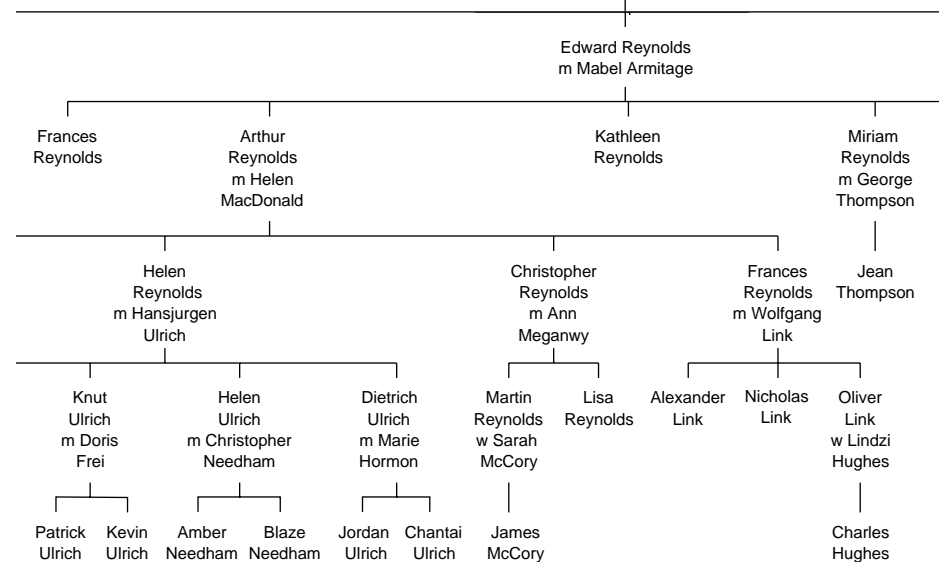
filled a largish basket. Sylvanus appeared with his whiskers heavily stained with blackberry juice and a few small berries in the bottom of his basket. Quick as a flash he poured mine into his own and strode back to the car, handing them to Mary with the instruction: "You shall make my blackberries into jam."

In fairness to Sylvanus, I cannot end without mentioning a major redeeming virtue, and this was his keen interest in trains. He enthralled me one day with a description of the scene in May 1891, when over the course of a single

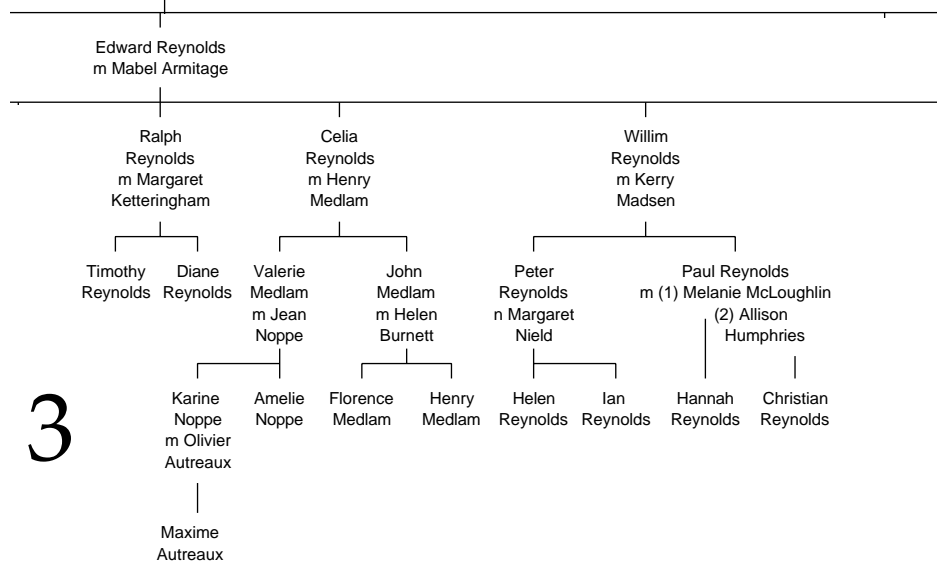
2



ARTHUR REYNOLDS m FANNY CLARK



ARTHUR REYNOLDS m FANNY CLARK



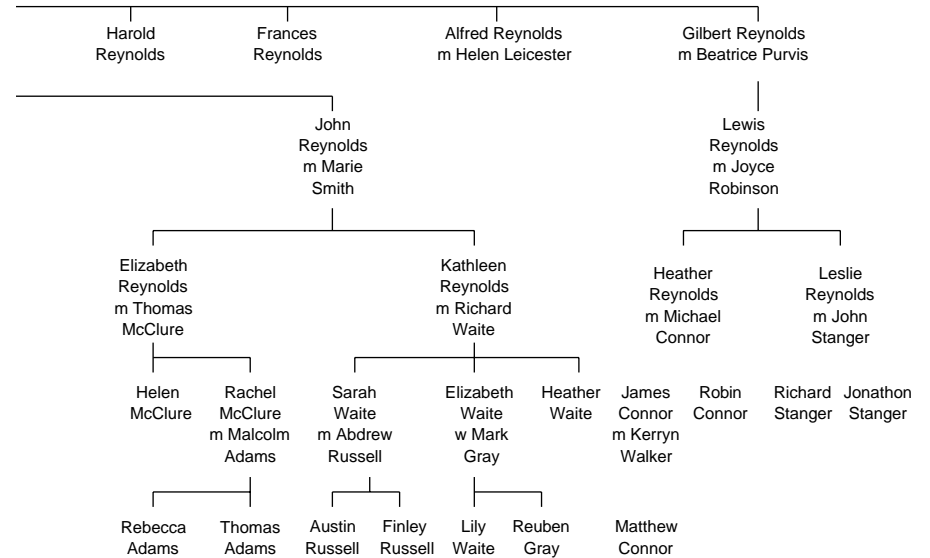
3

weekend the whole Great Western main line from London to Penzance was converted from Brunel's masterly seven-foot gauge to Stephenson's miserable four feet eight and a half inches. We wept silently together.

Sylvanus and Flo had another daughter, Margaret, who married one Oliver Samson. They lived just round the corner, but I hardly knew them. However, the Samson daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth, were at school with my sister Janet. Elizabeth has eight grandchildren, all with the surname Monk, who would be your fourth cousins.

Of the other nine children of Arthur Reynolds, I knew only one, my Grandfather James Bryant Reynolds. I will return to him in the next chapter

Of the others I knew absolutely nothing until I saw all their names on the family tree compiled by Michael Reynolds. Curiously, I actually met Michael briefly in 1953, when we were both in the FAUIS – Friends Ambulance Unit International Service – in Holland. But it did not occur to me to check whether this man with my mother's surname was a relation. In fact, he is quite close – a second cousin. My only excuse is



that I had twenty seven second cousins scattered over eleven families, whereas you have only six spread over three in the case of my grandchildren and three spread over two in the case of Janet's. Smaller families have their merits.

So, if I know so little of these people, why put them in? First, because the sheer numbers involved are worth recording: Arthur Reynolds had eight children and 27 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren, 63 great-great-grandchildren and 60 great-great-great-grandchildren, with more on the way. Second, because if you some day become interested in family history and want to find out more, it gives you a start. And if you ever do this, you will quickly realise what an astonishing job Michael Reynolds did for us all in collecting the information for this family tree.

## 6. The family of James Bryant Reynolds

The trail now gets warmer, because we come to us, the family of your great-great-grandfather, James Bryant Reynolds.

He went into the family business. Not his father's family business, but his mother's: Clark's Shoes. Clark's Shoes were being exported, and James Reynolds's became the firm's representative in Germany. Every three months of so he would pack up a hamper of samples of the latest models, and set off for a tour of the German shoe shops. He would be away for around two months, but kept in touch with his growing family with regular postcards.



6.1 James Bryant Reynolds

And then he would come home and be given at least two weeks holiday to catch up with them.

I wish that we had kept just one sample from the dozens of his postcards and letters which were in that trunk in the attic at Dashwood Road, but the whole lot were, it seems, thrown away when Wilfred and Dorothy moved from Dashwood Road to Robinswood in 1952. So all I have is a recollection that they gave vivid glimpses of life in Germany in those last years before the First World War.

The war was catastrophic both for him and for Clark's: he lost his territory, and they lost their best export market. Furthermore, unlike in the Crimean War, when Clarks had made huge profits out of the supply of sheepskin boots for the troops, the new generation of Clarks were pacifists, and refused to bid for any military contracts. He was kept on the payroll, but the war years were not easy.

Meanwhile the family were growing up, and it is time to meet them.

In July 1900 James had married a young lady called Florence Hatcher Humphries. I know nothing about her forebears, but the name of Frome, a town in Somerset, keeps cropping up in a way which suggests that this was where she grew up. For instance, she had an ivory needle case made in the shape of a miniature furred parasol, with a tiny window in the handle. If you held it up close to your eye, you saw a tinted photograph of Frome, looking large enough to read the caption: "Greetings from Frome". It was a high tech souvenir, 1900 style.

My mother often mentioned two aunts, Amy and Sophie, and



6.2 Florence Hatcher Humphries 'taken un the year dot' according to the inscription on the back – in her handwriting.



6.3 Amy Hallett

they do not seem to have been Reynoldses. We visited Aunt Amy in Beaminster. I am not sure how she fits in, but Florence corresponded with an Amy, and kept a photograph, labelled Amy Hallett, in her papers. This has a strong family resemblance to Florence, so presumably Amy Humphries was her sister, and at some stage married a Mr Hallett. Aunt Sophie was presum-



6.4 Your Great Great Grandmother, Florence Reynolds. née Florence Hatcher Humphries, 'Dah'

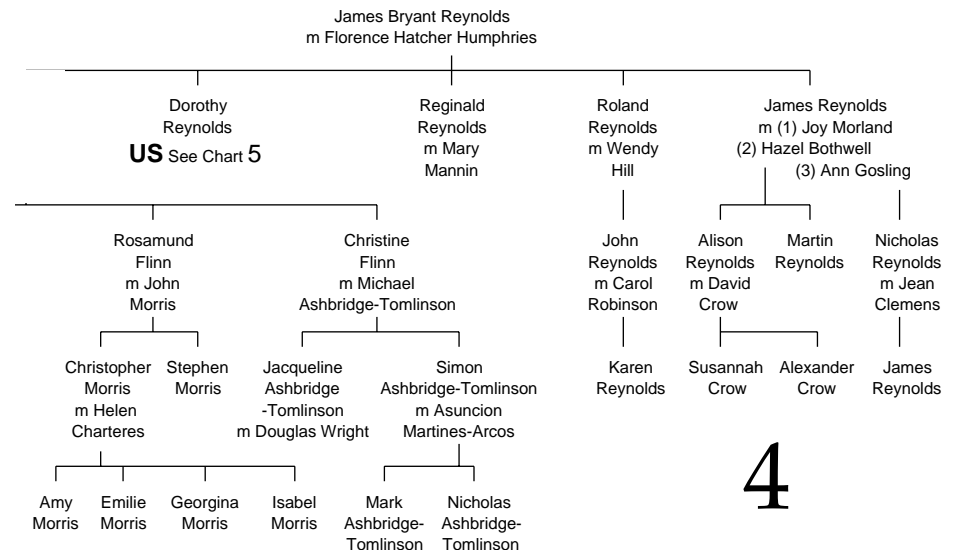
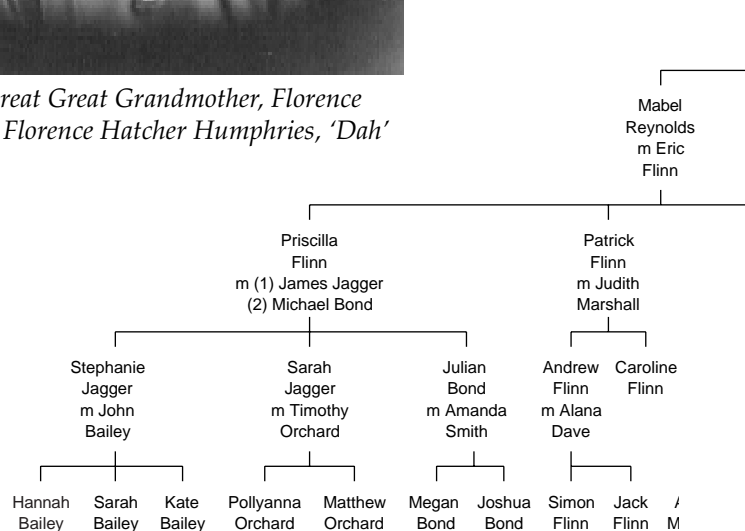
ably Sophie Humphries. She was remembered for the Sophie Pie. It seems that when they went on a picnic, Aunt Sophie would sit apart from the rest and, when offered cake or sandwiches, would say 'No thank you, I have my own pie.' A Sophie Pie became the family phrase for anything you selfishly refused to share.

Unlike my paternal grandparents, whom I never met, I remember these grandparents quite well. They were by then living in Street, and we called in on them on the way to a seaside holiday in (probably) 1937, when I was four. The occasion was memorable to me because we stopped in Glastonbury and I weighed myself on a machine in a chemist which issued a ticket with your weight on it. Mine was two stone ten and a quarter, and this remained my weight, when asked, for many years.

James died in 1938, and Florence – we called her Dah – came to live with us in 1939, so I remember her much better. However, my main memory is of her constantly listening to the news on the radio when we wanted to play noisy games. She died in our house in 1940.

I have somewhere a letter to her from James, and it is a gem. I must try to find it and perhaps reproduce it here. It is an extraordinarily loving letter. In the meantime, suffice to say that he writes 'thee' and 'thy' instead of 'you' and 'your', following another Quaker habit – of using what they called 'plainspeech', which preserved the purity of seventeenth century rural English against corruption by the fads and

## THE FAMILY OF JAMES BRYANT REYNOLDS





6.5 JBR and Dah

fancies of the Restoration court, one of which was to address thy wife as 'you'.

In the ten years after their marriage, James and Florence had five children: Mabel (Auntie May) Dorothy (my mother, your great-grandmother), Reginald (Uncle Reg), Roland (Uncle Roly) and James (Uncle Jimmie). They were all quite notable characters in their own very different ways.

Mabel ('May')

Florence kept a diary, largely I think so that James could catch up with events which occurred while he was away in Germany selling shoes. My mother had several volumes of the diary, and read us choice passages from it. I remember just one: "D hit M with little wicker chair, so got no apple this morning". This was my mother defending herself against her bossy older sister.

May remained bossy all her life, bossing her sweet defenceless husband Eric Flinn, all her children and later all the inhabitants of the village of Sibford, to which they retired. She had a massive bosom which she encased in a close fitting jacket, giving her something of the menace of an approaching airship.

No one ever got the better of May, but the nearest to it was my second wife Sam, many years later. Going to afternoon tea with her in her vast house in Sibford, we found a table laid in the dining room, but May moved us on, explaining that this was for dinner. There was another table laid in the kitchen, but May moved us on again, saying that this was tomorrow's breakfast. There was also a table laid in the living



6.6 Mabel's wedding, April 1925. The man on the right is dear little Eric. I suspect that the man on the left is Reg, for once dressed for the occasion.

room, and Sam said "Don't go in there, it's for tomorrow's lunch." May was not amused.

Before the war (and for me this always means 'before the Second World War, 1939-1945) the Flinns lived in Coventry, where Eric ran the family business as a jeweller and watchmaker. When the war came and Coventry, with its extensive motor factories, became a likely target for German air raids, they moved out of town into a delightful cottage in Priors Marston, very close to Banbury, so we saw a lot of them.

Curiously, this was the place where May was seen at her best. It was a totally unpretentious little house, so she was unable to persuade anyone, even herself, that it was the Manor, and she managed to create a very warm and welcoming home there.

Their fears about air raids were well founded. On the night of 24 November 1940 the air raid sirens went off, but we had by then got used to false alarms, and had stopped going down into our air raid shelter. Ours was a tall house on a north-facing slope, and I was looking out of the top front window, with a view over the town to a distant horizon. Next thing I heard the heavy drone of aircraft engines. I looked up and saw the sky full of aircraft, more than I had ever seen before, all heading north. I watch them spellbound, and then suddenly the whole horizon lit up like a great fireworks display.

That was the start of the great Coventry raid. It has gone down into history, though it was of course only the first of hundreds of similar raids. Most of the centre of the city was flattened, including the cathedral and Uncle Eric's shop. Nothing was left of the business except the contents of the safe, which was eventually dug out of the rubble after they had worked out where to dig by measuring the distance from a



6.7 Patrick and Priscilla Flinn, with (I think) not their sister Rosamund but our own dear little Janet in the middle.

corner of the cathedral wall which was sticking up out of the ruins.

The Flinns had four children, Priscilla, Patrick, Rosamund and Christine. I liked Christine best. She seemed to be much more fun than the others, but I couldn't quite understand it until much later when I heard one of her friends refer to her as Chris. Suddenly, it all fell into place. I had always thought of her as Christine, my nice little cousin, but she was really Chris, a good time girl.

The business re-opened later in new premises, and lasted long enough for Patrick to take it over, but it seems from Google that it is no more. But Googling 'flinn coventry jeweller' produces a long quotation from Patrick criticising the city redevelopment plan.

Between them, the four Flinn children have supplied you with fifteen third cousins.

#### *Reginald ('Reg')*

Reginald Reynolds, my Uncle Reg, was my favourite uncle. He was a wonderful story teller with all the wit and keen observation of the natural satirist. There were many Reginald stories in the family, but the one which appealed to me most concerned a family outing on a train when he was eight. It started with him being told to stay out of trouble: "Sit there until the train goes", said his mother, pointing to a seat. The train came in and they all clambered aboard. A quick count and then "Where's Reginald?" Yes, you've guessed it. He was sitting on the seat. "But you said 'Sit there until the train goes', and it hasn't gone yet." I really identify with that remark. After all, why be difficult when with minimum effort you can be impossible?

He never really had a job as most people would understand it, earning a precarious living from writing and lecturing. In the 1930s he went to India and worked with Mahatma Gandhi, an experience which resulted in his biography of Gandhi and a critique of the Raj, *White Sahibs in India*. You can actually hear a brief scratchy recording of his voice talking about Gandhi on a website - I can't remember its name, but googling Gandhi + "Reginald Reynolds" should get it.

His most successful book was called *Cleanliness and Godliness*, a history of sanitation, and he co-edited a book called *A Prison Anthology* with George Orwell, There is also a book of more of less comic verse called *Og and Other Ogres*, whose main interest is that it was illustrated



6.8 Reg enjoying breakfast in bed on a visit to us at Dashwood Road.

by Quentin Crisp, later self-styled 'the stately homo of England' for his New York audience. Many of Reg's verses were published in the *New Statesman*, where he regularly held the fort when the full-time satirical poet, Sagittarius, was on holiday. But his most interesting book for us is his autobiography, *My Life and Crimes*,

which has a lot about your great-great-grandmother, his sister Dorothy.

Reg adored Dorothy, and was very distressed when she married Wilfred, whom he regarded as unappreciative of her talents. I'm afraid he was right. We will see shortly the sort of person the young Dorothy was, and it was very different from the country GP's wife that she later became.

Reg was actually married, but they didn't live together. He called her Mary, but she was better known under her pen name, Ethel Mannin, author of innumerable library novels of the thirties and two very good satirical ones, *Comrade my Comrade* about left wing politics in London, and *Rolling in the Dew* about a nudist camp. She was active enough in left wing politics to be the subject of a major in-



6.9 Ethel Mannin

vestigation by MI5, a fact which came to light when the file was found in the public archive in Kew. She also had notorious affairs with the poet W. B. Yeats and the philosopher Bertrand Russell. But by the time I knew her she was living in suburban respectability in Wimbledon while Reg inhabited a single very small room in a basement in Chelsea.

The squalor of this room was hard to imagine. It was just long enough to allow the door to open at the foot of the single bed, and just wide enough to allow passage between the long side of the bed and the bookshelves that lined the other wall. But this space was also occupied by a cane chair, a small table and endless cardboard boxes and paper bags full of onions, incomplete manuscripts and all the clothes Reg did not happen to be wearing that day. I loved it, and actually lived in it for two months in 1952 when I was working round the corner in an Oxfam warehouse, packing clothes for refugees in Europe.

Reg died in Australia in 1958, at the age of 52. He was doing a lecture tour sponsored by local Quakers, got as far as Adelaide and suddenly dropped dead. I was the only family member present at his funeral, and it was one of the saddest moments of my life.

#### *Roland ('Roly')*

The fourth Reynolds child was Roland, Uncle Roly. He was the black sheep of the family, being an alcoholic who lived in sin. This rather medieval expression was still used in those days to describe those who cohabited with people to whom they were not married. It was not until the 1950s that I actually met him, and by then he was married and a member of AA – and acutely boring, as reformed alcoholics so often are. He told stories of how he was the top salesman for Harris brushes, which may or may not have been true but certainly did not make for riveting conversation.

He had by all accounts been much more fun in his alcoholic days. One story must suffice. In 1946, just after the war, his younger brother Jimmy bought a dilapidated house which desperately needed painting, but paint was unprocureable. Jimmy ran into Roly in a pub, and Roly said he'd fix it. Next day Jimmy was surprised when a huge military truck pulled up outside his front door. Two sailors in Royal Navy uniform jumped out and offloaded two 44-gallon drums of battleship



grey paint.

*James ('Jimmie')*

And so we come to Jimmy, the baby of the family. Jimmy was an extraordinarily successful publisher who made huge sums of money for everybody but himself. He also kept getting married. He started both careers just before the war, joining Hutchinsons as a management trainee and marrying his cousin Joy Morland. Joy was stunningly beautiful - indeed, she still was when I last saw her some forty years later. However, the war came, and the marriage fell apart after Jimmy joined the Royal Artillery and was sent off to guard the Suez Canal against air raids. There he met wife number two, a pretty little Wren called Hazel Bothwell. (The Wrens were members of the WRNS, the Women's Royal Naval Service.)

Hutchinson had promised all servicemen their jobs back, but Jimmy found himself not with one of their hardback imprints but with a decrepit publisher of motor manuals. He rapidly developed a trade book list and the firm prospered. He was noticed by the Australian owners of a small fiction house, Frederick Muller, and put in charge. There, his most spectacular coup was to pay a record price for the UK rights on an American first novel which he read in manuscript overnight at the Algonquin. This was Grace Metalious' *Peyton Place*, and it went on to be the bestseller of the year, establishing Mullers in the big league. He was also one of the first trade publishers to recognise the significance of a massive increase in funding for school libraries, devising the Muller True Book series.

Meanwhile Jimmy was having difficulty with Hazel. As he put to me, "Nick, you can have no idea what it is like being married to Hazel. Her mind is a morass." It was actually quite easy to imagine what it was like. Hazel had been a pretty little girl who must have looked bewitching in her Wrens uniform, but intellectually she was no match for Jimmy. In fact, I wasn't, either. Talking to Jimmy, I always felt that I was a lap behind. Hazel would have been left struggling with the starting blocks.

Anyway, he met Ann Gosling, who was a highly intelligent replica of wife No 1, Joy Morland. He soon made her wife number 3.

Jimmy's career took a further lift when he joined Alewyn Birch as

co-MD of Granada Publishing, but it didn't work out, and knowing both individuals I was not surprised. At this stage Jimmy decided that he had to go into business on his own account. His imprint, Robin Clark, was modestly successful, but he never made for himself the fortunes he had made for his employers.

However, he hit the jackpot with wife No 3, and lived blissfully with her for the rest of his life. She is still very much alive, living in Byfield, near Banbury, and is my favourite aunt. Not that I now have any others, and she is likely to outlive me, being a year younger.

I met both the children he had with Hazel when they were very young, and Martin called in on us in Melbourne about thirty years ago. He was an architect, and was working on an ambitious plan for a hotel in Dubai which was to be an inverted pyramid. He may be the architect Martin Reynolds who is involved with the Bush Theatre in London, but I must check this.

Of Nicholas, his son with Ann, I know nothing, which is sad because I understand he was named after me. But maybe this was just a fanciful invention.

*Dorothy*

And so we come to James Bryant Reynolds' second child, Dorothy, whom I have left until last because she is the one who matters most: my mother and your great-grandmother.

Dorothy went to the Quaker school at Saffron Walden, where she did well enough for the school to recommend that she should go on to university. This was itself quite remarkable. The idea of girls being worth educating was still very new, and less than one in a hundred made it to university.

She duly enrolled in University College, London, reading History, and was bright enough to be attached to a small group who were sent round the corner to study with Prof R. H. Tawney and Eileen Power at the London School of Economics, a powerhouse of radical thought.

Tawney is remembered for his seminal book, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, a book whose insights remain highly topical today.

It was 1926, a year in which many of the men who had fought for their country in the First World War discovered that their country's gratitude to them did not extend to giving them the promised 'land fit

for heroes to live in'. The workers, and in particular the miners, were threatened with wage cuts and longer hours, and fought back with a campaign based on the slogan 'Not a minute on the day, not a penny off the wage'. Finally, the TUC (Trades Union Congress, the peak body of the union movement) called a General Strike. The strike was to be organised from Transport House, headquarters of the Transport and General Workers Union.

So it was that on Friday, 30th April 1926, Prof Tawney closed his seminar with the words "See you down at Transport House on Monday". While most students were being encouraged to join the Government in breaking the strike, Tawney was going to help it on its way.

Your great-grandmother duly turned up at Transport House, and when they found that she could both read and write she was seconded to Ernest Bevin, later to be Foreign Minister in the Labour government of 1945, but then having the job of editing the *British Worker*, one of the two newspapers produced during the strike. (The other was the government's *British Gazette*, edited by Winston Churchill.) So started Dorothy's journalistic career.

Dorothy spent two days mastering the job of reporter, and did a good job. She wrote of the air of calm efficiency which pervaded Transport House. Bevin was astonished, and asked her whether she had personally witnessed any. She replied that she had been too busy to go downstairs, but when she looked out of the window everything seemed calm and efficient. Bevin was delighted, and on the Tuesday put the proposition that as he had more important things to do, she should be the editor. And so it was for the rest of the brief life of the paper.

At least, that was her version, and I have no reason to believe she would have knowingly lied. If it is true, she was the first woman ever to edit a London daily newspaper.

My investigations of the facts of the matter are inconclusive. One thing is certain: Dorothy told me the story when I found a complete set of copies of the *British Worker* in our attic, and asked her about them. So she was certainly involved.

There is also one bit of documentary evidence that Dorothy's role was quite substantial. In a report on the strike in the TUC archive there is a document listing ten people to whom special thanks were due, and two of them, the only 'volunteers' listed, were R. H. Tawney and Dor-

othy F. Reynolds.

I can find no direct mention of her in the newspaper, but I can find no mention of Ernest Bevin's name, either, nor of any of the editorial staff. The records mention that senior staff from the *Daily Herald* were involved, and the natural implication is that they provided the editor. In addition, Dorothy never mentioned doing anything other than writing: no copy-tasting or subediting. However, it is also

clear that most of the copy was written in Transport House – there are minute-by-minute reports on the comings and goings there, including one which sounds like the one which pleased Bevin.

I suspect that the answer is that both Bevin and Dorothy may have used the term 'editor' rather loosely: that Bevin and then Dorothy led a group at Transport House which supplied editorials and news items to an editor and subeditors at the *Herald*.

Either way, it is a good story.

Dorothy's other mentor at the LSE was Eileen Power, recently the subject of a major biography. She was a pioneer feminist and suffragette. (Political correctness now requires us to call them 'suffragists', but for my money this would be a travesty of history, like talking about Chairperson Mao.)

The suffragettes had been victorious in getting the vote for women over 30, but men got it at 21, and Eileen Power led the push for equality. The 21-30 year-olds were contemptuously called 'flappers' by the press, to which they responded with the most effective of all responses,



adopting the term for themselves and wearing it with pride.

Electoral issues like this in Britain were the responsibility of the Home Secretary, and the Home Secretary at the time was a pious reactionary called Joynson Hicks. It seems that he was courteous enough to talk with Eileen Powers about the matter of the flapper vote, but cut her short by saying that she had no authority to speak for the flappers, being herself well over thirty. "Why doesn't a real flapper talk to me about it?"

What happened next is one of the great puzzles of history, The record shows that Joynson Hicks stood up one Thursday in the House of Commons and assured members that the flappers would never get the vote as long as he was Home Secretary. The following Monday he astonished the House by announcing that a bill granting the flappers the vote would be presented forthwith. The literature records it as one of the most unexpected and inexplicable events in parliamentary history.

So much for the record. Dorothy supplied the answer. She had been briefed by Eileen Power to lobby Joynson Hicks, and on the Friday had done so. He had told her that he would think about it over the weekend, and on the Monday announced his change of mind.

Dorothy never told me precisely what arguments she had presented. However, until somebody comes up with a better explanation, I am perfectly happy to believe that she was personally responsible for Joynson Hicks' astonishing volte-face.

Dorothy was a member of 'Young Friends', a group of young Quakers who, she said, 'liked dashing about doing good, especially dashing about.' One gathering of Young Friends was held at Jordans, a Quaker meeting house near Beaconsfield. There she met Wilfred Hudson. And that was an event which deserves a new chapter.

## 7 Wilfred and Dorothy Hudson

It is hard to fathom what Dorothy saw in Wilfred. With wisdom of hindsight we know that she picked a man who with whom she rarely quarrelled; a man who provided for her very well; a man who probably loved her as deeply as he could ever have loved anybody; a doctor of above average skill and devotion to his patients, who adored him; a great big teddy bear of a man, always cheerful, always optimistic. But all that was in the future. The man to whom she became engaged was a medical student of limited imagination and no obvious ambition, at least when compared with her own enthusiasm, high intelligence and sense of adventure.

One possible answer is "Uncle Alfred". Dr Alfred Salter MP was a hero of the Young Friends, the only Quaker MP and a tireless advocate for the underprivileged. It seems to me perfectly possible that she met Wilfred, discovered his close connection to the great man, and imagined that Wilfred would emerge in the same way.

Her brother Reginald had a simpler explanation: that she hitched herself to Wilfred on the rebound from a tempestuous affair with somebody else. The name of Jock Sutherland tended to get mentioned. Reginald was not, of course, an impartial observer. He idolised his sister and believed, rightly as it turned out, that her star would never again shine as brilliantly as it had in her two years at University College.

Yes, just two years: she never took out her degree. Again, I don't know why. It was certainly not academic failure. Anyway, she found that she had to, or wanted to, support herself while waiting for Wilfred to qualify.

She saw an advertisement for a governess for two children on a cattle ranch in Argentina, replied to it and got the job. While waiting for the boat, she got a temporary job as chauffeur for a doctor in Hull. The only snag was that she had never driven a car, but she had a short lesson from a friend which covered starting and changing gear, and picked up the rest on the job. (This happened, of course, before they invented driving tests).

If we have difficulty working out what Dorothy saw in Wilfred, we have no difficulty in working out what he saw in her. She was good-

looking, vivacious, and offered a glimpse of a world of fun and laughter which he had been denied. But I don't think he noticed her brains, then or at any stage. Years later, at their 50th Wedding Anniversary party, I told the person who was to propose the toast the stories of her activities as a student, much as I told them in the last chapter, and he duly included them in his speech.

Wilfred registered shocked disbelief. "Dorothy, you didn't..." he said.

Dorothy looked at him sheepishly, blushed, and said in a very low voice, "Yes, I did."

As I thought about this, it occurred to me that although I had had serious discussions about political and moral issues with both my parents individually, I never discussed such matters with both of them at once. If my father was in the conversation, my mother kept out of it.

It seems inconceivable that Dorothy had never told him of her brushes with Ernest Bevin and Joynson Hicks, but perhaps he wasn't listening.

Anyway, they became engaged, and Dorothy sailed off to South America, leaving Wilfred to complete his medical training. He took the slightly unusual step of making a special study of radiology, then a brand new technology. I like to think that this was a sort of homage to his father, as it was the nearest thing to physics that happened in hospitals in those days.

Having qualified, he started looking around for a practice. But while his closest friend, Sydney Abrahams, went off to treat the unwashed proletariat in the East End of London, Wilfred accepted an offer of a junior partnership in Banbury, a market town just north of Oxford.

He and Dorothy got married, and set themselves up in a rented house at 28 Dashwood Road. The Golding Bird Gold Medal was sold to pay for their first furniture. (The house, incidentally, is still there, transformed into the Hillcrest Guest House. )

It is hard to imagine Dorothy's reaction to the practice. If she had dreams of a life of social service, she could not have been more wrong. A polite observer might have said that the practice preserved the traditions of a more gracious age. An impolite one would have described it as a pretentious, snobbish clique. The senior partner, Neville Penrose, habitually did his rounds in morning dress. He was immensely tall

and walked with a perpetual stoop, peering at the world owlishly over the top of half-moon spectacles. His treatment for all disorders was 'grey powders', which were what their name implied: a pinch or two of grey powder which came in a folded plain paper wrap. You took it dissolved in water, and Presto! your constipation, diarrhoea, cough, cold, whatever, was cured.

He wore morning dress because most of his patients were the titled and landed gentry of the surrounding countryside, the upper class, who wore tweeds. He recognised himself as upper middle class. This gave him the duty of dressing with deferential formality, like an up-market butler, while at the same time distinguishing himself from the lower middle class, who wore business suits, and the lower classes, in rags or overalls.

The partnership had a surgery in town, but this was patronised only by the lower classes, who were left to the junior partner, Wilfred. Everybody else, all the ones who paid their bills, were treated in their own homes by the senior partners.

So, how did Dorothy react to it? Initially, she maintained her social conscience, becoming involved with the local Education Board which



7.1 *The earliest photo I have of Dorothy and Wilfred as a married couple, taken by his Australian cousin Bill during a visit to England in 1933. The person in the basket has to be me.*

ran, amongst others, the elementary school across the road, but it seems that the partners, and more importantly the partners' wives, found this incomprehensible, not to say reprehensible. In any case, the arrival first of Janet, in 1931, and then me, in 1933, made motherhood a full time job. By the time I became aware of things, my mother had settled down, just

as Reginald had feared, into full time existence as a GP's wife.

One of the rules was that you had a nanny for the children, so we had Nanny Prue. The Nanny was soon traded in on a Maid, so we had Rose Bartlett, remembered in the family expression 'Ring for Rose'. You said 'Can you ring for Rose' if you wanted somebody to get something for you from the kitchen. Then there was Gwen Cross, who had a Young Man who courted her for many years, but never married her. I visited her some forty years later, still a spinster, and still with the same photograph on the mantelpiece of herself and her Young Man on the beach at Blackpool in 1936.

Another rule was that your children went to Miss Dyer's School, which was set up for this purpose. Dorothy Dyer had been the Penroses' governess, and when the Penrose children were all grown up the natural thing was for her to turn her talents to the children of the partners. She was duly set up in a house just round the corner from ours.

There were not quite enough of us to keep her busy, so her services were also made available to a select range of other families: other doctors and dentists, a vet, sundry lesser gentry and even, just keep the numbers up, a bank manager and a dealer in motor tyres.

Meanwhile, Wilfred's situation had improved radically. He had joined a partnership of just two, Drs Penrose and Wells. Then Wells went off on



7.2 Miss Dyer's pupils. arranged by height. Janet is in third place. At the front is Pat Snowball, distinguished both by standing a head taller than anyone else and by being a daughter of trade: Snowballs Tyre Service.

his own, and Wilfred became a partner. Next, they took on two new recruits, Chris Wharton and Pat Hewlings. Shortly afterwards Neville Penrose retired, and Wilfred at 35 found himself the senior partner of a very prosperous country practice.

If this was more luck than skill, Wilfred's progress at the local hospital was his own work. In those days it was common for local GPs to be honorary consultants at country hospitals, and Wilfred became the honorary consultant radiologist at Banbury's Horton General Hospital. The equipment he found when he took up the appointment in the early 1930s was primitive even by the standards of the day – museum pieces acquired from a military hospital after the First World War. The breakthrough came when he X-rayed a rich patient following a hunting accident, and the man became aware that the equipment was pretty rough. The outcome was a gift of enough money to fund the building and equipping of a state-of-the-art new X-ray Department.

But Wilfred was already showing that his first love was gardens, First, he did a major job at Dashwood Road, creating two flat lawn areas in a garden that had previously been on a continuous slope. This can still be seen, its trees much older but its landscaping much as he left it over fifty years ago. Wanting more space for vegetables, he rented an allotment beside the local Territorial Army HQ in Oxford Road. But he had bigger ideas, and in 1938 bought The Land, as it was always called, half of one of Mr Stroud's fields, just out of town on the Broughton Road, three acres of virgin agricultural land. An imaginative young architect, Robert Townsend, a pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, produced a set of plans and a wonderful scale model, the ultimate doll's house.

But war was coming. There was talk of a Crisis, which I somehow associated with my favourite breakfast cereal, Rice Crispies, but it gave Dorothy an excuse to get rid of the burden of resident domestic help, the excuse being that the maid's room was required for Johnny Emans, a German Jewish refugee.

Johnny taught me my first German words. He arrived just in time to put up the fence which marked the border of The Land. Then his girl friend Gabby joined him, and the two departed for New York.

With the departure of Johnny, help was needed with the huge job of landscaping and planting three acres of garden, and Wilfred took on a



7.3 Your great grandfather, Wilfred Faraday Hudson

delightful old man, recently retired from being head gardener on one of the larger local country estates. He had a totally feudal view of the world, in which everybody had his place, and his own was more or less at the bottom, the only lower ones being his undergardeners, of which he now had none. He was called Mr Brazendale, and spoke with a marvellous Cheshire accent. One of the greatest joys was to watch



7.4 The Hut nearing completion. Mr Brazendale talking to Great Granny Dorothy, Granny/Great Aunt Janet and Great Great Granny Dah.

him scything long grass. The motion had the precision of a machine and the fluency of a cellist, and the cut grass arranged itself in the neatest of piles at the end of each stroke. He was also very patient and tolerant of small boys who wanted him to make them bows and arrows.

The threat of war caused the plans for the house to be put on hold, and it was not built until fourteen years later. However, a summerhouse was built on the site, always known as The Hut, and kitted out with bedding, pots and pans and canned food for use as a place of refuge in the event that Banbury was bombed. Dorothy bought up Brummits' whole stock of Bunnykins crockery, some of which survives in the care of her Australian grandchildren.

I find it hard to imagine what it was like for Dorothy and Wilfred to



7.5 *Your Great Grandmother, Dorothy Florence Hudson, née Reynolds*

be bringing up two small children in a world which was on the brink of war. I got a taste of it during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, when once again the world seemed threatened with war, and this time a nuclear war, far more devastating than that which loomed in 1939. But in 1962 there was nothing we could do about it, and the crisis came and went in a matter of days. In 1939 there were blackout curtains and

shutters to be made, a cellar to be reinforced to make an air-raid shelter, and of course The Hut to be made ready for all eventualities. War was very real and personal.

Nowadays we hold our wars in other people's countries, so we hardly notice that we are at war. This is much more sensible.

With the coming of war Wilfred joined the Home Guard as a medic. He was issued with a uniform with the insignia of a Captain and a balloon-like oilskin cape. The Home Guard trained on Sundays, and Wilfred would disappear after breakfast, returning late afternoon in a particularly cheerful and rubicund condition. The secret was, of course, that the casualty clearance centre was always established in the bar of the White Lion Hotel.

Meanwhile Dorothy became a Fire Guard, one rung down from an Air Raid Warden. The Fire Guards were given white tin hats, stirrup pumps, buckets and long-handled shovels. Their main job was to deal with incendiary bombs. I am not sure how much Dorothy ever learnt about this tricky procedure, but fortunately her skill was never tested.

The war dragged on, but the next act in this drama had nothing to do with the war. It started for me one night towards the end of 1944. I was by then boarding at Winchester House School, and Dorothy had visited during the day. That evening there was a performance by a conjuror, and parents were welcome, so Dorothy stayed on for it. The conjuror was excellent, discovering eggs in all sorts of unexpected places, but I became aware that Dorothy was not really enjoying it; not aware of it, in fact. It was as if she was in a trance. After she went home I heard nothing from her for a fortnight, which was very odd, and I finally asked if I could phone home. (Making phone calls was not quite as easy then as it is now.) I was not very surprised to learn that she was in hospital and would not be coming home for quite a long time.

I still do not know precisely what was wrong, but I suspect it was a brain tumor. Certainly she had brain surgery, because I remember visiting her in Littlemore Hospital and finding her with her head swathed in bandages. She was in hospital for more than a year.

Under the circumstances, she made a remarkable recovery, being very much her old self for the next thirty years: witty, vivacious, a wonderful hostess and a sharp-eyed observer of the world around her. But I remember Wilfred saying, shortly after she came out of hospital,

that he would have to change his will in view of the likelihood that he would outlive her. I was fifteen at the time, and found this remark both puzzling and worrying. I still wonder what he had in mind.

With the end of the war the plans for the house were resurrected. There were at first restrictions on private building, the idea being to use the limited materials for public housing, but by 1952 the restrictions had been relaxed and work went ahead. It was built in an established garden, Wilfred having spent all his spare time for fourteen years planting trees, creating paths and vistas, lawns and herbaceous borders. He had even got a small gang of German prisoners of war, the only casual labour available immediately after the war, to level the lawn in front of The Hut for a tennis court.

And then, like a picture being put in an elaborate frame, a house was built in the garden. It was a beautiful house, and I still think that Robert Townsend, the architect who designed it, was a genius. It was designed to be built in Western Red Cedar, but there was no way that such a quantity of American timber could be had, and the design was adapted for building in the local stone, an iron-bearing sandstone which must be one of the most pleasing of all building materials, with its rich reddish brown colours and instantly weather-beaten texture. It was shown off to its best in the massive stone columns that were a main feature of the house.



7.6 *Robinswood nearing completion.*



7.7 *The pillars were beautiful modern examples of the ancient art of stonemasonry*

Janet only lived at Robinswood for a year or so, and I only lived there for four years, both of us leaving the nest to get married. But I still think of Robinswood with enormous affection.

Perhaps it was the success of Robinswood that persuaded Wilfred to build a second house, this time in the village of Cala d'Or, on Mallorca. As it happens this, too, was an architectural success, looking like a large white sugar loaf with a smaller white sugar loaf perched on top – allegedly 'Ibizan style' but I have never been to Ibiza and have to take this on trust. But quite why they built it at all is less clear. Wilfred said it was because Dorothy didn't like the English winter, but Dor-



othy never confirmed this. And why choose to build it on an island in the Mediterranean? And if on an island in the Mediterranean, why in a housing estate occupied largely by expatriate Belgians? I liked the house and have nothing against Belgians, but if I were building a holiday house on Mallorca I would want Mallorcan neighbours. This means I wouldn't choose Mallorca, because there don't seem to be many of them living there any more.

I visited Cala d'Or twice. On both occasions, it struck me that the main activity of the day was survival: legal battles over land titles, language battles with Belgians who had no English and refused to understand Wilfred's French, even if spoken loudly and with informative gestures; culinary battles with local restaurateurs who served *pella* whatever was ordered; horticultural battles with a gardener who failed to water the roses...

Wilfred remained remarkably cheerful through all these battles, and after he retired in 1970 they migrated from Banbury to Cala d'Or every winter for years. But then came a medical battle when Dorothy fell and broke her hip. Wilfred had to drive her back to Banbury, two boat trips and the long haul from Barcelona to Calais, with the hip untreated. They never went there again.

They visited us in Australia in 1982. By then Dorothy was in a fairly advanced stage of Alzheimer's. However, she was still worth talking to. We threw a party for them at my office, and one of the guests was a formidable academic of roughly the same vintage called Myra Roper. She and Dorothy sat on a sofa for more than an hour in animated conversation. At the end of it Myra said to me, "What an astonishing memory your mother has. She has just been telling me all about her days in left wing politics. She knew so many fascinating people."

However good the distant memory, the progress of the Alzheimer's had made her long since incapable of running the house. Wilfred took over the shopping and much of the cooking, and employed a comfortable person called Mrs Molloy to help him keep house. It was a very happy arrangement, and I was surprised and delighted by the way Wilfred took on the new responsibilities – much better than I would do under similar circumstances, I fear.

But this was not to last long. In 1983 Dorothy died. I flew over for the funeral, accompanied by Ben.

The next year Wilfred came out to Australia again, and it became obvious that he was dreading the prospect of some very lonely years. At some stage I said "Have you ever thought of marrying Mrs Molloy?" To my surprise he said "Yes. But I spoke to my solicitor about it, and he said it was unthinkable".

Anyway, to cut a long story short, we put a call though to England that night, and Wilfred popped the question. Mrs Molloy said she'd have to talk to her children about it, and the next day she rang back saying yes.

The outcome was that Wilfred's last five years were as happy as anyone could have hoped. He found himself part of a close-knit family, who seemed to feel for him a simple affection that I could never muster. I loved him as a father, and I mourned him with real tears when he died, but I don't think I ever really liked him. That's the truth.

And the house and garden? They have disappeared almost without trace. What had been a garden on farmland on the outer fringe of town had become an oasis in a suburban desert, enough land for 12 prestige executive homes or 24 desirable residences, and that's what happened. The house, the lawns, the tennis court, the thousand-and-one trees, the two greenhouses and the Hut were swept away by a tidal wave of suburban development. But if you go there with somebody who remembers it, you can still be shown, here and there a few traces of that garden. And the road into the estate still has at its entrance the stone with the name carved on it: Robinswood.

So, what else did Wilfred leave to the world. One thing at least which I think would have pleased him immensely, and that is the game of Hooray. All his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren play Hooray when the occasion arises, and whenever I play it, I see his great smiling face. He always won at playing Hooray.

Last Boxing Day, I introduced the game to some of our friends here. Immediately afterwards, the man on my right turned to me and said, "You have to hand it to the Poms, they do invent good games. But this must be the only one they have never lost."

This has been a very brief, very selective story of your great-grandfather and great-grandmother's married life. I will now talk about the eazrly years of the marriage as Janet and I saw them.

## 8 Janet and Nicky

Janet's first boyfriends were the lads coming out of the elementary school opposite our front gates. She was a deliciously chubby little girl, and used to dash out to greet them, calling "Here I am, boys!" At least, that was the story. I have no photograph to prove it, but the other photo on this page shows the location and some of the targets of her affection.

Another story is that she taught me to read. This is very likely. I don't remember learning to read, and I do know I could already do it

8.1 Janet

8.2 Our front gates, showing the Elementary School and some sample boys. Standing in front are Nanny Prue (I presume) and Nicky.



when I joined her at Miss Dyer's in 1938.

She was quite pleased to have me walking to school with her, as it saved her from hurrying. I would be sent ahead to check the time by the Catholic Church clock, and signal to her to let her know whether she had to run. Being chubby, it was quite important for her not to do any unnecessary hurrying.

I was deeply in love with my first teacher, Molly Darby, and was quite shocked to learn years later that she had run off with Dr Phillips, of the Horsefair practice. She had curly dark hair and ruby-red lips which seemed always to be smiling at us, and she introduced us to Winnie-the-Pooh.

Janet was of course two years older, and was already in Form 2. We met only in the garden at break time. It was totally dominated by the girls: boys were not encouraged to join in the more interesting games. We were useless at catching beanbags, for instance. The girls dominated partly because they were, weight for age, bigger and stronger, but also because they included ten and eleven year olds. Boys left for Prep School at nine. (In British English, a prep school was a school to prepare 9-13 year-olds for 'public school', which somewhat perversely meant a boys' private school. The girls' equivalent of the boys' public school was called a private school, and started at eleven. )

My conviction that the world was heavily loaded in favour of girls was reinforced by my experience of books. There seemed to be a monstrous conspiracy against allowing men to write books, and precious few books in which males played important roles. There were Beatrix Potter's Flopsy Bunnies, Alison Uttley's Little Grey Rabbit, Joyce Lancaster Brisley's Milly Molly Mandy, Constance Heywood's Ameliaranne Stiggins, Dorita Fairlie Bruce's Dimsie and the endless adventurous schoolgirls of Angela Brazil, to say nothing of Anne of Green Gables, What Katy Did, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, Little Women ... the evidence was overwhelming. Oh yes, and Enid Blyton. A. A. Milne was said to be a man, but he had had to use initials to conceal this fact from prejudiced publishers.

Needless to say, there is evidence of Janet's influence in this list. My reading was her reading, when she had finished with it.

Then I discovered the William books, books about a real live boy doing boy things in a boy way, books written by this man Richmal

Crompton. It was with some distress (but no great surprise) that I discovered Richmal to be a lady.

My next teacher, when with the passage of time I moved up into Form 2, was the terrifying Frieda Spokes, she of the bun and rimless glasses. At least, that is how I remember her. Janet warned me about her: she taught division. I suspect that it was exposure to division as much as some innate sense of domestic economy that led Janet to say one day "Let's pool our moneys." She then explained that as I had fivepence and she had a penny, we had sixpence in all. There were two of us. Six divided by two was three. Pooling it meant that we would have fair shares, three pennies each. The argument was hard to fault, but what really impressed me was that she had mastered division.

In form two we also encountered Mademoiselle Grenaud, she of the little green Baby Austin, who introduced us to Madame Souris, the hero of an exquisite book about the domestic problems of a family of French mice. She also had flashcards, and we learnt to say 'Le facteur apporte les lettres' whenever we saw a postman.

But real life started in Form 3, under the stern but benign gaze of Dolly Dyer herself. Here I was introduced to Latin, this being the key to success in later life.

I suppose that Janet was there in that class, because it was as far as the school went, so it contained children of between 8 and 11, all doing different things; but I do not remember her being there. At home it was different. We had endless private jokes between us, all more or less senseless.

For instance, there was the question of post and toast. For some reason, perhaps inspired by a breakfast cereal called Post Toasties, we transposed the meanings of post and toast. Thus we had marmalade on our post and the rattle at the front door heralded the arrival of the toastman with the toast. And so it continues to this day, In 2005 everybody was puzzled except me when Janet at breakfast asked me whether I wanted some more post.

Then there was the business of the shponge pudd'n. This started in 1938, when we were on holiday at Minsmere, in Essex, and ran into an antique couple living in the village. She had no teeth, and all her 's' sounds became 'sh'. She said, "I'm makin' a shponge pudd'n for me 'ushband, because 'e 'ashn't got a tooth in 'ish 'ead.' Whenever the

topic of pudding, cake or teeth came up, I would see Janet wrap her lips round her teeth and mouth the words "shponge pudd'n".

It was during that holiday at Minsmere that another event occurred of which I have regrettably no photograph, but I have a photograph taken just moments before it happened. As you will realise, Wilfred, who took it, was standing up in a boat. Moments later, the boat came alongside an island in the lake, and Wilfred stepped out onto the bank. And you've guessed it: the bank went one way, the boat went the other, and Wilfred took a header into the lake. Janet and I applauded: it was sufficiently impressive for me to remember it still.

The 1939 holiday was at West Bay, best remembered for its last day, on which we listened to Neville Chamberlain's broadcast and that night drove home in the dark with only the parking lights on, fearful that headlights would attract an immediate German bomb.

#### *The war*

It may seem odd to say this, but wartime England was for children an extraordinarily safe place. Of course, if you got caught in an air raid it was horrific. But the rest of the time things were pretty good. Food rationing, for example, is often assumed to have meant going without things, but nobody starved, and it has been shown that the wartime generation of children was better nourished and more healthy than any before them: rich kids didn't overeat as much, while for poor kids the ration was more and better food than they had got in the past.



8.3 Minsmere, 1938, Janet and Nicky with Granny Dah and Dorothy.

There were very few burglaries and muggings, because the burglars and muggers were away fighting the war. There were few road accidents because there was so little traffic. We used to ride our billy carts down a steep hill in the middle of Banbury and straight across an intersection at the bottom, and never had even a near miss.

So, after a flurry of activity with ARP (Air Raid Precautions) matters, life resumed much as before, apart from the issue of ration books and identity cards. I still remember my identity number: YDYA 1335919, which I never had to use. I am, however, very vague about the registration number of my present car, which I am constantly having to recall and which contains only six characters. Moral: if you want to remember something all your life, learn it when you are young.

The only thing that really terrified me was my gas mask. I hated putting it on, as it had a stale smell. When we had gas mask drill I always tried to be absent. And we never had to do it for real.

In 1940 we were unable to go to the south coast for our holiday, as all the beaches were covered with mines and barbed wire to stop the Germans invading. Instead, we went to Lynton, in Devon. From the terrace of the Sinai House Hotel we watched a convoy from America struggle up the Bristol Channel, aware that they were not yet safe from U-boat attack. A tanker had been torpedoed there a few days earlier, and the beach was black with oil. So there was no sea bathing that year.

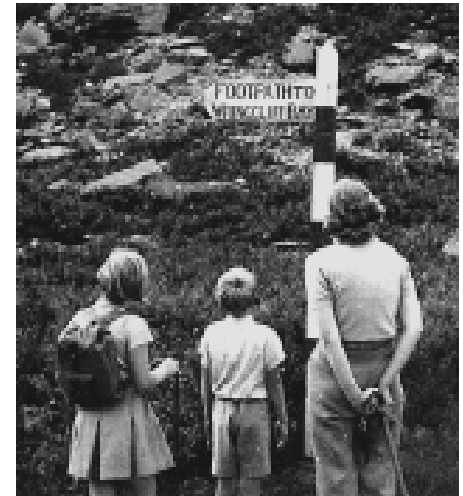
Happily, there was the river Lynn, and in particular a place on it called Watersmeet, where there was excel-



8.4 Janet at Watersmeet, 1940

lent paddling. This provided the scene for one of my favourite pictures of Janet. It shows a strong, brave person whom I adored.

Another memorable photo from that holiday was of something we called 'The last signpost', and this needs a bit of explanation. In order to make things difficult for German spies, the government had ordered the removal of all public references to place names. This meant not only removing all signposts, but even blacking out the word BANBURY on the shops which sold ■■■■■■ CAKES.



8.5 The last signpost, near Lynton

It certainly made life difficult for us, so it must have been terrible for the spies.

Anyway, what should we find when out walking one day but a signpost which had not been removed. And here it is, advertising the footpath to Wringcliff Bay.

If there was very little traffic on the ground, there was always traffic in the air. I remember wondering whether I would ever see a sky entirely empty of aircraft, and a shortly afterwards thinking that perhaps that moment had come, but then I saw that there was indeed a plane, low down on the distant horizon.

We were all experts at recognising the various types of aircraft, and there was always great excitement when we first saw a new one. The best example was when we became aware of two planes which were in none of the books. We called them the Whistler and the Roarer from their very distinctive sounds, always so high that they were just a speck in the sky. But we used to hear the Roarer warming up every morning on the airstrip at Barford St John, and one day cycled over to see it take off. We were stopped by policeman on a bicycle, who told us that the road was closed, and next moment a smokescreen drifted across the

road. However, when the plane took off, it crossed the road just above the top of the smoke, and we were astonished to see that it had no propellers. (We learned much later that it was the Gloster F9/40, the prototype of the Meteor.)

We watched it fly away, then turn and come back towards us, and at that moment it turned into the Whistler. The two planes were just one, whistling when coming towards us and roaring as it went away.

A year or so later, the first flying bombs landed in London, and the newspapers published a fuzzy photograph of one in the sky plus an 'artist's impression' of its main features. It showed a propeller in front, but we twelve-year-olds knew better. They were some sort of Roarer.

By then many of the planes we saw had black and white stripes on their wings, and we all knew that they were for the invasion of France. It was to be nearly a year before Germany surrendered, but we knew that the end of the war was coming.

The perceptive reader may well wonder why this chapter contains no references to gardening. The simple answer is that Wilfred's love of gardening was not infectious. Periodically, Wilfred would ask us whether we would like to go to The Land and help him with some gardening, and at first we said 'Yes'. We soon learnt, however, that helping with the gardening consisted of standing watching him, waiting for the moment when our turn would come. And it would. He would look up for a moment and shout "Spade." It was then our job to fetch him the spade. We called it "Playing Spade", and it cured us of any desire to become gardeners.

#### *The post-war years*

In 1945 we went on holiday to Boot, Eskdale, in the Lake District. That holiday was notable for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the war in Europe was over, and petrol was available again. Actually we had had petrol throughout the war, but only for Wilfred to do his country rounds. Now there was a small ration for private motoring, and we went to the Lakes by car.

To make the fuel go further we went in Dorothy's little Morris 8, which had been up on bricks throughout the war. On the last lap of the journey, we came to a hill which was too steep for it. Wilfred told us to get out and push. Without the weight of Janet, by then a generously

proportioned 14-y-o, and me, a splendidly little 12-y-o, the car leapt forward, and knowing he would never be able to start again with us on board, Wilfred drove over a mile to the top of the hill before stopping and waiting for us to catch up. Janet was not pleased – and nor was I, come to think of it.

It was in Boot that we heard the news of the end of the Pacific war. This was not a surprise: a fortnight earlier we had heard with horror of the dropping of the first atomic bomb. The citizens of Boot celebrated the Japanese surrender with a bonfire, helped on its way by a cupful of our precious petrol.

Dorothy wasn't with us, of course, being in hospital. We both missed our mother terribly. Perhaps the most agonising event had happened earlier that summer, when Dorothy had seemed to be fully recovered and was discharged. Within a day she started talking very strangely, and she was promptly delivered back to Littlemore.

I was by then nearing the end of my time at Winchester House. I have not said anything about this, as this is a family story rather than mine, but if you want to read a piece I wrote about it, google "Nick Hudson" "Lingua franca". One day I may write a proper autobiography, but I doubt it.

Meanwhile, Janet was at Downe House. Downe House was the creation of the formidable Miss Willis, who was still in charge. Miss Willis must have been frightened by a Mullah at some time, because she dressed the girls in djibbas, which were like hiking tents fabricated from shagpile flannelette, and made the burka seem revealing. No anatomical detail except, perhaps, a truly mountainous bosom was apparent to the wanton eye.

This was perhaps fortunate, because Janet had grown from a chubby little girl into a chubby big girl. You may find this hard to believe, but it is true. When she played the part of Miranda in *The Tempest*, the teacher explained that Miranda was Latin, meaning 'meet to be admired'. This gave Janet her nickname: Meat.

Meat she may have been, but she was also admired. She had for example an exceptionally boring admirer called Rodney, whose great ambition was to become an executive in the Metal Box Company.

In 1947 she left school. She had been accepted as a trainee nurse by Guy's Hospital, but she was only 16, and had to be 18 before she could

start, so she had a couple of years being finished. First she went to a domestic science school in Bardwell Road, Oxford, where she failed to master the arts of cookery and domestic economy, and then to an astonishing place called the House of Citizenship, Ashridge, where she failed to master conservative politics and a number of social and technical accomplishments.

In 1948 the family visited France and Switzerland. For Janet and me it was the first time we had travelled abroad. I took over from Wilfred as official photographer, and have as a result a great many very bad photographs, including some very interesting trains and cars, but perhaps we can leave these for another time. To whet your appetite, here is one of a car, ours, and a train.



8.6 Dorothy's 1937 Humber Super Snipe and an SBB Bo-Bo freight locomotive

France was a country of disturbing contrasts. We ate a spectacular lunch concluding with *fraises du bois* and double cream, while outside women demonstrated, holding up placards. 'Du lait pour nos enfants'. In England there was no double cream for the wild strawberries, but there was always milk for the children. There was *liberté* perhaps in post-war France, but not much *égalité* or *fraternité*.

Unlike London, where the scars of the Blitz were everywhere, Paris was untouched. However, there was still plenty of evidence of recent warfare elsewhere, with signs saying 'Chausée Bombée' heralding a length of rough road where somebody had made a poor job of filling in a bomb crater.

It was, in fact quite a relief to cross the border into Switzerland,

where the lights had never been turned off. We experienced the joy of walking into a shop and buying a bar of chocolate without being asked for coupons, and the macabre sight of trout being extracted from their tank with a net just minutes before they landed on our table, grilled to perfection *a la Meunière*. We also discovered that a Jodelkonzert, so far from being a happy-go-lucky performance by the Swiss equivalent of yodelling cowboys, was a solemn affair, in which some elderly men dressed as undertakers stood in a row and sang an endless repertoire of bucolic dirges.

Janet had recently had her seventeenth birthday, and had added driving to the range of skills she had yet to master. She was able to demonstrate this inability in a practical way in a narrow village street. Regrettably, I have no photograph of it: she drove our tank-like Humber very slowly down the length of a brand new Opel, rolling its side panels back like a sardine can. The Humber suffered no damage at all.

I do have, however, a photographic record of an occasion which was to be long remembered in the family. We were staying at the Adler in Grindelwald, and had decided to take a walk up to the Kleine Scheidegg. As we climbed the long steep ascent the sun came out, and Wilfred decided it was time to change his clothes – he always carried a variety of clothing in a rucksack to cater for all weathers. He went behind a rock and emerged in shorts, and secured his long trousers in some straps under the rucksack. On the way down it came on to rain, and he got out his Home Guard gas cape and put it on.

At some stage he must have felt behind him for the trousers, because he suddenly called out that they were missing. There was much kerfuffle and discussion of where they were likely to have dropped off, and whether we should return to the summit, but at that moment he saw an aged native struggling up the hill. "I'll ask this fellow to look out for them," said Wilfred confidently.

He started sensibly enough. "Do you speak English?"

The ancient rustic clearly didn't understand the question.

Wilfred decided that the best course was to communicate in German. "Ich habe gelosten meine trousers", he said, slowly and precisely.

The man did not seem to realise that he was being addressed in his own language. He adopted a perplexed frown.

"Ich habe gelosten meine trousers", said Wilfred again, this time

even more slowly and somewhat louder.

Still no response, and I clicked the shutter on the camera.

"Meine trousers", bellowed Wilfred, and pointed down to his bare pink legs sticking out of the bottom of the cape.

The man looked down at Wilfred's legs. His eyes bulged, his face went pale, he gave a cry of horror and fled up the hill. I would love to have heard his version of the story.

The next year we all went off to Scotland, taking in the first Edinburgh Festival. The holiday was notable in that it supplied another of the little expressions which exist in the private language Janet and I speak: 'Into your basket, Bonnie'. It should be uttered in the lilting tones of Edinburgh Scottish.

Bonnie was a yappy little dog owned by the proprietor of the b&b we stayed in, and the phrase was used to call off this hound when it became even more offensive than normal. It passed into our private language as the formula Janet or I used when one or other of us did or said something inappropriate. It meant 'Cut it out' or 'Whatever you are doing, stop it.' A useful phrase, worth remembering.

The last photo is just rather a nice family snap, but it also provides a coathanger for one final story. We were on the way to visit the model village at Bourton-on -the-Water (which you must visit if you ever get the chance) and we stopped for lunch at the Swan Hotel, Bibury. After lunch we sat out in their garden, and Dorothy told us that she and



8.7 "Ich habe gelosten meine trousers"

Wilfred had stayed there on their honeymoon. Dorothy soon discovered that there were a lot of crumbs in the bed, and summoned the chambermaid, expecting shock and apologies.

The girl did not seem to be at all surprised or apologetic.

"That's easy to explain," she said. "The last couple had breakfast in bed."



8.8 The family in 1949

So Janet went off to be a nurse, and shortly afterwards I went off to do my National Service with the Friends Ambulance Unit, and that was the end of Janet and Nicky.

## PART 2

### Descendants



*A typical sample descendant. It could be anyone, but it is Ben, on Erith Island, 1962, age 9 months.*

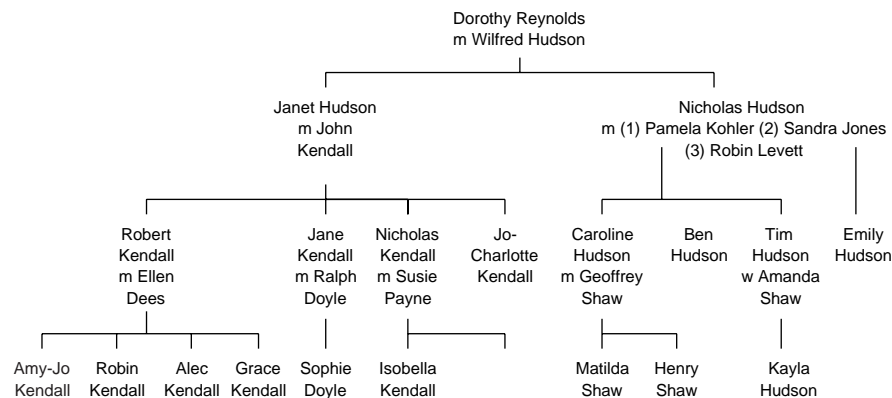


## Introduction: How?

There is a problem with this section which is supposed to cover the stories of the descendants of Dorothy and Wilfred, including the parts of Janet's and my stories which happened after we left the nest. If I wrote all the chapters, it would be totally out of kilter – a long chapter about me and very short ones about all of you.

I decided to cut the knot and write a long chapter which doesn't pretend to do anything except tell some of my story. You are all in it, but only with walk-on parts, like Janet's in her TV appearances. She is allowed to say 'Aarrgh' but not to say anything sensible. If you want to have your own lines, you had better sit down and start writing them.

Then I wrote the first two pages of Janet's story, just to get her going, and finally two 'roundup' chapters about the rest of you, just to get you all going.



## 9 Janet Hudson (Interim version)

(This interim version is supplied to show you what would happen if I wrote it all. It should encourage Janet to give us the real story.)

Until I was about seven, Nicky John and I used to have our baths together. Nicky John always chose the tap end, where he could maintain even body heat by moving alternately between leaning against the cold tap and the hot tap. I put up with the non-tap end, where I would lie back against the smooth slope and say 'Her ladyship is ill', executing a swoon ending with my head on one side. It was a posture I seem to have adopted soon after birth.

One of the deprivations of my childhood is contained in the title of this chapter: I had no second name. I used to invent them, and close inspection of the books of my childhood reveals some of the false starts: Janet Victoria Hudson, Janet Elizabeth Hudson.

So it was not surprising that I soon decided to change my name to Mrs John Crisp Chater Kendall. Young Kendall was a very handsome and talented young doctor at Guy's, and next thing it was 11 June 1955



9.1 Janet Hudson, in swooning posture.

and there was a marquee on the front lawn at Robinswood. We all dashed off to Broughton Church, where the funny little vicar told us that the purpose of the exercise was, as he put it, 'the Pro -cree-ation of cheel-dren'.

Now, had a five-year-old Christine Flinn been there, she might have piped up, as she had done on a similar occasion, "Will he spread the pollen now?" As it was, no one asked any such questions, and we departed for Lewisham, where we lived while John completed his internship.

Shortly afterwards my brother Nicholas happened to be the only one home at Robinswood when the phone rang.

"Dr Hudson?" asked a voice.

"No, his son." he replied.

"Oh, good, That's who I was wanting to talk to. We hear very good things about you. Would you consider joining us at the Malthouse practice in Abingdon?"

If he had said yes, things might have turned out very differently. But he said "Thank you, it's a very attractive offer, but I have to say no, because I'm not qualified. However, I have a brother-in-law who is looking for a job."

And that is how we came to live in Abingdon.

(Watch this space for the real Janet's version)



9.2 John Crisp Chater Kendall

## 10 Nicholas John Hudson

I have only once appeared before a judge, and it happened just after I left school, at the Fulham Magistrates Court in West London. It was actually my conscience, not myself, that was on trial. I appeared before a tribunal whose job it was to decide whether my objection to military service was conscientious or not. Happily they decided it was, so I joined the Friends Ambulance Unit.

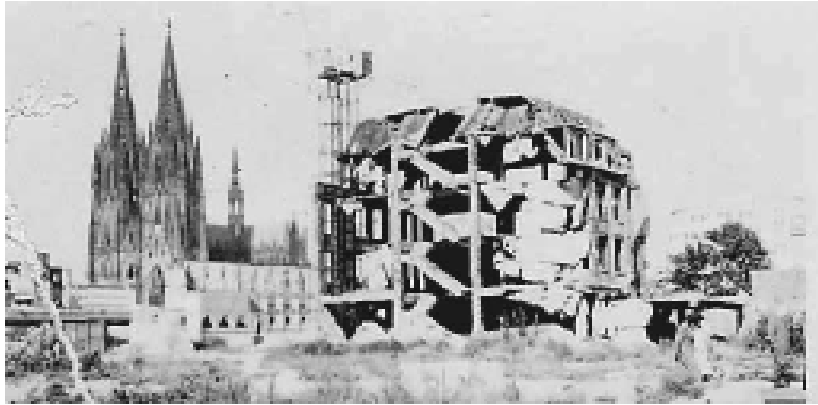
The next two years were the most intensive educational experience of my life. I was taught how to chop trees down in a four month stint with the Forestry Commission in Crawley, then seven months being taught to be a builder in Germany, the task being to turn a WW2 prisoner of war camp into a home for orphan refugees; then two months with Oxfam being taught to pack crates of pre-loved clothes for shipment to refugee camps in Europe; then six months being taught to be a hospital orderly at the Brook General Hospital in Woolwich; and finally six months being taught demolition and building on the island of Overflakkee in Holland, which had gone under three metres of water in the great floods of January 1953.

I say 'being taught' rather than 'learning', because, like Janet, I tended to be taught more than I learned. But at least I can order a beer in a pub in Germany without being immediately picked as a foreigner.

I have hundreds of photos from those two years, but will show you just two. The first is of the centre of Cologne as it was when I first saw it. This was nearly six years after the war ended, but little had changed. There were people living in cellars under the rubble. I was convinced that the damage was so complete and extensive that the city would never really recover.

It seemed that I had plenty of good reasons to be pessimistic. In 1950, when the Korea War started, I believed that there was no way it would *not* develop into a full-scale nuclear war. Everything seemed pretty pointless. Over the next two years the worst of this depression had passed, but I still could not take seriously any long term planning. The idea that I would live into my seventies without seeing another world war, for example, was simply inconceivable.

Then, in Germany, I met people who really had reason for pessi-



10.1 Cologne, 1952. *It would be nice to attribute the survival of the cathedral to the phenomenal accuracy of RAF bombing or to the hand of God, but there are serious difficulties with both these explanations.*

mism. They were orphan boys, all younger than me, who had been living on the streets in East Germany. They had been recruited by the American authorities in West Berlin to smuggle propaganda material into the East. However, as soon as they became known to the East Berlin authorities, they were no longer of use as couriers. They were then given certificates saying what a good job they had done for freedom and democracy and dumped in West Germany. They had nothing: no families, no friends, no education, no skills.

Many of them found their way to the place where I was working. They were found apprenticeships and given board and lodging plus one mark a week pocket money, which would buy two cups of coffee. But I found that they were saving it up: six months and they might be able to buy an old radio; eighteen months and they might have enough for an old bicycle. To me, it was a revelation. They taught me to believe in the future.

The other photo has a less solemn message. It is the view out of the front door of a house in Holland, and tells a number of stories. Firstly, you will notice that the front fence is under water, and that water stretches away to the horizon behind. The water had been up to the top of the door at the peak of the flood, but was now quite shallow. However, at high tide it tended to rise a bit, flooding the ground floor

of the house. As we were living in the house we had our own dyke round the front door to keep our feet dry.

Next you should notice the object floating in the water just inside the gate, looking like an old oak bookcase. This is indeed an old oak bookcase, which came our way when we were rescuing furniture from the ruins of a house. It was very heavy, and we decided that the easiest way to get it back to dry land was to float it. It floated so well that we put a lot of other furniture and property in it, and waded back towing it like a barge.

When it was unloaded, it seemed a pity to take it out of the water when it so obviously wanted to be a boat. We got in and found that it would happily carry four people.

Paddling it was quite easy, but steering it was tricky. However, we found a way, which I will now disclose to you in case you are ever faced with a similar problem: You get a long straw broom and use it as a sweep – a sort of very long rudder.

#### *University*

With National Service behind me I moved into Trinity College, Oxford, and at the end of my first term attended the only Quaker function I ever attended there, a Christmas party. There I ran into a third year English student from St Anne's, who had come in response to the pleadings of her Quaker friend Brenda, who had been dreading it but felt she had to go.



10.2 Holland, 1953

Her name was Pamela Kohler. She was very sophisticated to my freshman's eyes, and I was surprised when she accepted my invitation to meet again. My first gift to her was the vast and trunkless legs of a large chocolate elephant, inevitably called Ozymandias.

Eighteen months later we were still an item, which is how both of us came to be in Broughton church in June 1955 for Janet's wedding.

The photo shows us the next year, 1956, skiing at Alpe d'Huez. Pamela won that week's Downhill Race, the most spectacular and dangerous of the events, while I struggled on the nursery slopes.

Meanwhile I was enjoying university life. I have immense admiration for anyone who gets First Class Honours at university, so much indeed that I realised from the outset that I was never going to be one of them. Instead, I spent much of my time discovering that I was also not cut out to be a journalist. I worked on the student newspaper, *Cherwell*, and was its editor in 1955, but I was a lousy reporter. I learnt that I could trip over a brilliant news story without noticing it.

So it was that one morning in June, 1957, I found myself about to leave Oxford, with a wedding lined up but no job, and a letter in my hand asking whether I might think of becoming an Australian publisher. I instantly realised that this was what I had always wanted to be. So the wedding went ahead, and a honeymoon on Sark, and six months later we sailed from Tilbury on the *Iberia*.

#### *Australia*

There are several rides you can no longer take which I am lucky to have taken, like flying into Hong Kong's old Kai Tak airport, with the blocks of flats rearing up on either side just beyond the wingtips, and landing on the lagoon at Lord Howe Island in a flying boat. But the best of them was travelling first class to Melbourne on a P&O liner.



10.3 *Alpe d'Huez, 1956*

You can still go on an ocean cruise, but that is culpable self-indulgence: you end up just where you began. A first class journey on the *Iberia* was justifiable self-indulgence: you got somewhere.

After a few days or table steward would hand us the long dinner menu, wait patiently while we chose our entrées, and immediately open his little plate-warmer and produce exactly what we had ordered. We won the Funny Hat competition with creations called Strawberry Tart and Gooseberry Fool. Unfortunately the hats themselves, made of crepe paper stuffed with my socks, were thrown away by a diligent room steward, and I arrived in Melbourne virtually sockless.

Two days later, 11 April 1958, was my 25th birthday. We booked a telephone call to England, and spent the three minutes bellowing to make ourselves heard over the static. It cost five pounds, more than a day's pay. Nowadays we can just dial Janet's number and a moment later we are speaking to her as if she were next door, all for the equivalent of two minutes pay.

Why, then, do I say that I was lucky to have started in business in a world without easy, cheap, instant communication? It meant that the London head office had to leave almost all decisions to me. Over the next twenty seven years I received only one instruction from London, and rejected it, cabling back that it was not a good idea. In the twenty eighth year the telex was invented, and we would arrive at the office in the morning to see the overnight instructions billowing out of the machine. I knew it was time to go.

But we are jumping the gun. While I was enjoying my first days at work. Pamela, six months pregnant, was out looking at houses, and she settled on one in Greensborough.



10.4 *Caroline*

Three months later, the day before Pam's 26th birthday, Caroline arrived.

She was not, of course, the first grandchild for Wilfred and Dorothy. Janet had already filled the first two places with Robert and Jane.



10.5 Robert Kendall... 10.6 Ditto, clad

10.7 Jane and Robert Kendall



We were kept informed of Robert's progress with photographs, but he never seemed to have any clothes on. I have dozens, but here's a typical example, taken on the lawn at Robinswood. Those are the kitchen windows in the background.

It wasn't until later that we got a photo with clothes on and the truth dawned: his parents were so poor that they dressed him in clothes which the Salvation Army had thrown out, and he was ashamed of them and took them off at the first opportunity.

Sadly, Jane suffered from a similar deprivation, but in her case no photograph of the awful

clothes is available. We had to wait for some years before she was dressed in fine clothes for the benefit of a professional photographer.

Nevertheless, as we now know, they both grew up into fully clad adults.

It was at about this time that Robert made a major contribution to the family by determining new names for Dorothy and Wilfred: Gaggy and Abba. These names were instantly adopted by all of us, and these are the names by which they will be known for the rest of this book.

The race was then on to give Gaggy and Abba their fourth grandchild, and it was a dead heat, both of the contestants arriving on 28 March 1962. However, the record shows that Ben

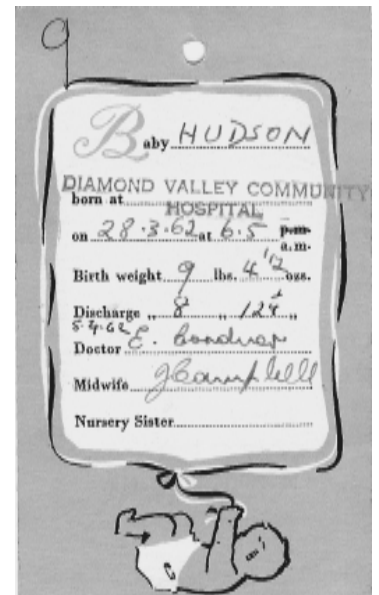


10.8 Jane



10.9 (above) Ben and Caroline

10.10 (right) Evidence that Ben Hudson is older than Nicholas Kendall



was born at five past six in the morning, when it would still have been 27 March in England, so Ben won by at least six hours.

I do not seem to have been sent any photographs of the infant Nicholas Kendall, but I have something far more easy on the eye, namely, a picture of him *in utero*. We were not told the names of the puppies.

Next cab off the rank was Pam, who gave the world Timothy James, Tim Jim. He arrived on 16 October 1963, and my picture of him is one of the last taken in our house in Greensborough. Shortly afterwards, we moved to Pine Trees, a lovely old house in Eltham, where he still lives. The rest of us moved out long ago.

And so we come to the saddest bit of this story: Jo Charlotte Kendall. As you will all know, the seventh grandchild, Jo Charlotte Kendall, born in 1965, died in a car accident when she was just eighteen. The best I can do is to tell you what I remember of her.

She was one of those people who light up the room when they come in. She radiated an infectious happiness – nobody could be miserable for long if she was around. Doing anything with her, whether it was playing cards or washing up, was always fun.

She was nine when Emily, just two months old, first visited Abingdon, and Jo looked after her most of the time. One of my strongest memories



10.11 Nicholas Kendall in utero



10.12 Timothy Hudson

of her has her standing outside the front door of Park Crescent with Emily in her arms.

I have no proper photographs of her, but this is a still from a movie taken at Gaggy and Abba's Golden Wedding in 1980, in which she and Jane appear along with Emily.

Her death was one of those pointless tragedies that make one wonder what it is all about. However, one thing is clear: a year later the first of Gaggy and Abba's grandchildren arrived, and was called Amy Jo. I cannot think of a more suitable person to carry on her name.



10.13 Jane, Jo and Emily in 1980, from an 8mm movie.

#### *First steps in publishing*

All the time that this procreation had been going on, my firm had been establishing itself. Our first real breakthrough was with a senior secondary Chemistry text. There was a new Chemistry course for Victorian schools with the periodic table of the elements as its central concept. This struck me as a very interesting and possibly revolutionary approach to the teaching of chemistry, and I commissioned a book for it from two of the best chemistry teachers I could find. A year later I got their manuscript, and it was all that I had hoped.

In fact, it was better than I had hoped. Just days after it was published, the Nuffield Committee (the key Chemistry syllabus body in the UK) released their new syllabus, and it was almost exactly the same. As a result, we found ourselves with the only immediately available book for the new UK syllabus.

Our Australian text immediately became the market leader in Year 11 Chemistry in the UK and in all countries which took the Cambridge Overseas Certificate – Nigeria, Malaysia and so on. We sold over a quarter of a million copies worldwide.

By then the Australian business had been incorporated, turning from a branch of a UK company into a company in its own right, Heinemann Educational Australia. But it still operated from the office and warehouse of the original William Heinemann business in Australia, which handled books for the general book trade. In 1967 we moved out, setting up our own offices and warehouse in River Street, South Yarra. The staff had by then grown from one (me) to fifteen.

#### *ERA*

In 1967 I was invited to join the Council of ERA, the Education Reform Association, which was trying to set up a progressive secondary school. We learnt the hard way. It was easy to agree about what we disliked about the existing schools, but we were less clear about what we expected of the new one.

The mainspring of the Association was a man called Henry Schonheimer. He worked in the Education faculty of Latrobe University, but his fame rested on his position as Education columnist for the *Age* newspaper, a job he did brilliantly. If a complex educational problem hit the headlines, Henry would come out the next day with a clear analysis of the issues. The problem was that this did not necessarily lead to clear solutions.

I remember him making a speech to a packed meeting of potential customers. He started by deploring the way in which teachers were required to kowtow to examining boards and educational authorities, and said that in our school the teachers would be recognised as professionals, with all the skills needed to plan courses to cater to the needs of students. Applause. He then deplored the way in which existing schools ignored the wishes of parents, and said that in our school the wishes of the parents would be fully respected. Rapturous applause. Then he deplored the way in which existing schools failed to recognise the students' inalienable right to participate in the decision-making process, and said that our school would be a flag-bearer for student democracy. Deafening applause.

The problem was, of course, that these three aims, however admirable, were incompatible with one another. Staff who believed they would be in charge found themselves having to answer to meetings of parents; parents who believed that their concerns would be respected

found that they were overruled by the student democracy; and students complained that all the really important decisions were made by staff. All three then referred their grievances to us, the Council of the new school.

The problem was neatly summed up by the first Principal of the school, David Bennett: 'Who decides who decides?' The question was never really resolved.

Perhaps the surprising thing is that the school ever opened, that it remained open long enough for Caroline, Ben and Tim to attend, that for Caroline it was a good experience and that for the boys it was not a bad one, certainly no worse than they would have had elsewhere.

#### *An end and a new beginning*

Meanwhile things were not going well at home at home. I don't think it was really anybody's fault, and Pam and I both tried pretty hard to put it back together, but it was no use. Just short of Caroline's thirteenth birthday Pam and I parted company.

It was not that we could not get on. We had had two memorable holidays when we left the children and went off together, one to Spain and one in Cambodia, which we both enjoyed immensely. At least, I certainly did. Being together 24/7 can test a relationship to destruction, but it didn't. Our problem was that we were unable to establish a good working relationship at home. I had a stimulating job, Pam didn't. I didn't like some of her Eltham friends and she did not want to be Mrs Hudson the Publisher's wife, and steered clear of my office. Finally I cleared out.

Shortly after the split I had to go to England, and Caroline came with me. It was a wonderful trip. We had a day in Mauritius and then flew on to visit my opposite number in Nairobi. On the first night we overcame our jetlag sufficiently to thrash him and his wife at bridge. Later we crossed the channel by Hovercraft and thrashed a French couple on the train to Paris. Come to think of it, I don't think we have ever been beaten.

Gaggy and Abba invited us and the Kendalls to visit them in their new holiday house in Cala d'Or. I emerged glad that I lived in Australia, and would rarely be invited to travel so far for so unappealing a destination. The highspot was dinner in the local café. Abba spent some



10.14 With our driver outside a Tamil school in Mauritius

time on the phone explaining, as he told us, that we wanted roast chicken rather than their usual paella, but they still served their usual paella, accompanied by a grubby guitar-strumming vocalist to whom Janet gave the name Old Tennis Shoes. However, one very good thing came out of it: that Caroline forged a strong bond with cousin Jane which continues to this day.

We then flew on to New York, where I had

some business, and stayed at the Algonquin. As somebody said: 'You have to understand the Algonquin. When they do it up, they do it up just like it was.' Later I overheard a woman checking in, and she asked the receptionist if there was ice in the rooms. "No ma'am, this is August, We have ice in the rooms January through March." We loved New York.

Back in Melbourne, I was now living with, and in 1975 married, Sam, Sandra Elaine Kerr, née Jones. She had had a brief and by all accounts disastrous marriage to Mr Kerr, but we got along famously. She actually seemed to enjoy my company, which was something I had not experienced for some time.

We bought a modest little 1890s house in Prahran, which we modernised by installing an inside loo and in general bringing it up to the standards of the early 1930s. For me it was a very happy place.

I often wondered, and wonder still, what my children made of it all. Sam was very good with them, but the relationship between young children and a second wife is an impossible one. They were torn between the sense that I had deserted them and the understanding that

there was no simple alternative. She was torn between the desire to make me and them happy and annoyance at the constant reminders of a part of my life which she could not fully share. But these are just my guesses: none of them ever complained. Under the circumstances, I was lucky that they all tried so hard to make the best of things, that were no disasters and so many good times.

It was probably worst for Caroline. There are not many activities which a father can easily share with a teenage daughter unless one or the other of them is very good at role playing. What a daughter needs is a Dad who is around for the odd moments when a Dad is needed, instantly. By contrast, there were always plenty of things I could do with the boys which were fun for me and, I think, for them. We had camping holidays in the Grampians, on Flinders Island and at Woods Point, and a memorable three weeks in Europe and North America. They were always wonderful travelling companions, even when they found themselves accompanying me on trips down my memory lanes, as happened in Germany and Holland.

What I missed was involvement in their ordinary lives. We used to meet as hosts and guests. Tim manages his relationship with Kaila much better.

In 1976 Emily arrived, and for the first time I attended the birth. It was termed 'easy', which meant that it was all over in two hours. It persuaded me that blokes have it easy.

Emily had the rare distinction of being booked to fly half way round the world before she was born – before she had a name to put on the ticket. I can tell you with confidence that the beautiful ladies on Singapore Airlines who are so good



10.15 Sam and Emily



at pouring champagne are not good at all at warming babies' bottles: the bottles either arrive stone cold or boiling hot.

In 1977 we moved into a larger but even more derelict house in Hawthorn, which we bought for site value less the cost of demolishing it. Sam had sworn that she would never again live in a house while I was renovating it, but she found herself doing just that.

Minutes after we moved in Robert arrived on a visit. He was very polite about the house, even when we showed him the bed we had made up for him in a broom cupboard. After his early clothing problem, he had been sent to the Dragon School, in Oxford and then followed in his father's footsteps by going to Sherborne. Finally he went to university in Greensboro, North Carolina, where they taught him the rudiments of American History.

By 1977 he was following in his great-grandfather's footsteps by working for Clarks Shoes. He was very interesting on the subject of shoes, but we got the strong sense that his heart was not in them. His heart was in North Carolina, stolen by a young lady called Ellen Dees.

We were therefore not surprised when, not long afterwards, we heard that they had got married. Next, Robert replied to an advertisement from Woodberry Forest School in Orange, Virginia, which had a vacancy for an English Dragon who knew the rudiments of American History. Robert got the job. He and Ellen shook the shoes from their dust and hurried to Virginia.

And what of my children? They had all left school. Ben seemed to have an entrepreneurial bent, starting a number of business ventures, including a possum-catching agency (there's good money in removing offensive but protected species from suburban houses) and a mud brick business, mud bricks being very popular for their comfortable appearance and splendid insulation properties. He started, and Tim finished, the building of a delightful two-storey mud-brick cottage in the garden of Pine Trees, which looked so antique that it found its way on to the local register of historic buildings when the main house, over a hundred years older, did not.

Meanwhile Tim was emerging as a craftsman of extraordinary talent, capable of mastering almost any skill with ease. I gave him a camera for his fifteenth birthday, and his first film was artistically more imaginative than anything I had ever done. After a week learning to



10.16 Tim, Caroline and Ben, c. 1977

make lead-light windows, his tutor said he could teach him no more. He made a superb coffee table for his mother with an elegant tooled leather top, and a companion chess table for me.

Caroline was recovering from the tragedy of her first real love affair, which had come to an abrupt end when her beloved Dennis was killed riding sidecar at Sandown racetrack. All I have left from this time is a five second movie fragment of them in our house in Prahran.



10.17 Caroline and Dennis, from an 8mm movie.

*Publishing in the 1970s, etc*

It had always seemed odd to me that teenagers who were having difficulty reading were given totally unsuitable dictionaries. There seemed to be nothing between primary school dictionaries, which they found childish, and adult dictionaries, stuffed with abbreviated information, much of it in codes they could not break.

The guidelines I set for the team which compiled the *Heinemann Australian Dictionary* were: no conventions; no abbreviations; a head-word list covering all words likely to be encountered in a secondary school syllabus, and defined in ways which would solve the questions most likely to arise. The result was a dictionary which was not childish but was outstandingly easy to use.

The book was (and remains) more successful than I had dared hope. It was published in adapted editions for schools in the UK, USA, Canada and New Zealand. (No other Australian dictionary has ever been adapted for overseas use). It also found use as a general dictionary, appearing as the Pan English Dictionary, and to our great surprise proved very successful for use with second language students, whose needs and problems we had not addressed.

In 1980 the word went out from London that the two Heinemann organisations in Melbourne were to be reunified. There was no doubt as to which was now the senior partner: in our thirteen years as a separate entity, we had gone from being half their size to four times their size. However, I was keen to go on reporting to the Educational company in London, as they had always trusted my judgement, whereas the Trade firm had a long tradition of management by cable from London. I resisted calls for a merger and insisted on a takeover by us of the Trade firm at net asset value. The result was that we were paid to take it away, and I became Managing Director of a firm which was both a trade publisher and an educational one.

For four years all went well. The fifth year, 1985, started brilliantly and then went bad in a big way.

The London firm had commissioned a book by a former Deputy Director of MI5, the British equivalent of the FBI or ASIO. They were worried that they might be carted off to gaol for breach of the Official Secrets Act, and they asked me whether, in the event that this threat arising, I would take the project over. I agreed.

In June the expected threats materialised, the original contracts were shredded and I signed a new one. The only problem at that stage was that nobody in my firm was very keen on a book by an obscure British spook. We were up for a £75,000 advance to the author, but my marketing manager said he could not sell more than 3000 copies.

The answer arrived in the form of a telephone call from a Sydney solicitor representing the British government, asking me for an undertaking not to publish the book. I refused.

When I got off the phone, I thought hard about how to make the best of this. We could have put out a press release, but I feared that it would be a small paragraph on page 13. Instead, I phoned a friend and asked him to leak the news to the *Age* that there was something going on at Heinemann involving pressure from the British government to stop them publishing something. Twenty minutes later the phone rang, and it was an *Age* reporter asking for more details. I said, 'I am sorry, we cannot talk about that,' and hung up.

For the rest of the day, the phone rang hot as the *Age* reporters tried to find somebody who would talk. They were also in touch with London, and got further details from their investigative team there. They would then phone us for confirmation, and we would occasionally give it. One way or another, they had virtually their whole staff employed all day on this one story. So the next day the *Age* came out with a huge unprecedented two-decker front page headline: 'British Government pressures Melbourne publisher'.

Being on the front page, the story was picked up by Reuters and next thing the book was headline news all round the world. Instantly, it was on its way to becoming a worldwide bestseller.

In October I flew to Frankfurt for the Book Fair. The Frankfurt Book Fair is the place where all the really big rights deals are done, and for once we had the book of the fair. It was an exhilarating experience. Where previously I had had difficulty getting anyone to look at our offerings, I now had a queue of people wanting to buy rights. I even sold Icelandic translation rights, something no one else had ever done.

I had been warned not to try to enter England, as there was a warrant out for me at Heathrow, so I flew straight to America to finalise the sale of US rights to Viking.

When I had finished my business with Viking, I needed a break,

and decided to visit Robert at Woodberry Forest School. I flew into Richmond, under the mistaken impression that it was their nearest airport, and Ellen drove over there to pick me up, two hours driving each way. Only later, when I flew out from Charlottesville, less than half an hour away, did I realise my mistake. She was far too polite to mention it.



10.18 Robert, Amy, Ellen

Robert and Ellen were living in a penthouse at the top of a building fronted by a vast colonnaded portico like a suburban Town Hall, which turned out to be the school gymnasium. It was clear that Robert's seed had fallen on well-heeled ground.

Better still, they had just taken delivery of their daughter Amy Jo. Now, most babies are quite repellent, but I am being neither polite nor dishonest when I say that Amy was beautiful from the word go, rivalled only by her delicious mother.

I also visited some of the local historical monuments, including the University of Virginia, surely the world's only log-fired campus, and Monticello, the only house I know where you can be in both the sitting room and the dining room without getting out of bed.

And so back to Melbourne. A fortnight later the newly appointed Group Managing Director arrived from England, walked into my office and said "You are dismissed."

And that was the end of my 28 years with Heinemann.

Now, you may well ask why I was fired. The answer is that I don't know. The press said it was pressure from MI5, but I doubt it. They had certainly interfered with us – we had two burglaries, in the first of which all our word processing disks disappeared and in the second reappeared, and on the way to Frankfurt my luggage had gone astray, only to turn up three days later, repacked with loving care. But the firm went ahead with the book, so it wasn't that.

A second possibility is that I was sacked for insubordination. The fireman had been impressed by my marketing manager because he saw him taking notes on his speech to a sales conference, and demanded that I make him a director. I had resisted, since although he had skills we needed in a marketing manager, his honesty was in doubt. The fireman had asked me to appoint him or resign. I had done neither.

However, I suspect that the answer is even more mundane. The firm had recently been taken over, and the new owner, Paul Hamlyn, had strong ideas about the way it should be run, with all important decisions made in London. He also knew that this would be resisted by the existing local MDs who liked their independence. So he sent the fireman round the world to fire us all. Which he did.

My solicitor told me I had an open and shut case of wrongful dismissal, but that I would spend the next three years fighting it. To me, the thought of fighting my own firm in court was unthinkable. Of course, it was not my own firm; but that is the delusion of many people who dedicate their lives totally to the nurture of somebody else's child. And the grief at separation can be just as real.

And what happened after I left?

The marketing manager got his directorship, but two years later had to be sacked for stealing bestsellers from the warehouse and flogging them cheap at a suburban market. I thought he would do something rather more spectacular.

The book was the subject of an interlocutory injunction and a long trial in Sydney. Peter Wright was brilliantly defended by Malcolm Turnbull, and the trial ended in total defeat for the British government. The book, under the title I gave it, *Spycatcher*, ended up selling, I am told, 12 million copies worldwide.

The affair made Malcolm Turnbull a celebrity. He later went into politics, and recently got a seat in Cabinet.

Despite the enormous success of *Spycatcher*, the trade side of the firm went downhill. Twelve years later the educational and trade divisions were demerged. The educational one continues to flourish, but no buyer could be found for the trade firm as a going concern, and all the owners could sell was a pile of books, the imprint name and a filing cabinet full of contracts. And that was the end of William Heinemann's great firm.

### *A fresh start*

It is quite a shock to find oneself unemployed in one's early fifties, but hunting for a job did not appeal. The MD of Penguin Books had put it very simply: 'If you're not safe, none of us are.' I determined that I would never work for anyone else again.

As it happens, we had already got a company registered and ready to go. The original idea was for Sam to run it, while I cheered her on from the 'safety' of a paid job.

The engine room of the firm was a computer and a laser printer. 'So what?' you say. To answer this question, I have to put it in context. Computers were not new in publishing. We had done all our invoicing and stock control on computer since 1968, and used computers for what was termed 'word processing' since 1975. I had got my first personal computer, an Apple IIc, in 1981. However, in 1984 Apple Computers unveiled the Macintosh, with the slogan 'Wysiwyg' – what you see is what you get. For the first time, there was a microcomputer which could show you on screen an exact replica of what would be printed out: correct font, correct indenting, correct margins, correct line spacing. Processes which had previously involved huge computers and programs costing hundreds of thousands of dollars (or pounds, for that matter) were now available to more or less anyone.

The company was called Hudson Publishing Services, and Sam had planned to open it for business that week. As it turned out, we were both in it together from the start. My last day at Heinemann was a Tuesday, and the new firm completed its first job, a leaflet for a Senator John Siddons (and issued its first invoice) on the Thursday.

Fortunately for us, the publishing industry was very slow to recognise the revolution that had occurred. As a result, we were able to sell our services not only to the small fish but also to the whales. We did work for almost all the publishers in Melbourne, plus a lot of government work.

Meanwhile, I was rather more interested in publishing than providing services, so Sam was the Managing Director, managing the services, and I was Publishing Director.

Tim built us a very attractive office in our garden. I simply left it to him to design and build it, only helping him occasionally when he needed a second pair of hands.

The services side of the business paid most of the bills for the first few years. Then, as more and more publishers got themselves Macintoshes, the amount of work, and the price we could charge for it, dropped, and we became reliant on the publishing. And this was a problem, because it wasn't very reliable.

Starting again in the sort of publishing I really understood, educational publishing, had not appealed. I wanted to publish real books, trade books. This is a common disease among middle-aged educational publishers, and most of them get away with it because they are sustained by their educational backlists. If the disease is caught by an educational publisher without an educational backlist, it can be fatal.

It wasn't quite fatal with us. We had some major successes, but we never established a brand image for the firm. As one perceptive observer said 'You have devised a new definition of niche publisher: a publisher with one book in each niche'.

Yes, it was true. We published one huge and beautiful art book, one hard-hitting diatribe against banks, one brilliant memoir of a World War II Lancaster navigator, one polemic about the plight of the Aborigines, one attack on fundamentalism. Each of these was a success, winning critical acclaim and very good sales. But the thought of specialising in any of these niches never appealed. I always went on to something different.

It is important for a trade publisher to establish an image because you will rarely be offered a really good manuscript unless you have a reputation for good work in its genre. The only genre with which we were ever associated was the literary journal: our most successful book, Kate Llewellyn's *The Waterlily*, was a literary journal, and we went on to publish ten more books by the same author. Unfortunately all this achieved for us was a deluge of MSS of appalling domestic trivia. Not the brand image we wanted.

In 1988 I was invited by Oxford University Press to write an Australian edition of Fowler's *Modern English Usage*. It was an extraordinary invitation, rather like the Pope asking me to update the Bible. And, as I would have done to the Pope, I said that the job was impossible: Fowler's voice was so much his own that it would be presumptuous, and incidentally impossible, to sing in harmony with him. But I offered

instead to write my own alternative work, which I had provisionally entitled *A Dictionary of Writers' Problems*. They liked the book but not the title, publishing it as *Modern Australian Usage*. It is the best book I have ever written or am likely to write.

Unquestionably the title helped to sell the book in Australia (and it sold very well) but of course it killed any hope of overseas sales. It would be wonderful if one day it could be re-issued with the correct label.

Emily had decided she was the reincarnation of the goddess Artemis, and we paid a visit to Athens and Delphi to check out her old haunts. Then on to Rome, Florence and Pisa, up through the endless tunnels to Monte Carlo, and then called in on the Dattners in Burgundy. The remark of the trip was Emily's, as we approached the Dattner hideaway. I made some facile comment about it being a rich, rolling landscape, and Emily said 'Like Steve Dattner, you might say'.

#### *The Australian Democrats*

Meanwhile Sam was going great guns in the Australian Democrats, the first effective third force in Australian politics. She had started working for them soon after the formation of the Party in 1977, and became State Secretary and then National Secretary, a position she was to hold for more than a decade. Emily therefore grew up in a hotbed of politics. We found her one day sitting on the floor surrounded by stuffed animals and rag dolls. When asked what was going on, she explained that she was holding a meeting of her candidates.

The party prospered, eventually winning the balance of power in the Federal Upper House, with Sam as Chief of Staff to its Leader. The Party was still in this position when she retired from the job in 1997 at a dinner in her honour in Sydney. A *Bulletin* magazine article described her as 'Canberra's best-kept secret'. Within a year of her departure the rot set in and the party looks like disappearing from the stage at the next election. Whether she could have kept it together will never be known, but unquestionably her contribution as a peacemaker for the various fractious elements in the Party was incalculable. She is now doing the same job for the fractious Brewing Industry association, which is rather odd given that her mother signed the pledge and she doesn't

like beer.

However, in the meantime we had gone our separate ways. The second marriage lasted for over twenty years. As with Pam, it is hard (and unhelpful) to try to apportion blame, but this time the balance has to be on my side. Sam never did me any sort of injury.

The best I can say is that the Sam who finally threw me out in 1996 was an infinitely stronger and more confident character than the Sandra I had married, and I like to believe that I made a real contribution to this.

I would also like to think that it was not too damaging to Emily. She had by then finished at Methodist Ladies College and was at Melbourne University, studying Science/Law, a four year double degree course.

I bought a flat round the corner and rented a room in Pam's house, which was just a kilometre away in the neighbouring suburb of Kew, to use as an office. Tim was sceptical. 'You won't last a fortnight, Dad', he said, aware of the difficulties he had had living at Pine Trees as a tenant with Pam as the landlord. But the arrangement worked well for four years.

#### *Third time lucky*

In 1997 I published *The Girls*, by Robin Levett, and was working on her second book, *The Shikari*, while she wrote her third, *Bloodstock*. I enjoyed working with her immensely. This was strange, because we really had very little in common. She had made a career in the racing industry, running two stud farms, owning a string of successful racehorses, becoming president of the Kilmore Turf Club and being named First Lady of Australian Racing, while I had never been near an Australian racetrack and regarded the industry and its adherents with contempt. Anyway, the long and the short of it was that we started living together, first at weekends and then full time.

She reckons it was Emily who first suggested that we should get married. I am not sure about this, but if so it was a very good idea. We summoned all our friends to a party to celebrate my 70th birthday, and in the middle of it announced that there was a registered marriage celebrant present who would now do her stuff. And so I got married for the third time.

My two ex-wives and four children don't all agree on many things,

but they do on one: that Robin is a good thing.

It had never occurred to me that my seventies would be so exhilarating. Of course, I hadn't retired – self-employed people rarely can or do – but I certainly had slowed down. Nevertheless...

First, I have done more travelling than I had ever done. We have been fishing in Tasmania, New Zealand and Darwin, we have visited Sri Lanka and Kerala, Morocco, Spain, France, Germany, and of course England. We visited Ireland and within two hours of arrival had our hire car bogged up to its axles in the car park at Punchestown racecourse. We have made four trips to the north of Australia, taking in Thursday Island and a helicopter ride to The Tip (the end of Cape Yorke).

Best of all, Robin introduced me to Kashmir. She loves Kashmir, and had visited it every year since 1972, including all the years of the troubles. Visiting Kashmir with her made me understand what it's like to be the Duke of Edinburgh, constantly bathing in his wife's glory.



10.19 Tea party with the Rehman family in Kashmir. The large pot is not the tea, it is for the water to pour over your hands.

Robin has friends at all social levels. On one day during our last trip, we attended a European-style lunch party with the cream of the Kashmiri political elite, including an ex-Chief Minister (the equivalent of the State Premier), and then went on to sit on the floor in the home of a boatman who paddles a shikara on the Dal Lake, being offered traditional Kashmiri hospitality. What did our hosts have in common? They were both personal friends of Robin's.

I have published seven of Robin's books, the latest being, like this one, a gift to her grandchildren rather than a contribution to general reading. In fact, it was that book which inspired me to try to do the same. We do all our writing on computers, which enable Robin to write despite eyesight problems – she writes in 18/24pt Helvetica bold. We keep in touch with the world with broadband internet and have a dish on our roof for satellite TV.

We have a dog called Goulasch, in recognition of his ill-defined ingredients, a cat called Chat and three ducks called George W, Laura and Condy, who live in The White House, a luxurious duck palace.

I have a 1986 Volvo and Robin has a 1992 4WD Subaru utility (yes, her sight is good enough to keep her driving licence). Mine is more comfortable, hers is better for collecting bales of straw for the ducks.

We love house guests, and you would all be welcome.

*Postscript:*

Rather than change any of this (given that it all remains essentially true) I have to add a bit. In 2008 Janet's beloved John died, and we thought the best thing we could do was to invite Janet and Robert to visit us. And they came. We had three wonderful weeks with them, including hiring the 'Parlor Car' on a steam train from Castlemaine to Malden and back to celebrate my 75th birthday and the fifth anniversary of my wedding to Robin. Janet was looking lovely and it was just one of those great days.

Three months later Robin's cancer took over. She had been given five years to live in 1997 with a kidney cancer, and eight months in 2003, soon after our marriage, with a lung cancer, so she had, as ever, not done badly at beating the odds. But it had to catch up sooner or later. Mercifully, it was all over in three weeks, and she died peacefully in August 2008.

# 11 Round up of grandchildren

## *The Kendalls*

Robert Kendall must by now be among the longest-serving teachers at Woodberry Forest. He retains his links with England not only through the family, but also by bringing groups of senior boys to England in the summer vacations. Maybe one day he'll bring some to Australia. Better still, maybe he'll bring Ellen.

Jane Kendall trained as a nurse, but moved over into hospital administration. She married Raymond Forest in



11.1 Robert Kendall

1993, but two months later he was suddenly taken ill with a particularly virulent form of meningitis, and died a few days later. We were all shaken by this, especially Caroline, who had experienced something similar in the loss of her first love.

It took Jane some time to get back on track, but at the end of 1996 she married Ralph Doyle. Their daughter Sophie arrived in 1999. I thought that



11.2 Jane Doyle, née Kendall

Ralph was just what she needed.

She and Ralph have recently moved house, and if their new one is better than the old it will be a ripper.

Nicholas Kendall runs an events catering company from the premises of the Ham Polo Club. The best event he held there was his wedding to Susie, which was a great family gathering, with a full turnout of Brits and Americans, and with Caroline, Robin and me representing Australia. Caroline was gobsmacked by the chocolate fountain.



11.3 Nick and Susie Kendall



So much for the Kendalls. I await their own versions with keenest anticipation.

11.4 Caroline Shaw (left) being gobsmacked



### *The Hudsons*

I know a bit more about my brood.

Caroline suffered a second blow in 1997 with the sudden death of Geoffrey. Sudden it was, but not totally unexpected. He had a congenital heart condition which might not have caused trouble, but did.

When they had married, Geoff was pretty well broke, but with Caroline's help established a successful management consultancy firm. One of their clients was the Melbourne legal firm, Slater and Gordon, and they did such a good job that Geoffrey was invited to join them as General Manager with partner status. He sold out his share in the consultancy firm to his partner and took the job.

There is a very good account of this firm, with acknowledgement of Geoff's contribution, in a book, *That disreputable firm*, by Michael Cannon. (Hudson Publishing Services produced it for its publisher, Melbourne University Press). The title was quoted from the mouth of a Victorian State Premier, Geoff Kennett, who hated Slater and Gordon because unlike they specialised in helping poor people against rich people, something which the rich and their political friends find reprehensible.

The problem with such work is that the clients cannot pay you. You only get paid when you win and get costs awarded to you, and even then it can be a battle.

When Geoff arrived Slaters were in diabolical strife, millions in debt and with nothing on the credit side except some uncollected bills and the hope of being awarded costs on some major current cases. Geoff rapidly sorted out their accounting system, ensuring that the work was properly recorded and invoiced, and pressing for pay-



11.5 *Caroline Shaw, née Hudson*

ment in cases where payment was due. Within five years he had turned the firm round.

He was well paid for his services. As a result he was able to leave Caroline financially secure.

She lives in a rambling Art Nouveau house in Brighton, a bayside suburb of Melbourne, with her live-in partner Michael Butcher, of whom we all approve. She has a prosperous business as an interior decorator.

Ben lives in Mosman, Queensland, right up at the top, 50 kilometres north of Cairns. He does house renovations, specialising in the traditional 'Queenslanders' which were built on stilts in the belief that the higher altitude gave relief from the tropical heat. However, the coolest place in a Queensland house is in fact at ground level, under the house proper. He has recently bought one, and is rapidly turning it from the most run-down property in the street into the prize one.

He also does contract work for other builders, one of his specialities being the manufacture of timber louvres. He recently became the local council's expert on the eradication of mosquitoes. Never a dull moment with Ben.

What about Tim? When he was about twelve, he came with me to Tasmania. Driving across the centre of the island past a string of isolated homesteads, he looked longing at them and said 'You know, Dad, they have good junk in Tasmania'. Now he has his very own junk yard. He lives in Pine Trees, the house where he has lived ever since Pam and I bought it in 1964. He bought it from Pam about five years ago, and ever since that moment the garden has been slowly disappearing under a rich assortment of junk. His biggest projects recently have been in the house removal business – moving the whole house, that is, not



11.6 *Ben Hudson*



just its contents – but he always seems to have some bits left over. Visitors to Pine Trees are immediately made aware of the range of his activities because the house is slowly disappearing behind huge piles of



11.7 Kaila and Tim Hudson

old handmade bricks, Victorian casement and sash windows, several hundred bicycles, half a dozen cars..

Sadly, he and Kaila’s mother don’t have much to do with one another, but he has Kaila a lot of the time, and she keeps him in order. She is the only person who can. They make a wonderful pair.

Finally, there is Emily. She emerged from Melbourne University with First Class Honour in Genetics and a Higher Second in Law. She completed her legal training with Minter Ellison, becoming a fully licensed barrister and solicitor (and you never know when you may need one). She then returned to the University to take up a Research Fellowship in the Law school, working in the field of Intellectual Property. She is currently (2007) working on her PhD, so we will soon have a Dr Hudson in the family again.



11.8 Emily and Robin Hudson with Goulasch

## BEN’S STORY

We lived in this rambling old converted guest house, with a massive garden and an eclectic bunch of tenants including musicians, hippies, an ex-soldier and his mother. And a large Dutch family of six, so it was never boring.

My father (Nick) liked to build and build and build. In fact many weekends were spent watching him construct things. He would yell ‘Hammer’ at which my brother (Tim), who had previously been chasing me with it, would hand it over. To be true Dad was only keen to include us after his own experience with his father yelling “spade”.

Tim was particularly good at this, as he was at anything to do with his hands. In fact Tim is a natural artist, whereas I couldn’t nail at all. It wasn’t until I discovered the nail gun that carpentry became interesting. Even then there was the boredom of always holding the dumb end of the tape. Caroline was the most capable of all of us – she could do anything we boys could do. And she would roll her eyes at me pityingly, a thing she still does 40 years on.

The advent of the Vietnam War (or the American War, as the Vietnamese saw it) was an exciting time. Paul Fox, one of the hippies, was on the run for not wanting to go and kill women and children in a country we knew little about. Dad being a pacifist employed and housed him, but unfortunately the ex soldier didn’t see it in the same light. Paul was arrested attending the birth of his first born and got two years jail,

One day we found a rabbit in Caroline’s cubby (another of Dad’s masterpieces) and excitedly told our parents. They told us to bring it inside. Caroline wrapped it in a towel and brought it into the bedroom. Upon releasing it we were all fascinated as this rabbit tore up the curtains (literally) and looked down with a vicious snarl.

We were disappointed when Mum explained.

“Darlings that’s a Possum”

“Can we keep it?” we asked.

And this was the start of an varied collection of animals that we would bring home and that Dad would build wonderful houses for, including turtles, rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens, a bearded dragon and a galah that we let fly around the house.

It was also at this time that my Mother on listening to a radio show on stereotypical role-modelling dragged Tim and me inside from chopping wood and got us to vacuum and clean – not with a mop but on hands and knees.

Also we were to cook once a week. This particular chore I liked, although I don't know if the others enjoying my culinary jaunts as much as me. (Thanks, Mum).

### *Abingdon*

Working for an English firm meant we got to go to England. The first time I was quite young and only remembered the smell of the fire-wood they burned at Robinswood. It was not until our second visit that we met the Kendall family and I immediately fell in love with our Aunt Janet. I thought she was the most beautiful aunt a boy could have.

Uncle John would look down at over the top of his glasses at the meal in front of him and declare "Oh squodgymuck again" and all the kids would laugh. This made me feel terrible as I loved anything that aunty Janet made and as much as she laughed along I could tell even at that age when someone was slightly hurt Maybe she wasn't, maybe it was me.

Uncle John had a very dry sense of humour, and although I didn't get it I was in awe pf him, as he was a doctor who liked boats.

The eldest Robert was quite serious and I felt we were something to be tolerated but not indulged. He also seemed to be very intelligent.

Jane, well Jane was like Caroline my sister (although she didn't roll her eyes at me). She spoke very poshly and was quite matter of fact, much like my sister.

This left the last two, Nicky and Jo. Nicky was exactly my age so there was a little rivalry, but it was in the polite style of the English which was "Oh haven't you heard of Charlie Pride" and then he would play 'Hey haven't you seen the most beautiful girl in the world" over and over. Tim and I thought it was the dumbest song we had ever heard. On our birthday we got the best cowboy outfits that a boy could have and lived the life of a cowboy if only for one day.

That brings me to Jo-Jo She was my favorite as she was everybody's. She only had to smile – which she did often – and you would get a feeling she was getting into your heart and lighting a light there, and

whatever you were feeling would be replaced by her infectious love for all people and all things. Jo's passing had such an effect on me that I can't imagine the grief the Kendall's suffered.

But I learnt then to ask myself what would she have wanted me to do and it's not to dwell for she is at peace It's the living that suffer and she would just want every-one to go on and keep her love alive in our hearts.

### *Robinswood, Banbury*

Apart from the smell of wood burning in the fire place, the magic was the garden and what a wonderful garden and it certainly rubbed off on me as I am never happier then when I have my hands in the soil it just feels like this is what we are meant to do Be caretakers of the planet also my first experience with the shovel was quickly realised so Tim and I would just takeoff it was a magical garden with secret paths huge trees lots of wonderful plants and flowers all with this exquisite earthy smell about it. Abba would call out "Where are you, My Boy," I think he couldn't remember my name, just as my father still can't. "Very good, My Boy" he would say in this deep nasally English tone to whatever it was we had done. He had this full head of white hair that made him look like a clean shaved Santa,

Gaggy on the other hand was very interested in us. She would talk and talk and everything was wonderful this and wonderful that she did have a habit of forgetting she had a pot of food on the stove only to discover it a few days later and serve it up. My father had developed what we called an "iron gut".

It was on my next visit when I accompanied my father to England to attend Gaggy's funereal that I was left to look after Abba as Dad had to go somewhere. I learnt it was an after the war/ depression thing that you didn't waste anything. For three days we lived on cucumber sandwiches left over from the funeral. I was toasting them in the end until Abba declared "Very well, my Boy, I can do a very good poached sole." He placed a plate of fish covered in milk onto a saucepan of boiling water. I couldn't see how the thing would cook but after three days of cucumber sandwiches it was heaven.

Abba to me was one of these men who are more interested in their own head than others. And, dare I say it, it has passed on to my father

Nick. The only difference is Dad tries to show interest in other people and as you can see he is a wonderful story teller, orator and comedian.

### *Queensland*

It's now 2007. I live in a funky house in a sugar cane town in Far North Queensland. My best friend is my ex partner Teri (female) and gardening is my favorite hobby. I share the house with my dog Zebity (magic roundabout) who is a Queensland red healer, a mix of dingo, kelpie, bullie etc. bred for chasing cattle although he doesn't work.

My house is always open to any of you who are reading this and want to come and see what paradise is like. The best time is between April and September, 26-27 deg and blue skies and there's always room. So book that ticket!!! and write to me at 11 Jack St Mossman 4873 AUSTRALIA. And don't worry the madness gene has been bred out of our extended family although it does explain some of the eccentricities (off center) of some of the members. My parting advice: remember to breathe.



11.9 Ben outside his house in Mossman, FNQ.

## 12 Roundup of great-grandchildren

### *Round 1: Australia vs USA*

Until 1990 procreation of great-grandchildren went on only in the USA, the Americans having established themselves in a clear lead with the arrival of Robin in 1989.



12.1 Left to right: Grace, Amy, Alec and Robin.

However, Caroline had married Geoffrey Shaw in 1983, and eventually they got the hang of it, Matilda being born in 1990. Tim Hudson levelled trans-Pacific score in 1992 by giving us Kaila, and Caroline put Australia briefly in the lead in 1993 by producing Henry.

The Americans equalised later the same year with the arrival of Alec, and regained the lead in 1998 by producing their trump card,



12.2 Matilda Shaw



12.3 Kaila Hudson



12.4 Henry Shaw

Grace, a position they have retained every since.

Interim score: USA 4 d. Australia 3.

*Round 2: Britain vs. the rest*

In Round 2 the Brits mounted a late challenge.

Ralph and Jane made the first move by generating Sophie, who has her future mapped out as an a writer.

They then passed the baton to Nick and Susie, who came home strongly with Isabella "Poppy". Poppy later accompanied them down the aisle, which must surely be good practice for future matches.

12.5 Sophie Doyle



And now there is Anastasia, alias Ana, Anna or Annie bringing the Brits into equal second place:

1	USA	4
2=	Australia	3
2=	Great Britain	3

Will this be the final score? Watch this space for the next breathtaking installment.



12.6 Isabella Kendall and, of course, Susie

And now it is over to you to write your true stories.

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