

A COLLECTION OF MEMORIES

(1904 - 1945)

by

WINNIE GWENDOLINE BROWNE

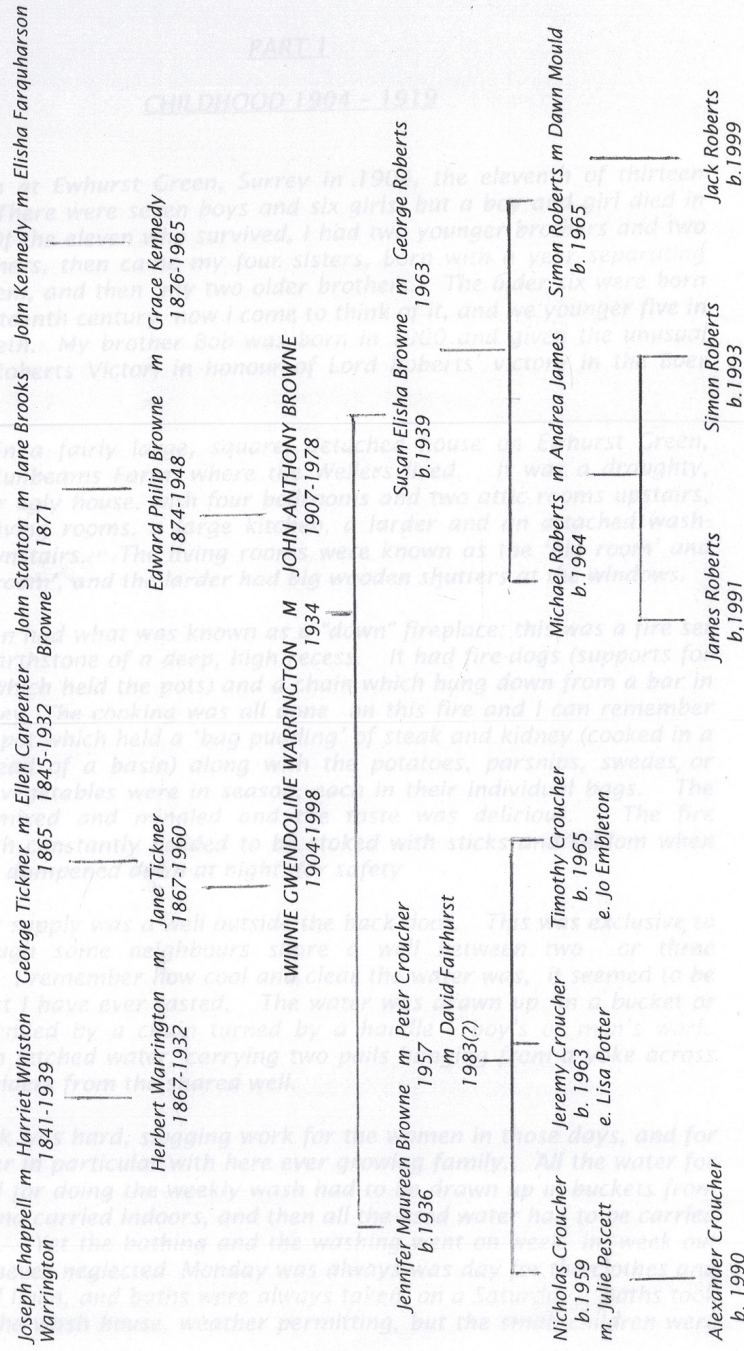
(nee Warrington)

Compiled from her Journals
and Notebooks written between the years
1956 and 1986

Born: 30 November 1904

Died: 14 April 1998

The family of WINNIE GWENDOLINE WARRINGTON



PART 1

CHILDHOOD 1904 - 1919

I was born at Ewhurst Green, Surrey in 1904, the eleventh of thirteen children. There were seven boys and six girls, but a boy and girl died in infancy. Of the eleven who survived, I had two younger brothers and two older brothers, then came my four sisters, born with a year separating each of them, and then my two older brothers. The older six were born in the nineteenth century, now I come to think of it, and we younger five in the twentieth. My brother Bob was born in 1900 and given the unusual name of Roberts Victor, in honour of Lord Roberts' victory in the Boer War.

We lived in a fairly large, square, detached house on Ewhurst Green, opposite Runbeams Farm, where the Wellers lived. It was a draughty, and rather ugly house, with four bedrooms and two attic rooms upstairs, and two living rooms, a large kitchen, a larder and an attached wash-house downstairs. The living rooms were known as the 'big room' and the 'little room', and the larder had big wooden shutters at the windows.

The kitchen had what was known as a "down" fireplace; this was a fire set on the hearthstone of a deep, high recess. It had fire-dogs (supports for the bars which held the pots) and a chain which hung down from a bar in the chimney. The cooking was all done on this fire and I can remember one large pot which held a 'bag pudding' of steak and kidney (cooked in a cloth instead of a basin) along with the potatoes, parsnips, swedes or whatever vegetables were in season, each in their individual bags. The flavours mixed and mingled and the taste was delicious. The fire underneath constantly needed to be stoked with sticks and seldom when out, being dampened down at night, for safety.

Our water supply was a well outside the back door. This was exclusive to us, although some neighbours share a well between two or three cottages. I remember how cool and clear the water was, it seemed to be the coldest I have ever tasted. The water was drawn up in a bucket or pail suspended by a chain turned by a handle - boy's or men's work. Some men fetched water, carrying two pails hanging from a yoke across their shoulders from the shared well.

Housework was hard, slogging work for the women in those days, and for my mother in particular with here ever growing family. All the water for baths and for doing the weekly wash had to be drawn up in buckets from the well and carried indoors, and then all the used water had to be carried out again. Yet the bathing and the washing went on week in, week out and was never neglected. Monday was always was day for the clothes and household linen, and baths were always taken on a Saturday. Baths took place in the wash house, weather permitting, but the small children were

bathed in the kitchen, in front of the fire! In about 1910 this down fire was replaced by a small range for cooking, and later an oven was added to the side; very modern!

The wash-house contained an enormous copper for heating the water, and a low, stone sink at one side. On was days one or other of our large family were wont to stoke the fire under the copper from a large bundle of wood chips. I have only to smell steam from clothes boiling and I am transported back to that wash house with its flagstone floor and the damp air. I can close my eyes and recall the smell of the soap powder; it came in a packet, costing tuppence. When I was older, I can remember mixing the starch – squiggley bits of chalky substance – with a pinch of B Borax to give a gloss to things when ironed. The starch was always made in “Auntie’s crock” – a glazed, earthenware bowl that had come from Aunt Jenner, a wonderful old relation on my mother’s side of the family. There was of course, no drainage; instead we had a ditch running through the garden, into which all the used water was thrown. This probably linked up with our neighbours’ ditches, but I’m not sure.

Down the garden was the “Dunnikin” or Privvy, in a shed well away from the house. This was fine from a hygienic point of view, but it was quite a trek after dark with a lantern. Sometimes, we would take the dog along and it sat outside and waited. The Privvy was a two-seater, wooden affair, with one large and one small hole over an earthen closet. In our early years I often sat there with one or other of my small brothers. Once a year my father lit his meerschaum pipe and dug out the earth closet. The contents were emptied into specially prepared trenches, and presumably used as fertiliser once it was well rotted. Nearly everyone lived like this in the village, before the First World War.

I think my earliest memory goes back to 1908, when I was nearly four years old and my youngest brother was born. I can distinctly remember hearing the cry of a new baby in the early hours of the morning. I slipped out of bed and went out onto the landing, where I met the local woman who had delivered the baby. She was carrying a very large, old-fashioned slop-bucket, and announced: “You have a baby brother.” For years I associated his arrival with the bucket, and thought he had been brought from somewhere in it.

The local midwife was not a trained nurse. For many women childbirth was a chore, repeated many times, and up until the First World War it was regarded as such a natural event that very little though or help was given. Often a local woman was willing to oblige as midwife, and neighbours helped out with the other children. Forms of hygiene were scarce; mothers contracted toxic fevers as a result, and there were few recoveries. Infant mortality was high, as babies often suffered respiratory diseases, for which little could be done. For our mother, though, cleanliness was

not just next to godliness, it was almost on a par with it. As a result, she survived her constant pregnancies and retained a healthy constitution. The two children she lost died as a result of childhood illnesses, not from a dangerous birth.

The baby who was born before me, in 1902, died at the age of fourteen months. Mother used to speak of her death with great sadness. Ruby Janet had died of a bout of bronchial pneumonia, following measles. Her death had cause to be remembered in the village, as she had not been baptised, so she could not be taken to the church for burial; this despite the fact that my parents were regular church-goers. She died in 1903. The minister of the Congregational Church stepped in, and a service was held in a room in our house. Feelings ran high in the village. A letter even appeared in The Times, and someone wrote a poem about the baby titled “Suffer Little Children.”

As a result of all this the family then attended the Congregational Chapel in the village for some time. I was baptised in this chapel. For some years I went to Sunday School there with some of my sisters. I can remember on one occasion, at the annual Christmas Party, standing on a chair and reciting “I once had a dear little doll, dears,” from the Water Babies; an irony, really, as I wasn’t to own a proper doll until I was nine years old! I can’t remember whether it was at this time, or a different one, but my sisters told me that at one of these Christmas Parties I had my eyes fixed on a beautiful fairy doll on the Christmas tree. Presents were always distributed before we went home and I received a flannelette nightdress and my sisters were given pinafores. We always received ‘useful’ presents, because, I guess, we were the underprivileged of the time! Until, that is, my sister Grace, aged about ten, bravely blurted out: “Why can’t we have a pretty present? My little sister would like a doll.” I was given a tiny rag doll with a painted, china head. I was thrilled and had it for years.

I can remember my youngest brother, Gerald, being very ill when he was about ten months old, following measles and the doctor had to be called. This only happened if there was a life and death struggle, and remembering what had happened to little Ruby Janet the doctor came every day. All four of we younger children caught the measles, and we were put in beds in the same room together. Along with the baby, there was my two year old brother Harold, myself aged four, and six year old Bill. We were kept in isolation and separated from the rest of the family by a large sheet hanging from the doorway, which had been soaked in Sanitas disinfectant. Anyone entering or leaving the room had to brush up against this. Measles was of course a killer disease in those days and there were few modern remedies, but strong disinfectant was a great standby to mother. She also used it liberally to combat the open drain that flowed along by the garden hedge.

I had the most dreadful ear-ache when I had measles. I can remember lying and watching the pattern on the ceiling made by the oil heater which was alight in the room, for warmth. We survived without antibiotics, then, and in later years. For my ear-ache I was given a poultice of camomile flowers. These flowers were gathered in the autumn and hung up in paper bags to dry, along the beam in the kitchen. When needed, the dried flowers were put into a flannel bag that was kept specially for this purpose, then the bag was tied at the top and placed in a basin. Boiling water was poured over the bag to produce an infusion which we breathed in, leaning over the basin, with a towel draped over our head to create a little tent. The bag was later removed from the basin, the water squeezed out and the resulting 'poultice' placed over the painful ear and tied on with a scarf.

Another popular remedy, this time for sore throats, was a baked potato. The potato was usually put inside a woollen sock or stocking which was then fastened round the throat; it was really quite comforting and the warmth seemed to help! Mother also used a horrible commercial chilli paste, which was rubbed on the outside of the face for toothache. Once on the skin it seemed to grow hotter and hotter. Possibly its efficacy lay in its powers of taking the mind off the toothache! As children we were regularly dosed to keep us healthy; every Saturday morning before breakfast, we were given liquorice powder, and in the spring we were also given nettle tea (which was supposed to be 'good for the blood'). These simple preparations seemed to work, because we were a fairly healthy family, although I can remember having chilblains.

Looking back to my childhood, I remember mostly sunny days. In my mind's eye I can see all the wild flowers; white billows of Hope daisies, fields carpeted with yellow buttercups, the scatterings of 'milkmaids' along the roadside and hedgerows, the swathes of scarlet poppies the cornfields. I remember standing in the coppice woods at the back of our house, gazing in wonder at the primroses at my feet - stretching out in a pale carpet wherever I turned. I can see the windflowers and the cuckoo flowers; the ground-nuts we rooted up and ate; the hazelnuts bursting out on the branches, and the rich, burnished chestnuts collected for our games of conkers. The seasons had their times for collecting. There were blackberries, crab-apples, whortleberries (which we locally called 'hurts') used for pies and jams, and the acorns collected by the bushel for the neighbours' pigs.

The farmers gave us sixpence a bushel for the acorns, but the neighbours would give in kind, come pig-killing. We went bird-nesting; wrong I know, now, but then it was just a seasonal part of our country childhood. We played games round the Green and wandered feely and safely in the woods and copses. We went collecting eggs around the farm and fetched

the cows home from the 'lags'. Polly, the leader, would be waiting at the gate, giving a soft "moo" when we approached; she led, the others followed her home.

We spent many happy days at "Runbeams Farm", with the Weller family, helping, or hindering, or just playing. I shall never forget the thrill of wheeling their baby out in its pram, when I was ten, and then sitting on the doorstep eating delicious homemade cake. Most important of all, being given a sixpence, if lucky, which was immediately handed over to mother, who of course, never had enough money.

Oddly enough I cannot remember the dark patches in my early childhood. There must have been some. Father was sometimes out of work, and there was no dole, no official help, no nothing, but somehow we got by. I do not recall being hungry, but there were times when we could have done with a good deal more! We had a garden, but father was no gardener, so not much was grown in it. However, there was a vegetable patch in which we grew mostly potatoes, but also other root vegetables, and sometimes greens in season. He gardened mostly of necessity, urged on by Mother who came from generations of country stock and for whom self-sufficiency was a way of life. I suppose childhood was grim for some before the First World War, not that we children realised this at the time. Children seem to accept things as they are, not knowing any different: we had a happy home life and loving parents and these are greater than riches for a child.

Despite all these happy memories, when I look back to my childhood I seemed always to be working in some capacity or other, either in the house or for people in the village. My four sisters and my two eldest brothers had left home by the time I was eight. As the only girl, sandwiched between two older and two younger brothers, many of the chores seemed to fall to me. When we were older, I used to say to my sisters that at least they had each other to share the chores with, but I had to do them on my own. They retorted that there were thirteen in their day, whereas it was down to seven by the time I was involved.

We five younger ones were close to each other and I inevitably ended up as a tomboy, playing cricket and racing about on the village green.

My mother believed in strict discipline and was a Victorian in many ways. We were taught the difference between right and wrong, and that hard work and honesty were sure to triumph. She was a woman of strong character in many ways, and enjoyed good, sturdy, country health, and followed a clear, simple, Christian faith. She was immensely practical and had a hard life, yet lived to be ninety two. She reared eleven children and always had to struggle to make ends meet. She adored my

father, and always felt she had married a bit above herself, as he was an educated man.

Born in 1867, brought up in the hard times of Victorian England, and knowing the difficulties and vagaries of country life, Mother once told me that the only way to ensure that her growing children got decent food was to put them to 'good' Service. This invariably meant the Aristocracy, or members of the Government, many of whom had country estates in Surrey And Sussex. Quite what my father felt about this, I never knew. He came from a family that had servants, but his father lived recklessly, lost his money and died leaving debts. His mother, my grandmother, apparently wrote from America when my eldest sister went to work: "I never thought the day would come when one of my grandchildren would enter Service." My practical mother had no time for such fine sentiments, and continued to strive to find 'good' places for her daughters when the time came.

My father came from a middle-class family in Cheshire. As a young man he had begun to train as an architect, but his father died suddenly, leaving debts and a family of relatively young children. (Father was the second eldest.) My grandmother's brother paid for her and the younger children to go to America, but my father stayed in Broadstairs. It was there that he met my mother, who was working as a children's nanny.

After Father had to give up his architectural studies, he trained as a carpenter and cabinet maker, becoming a very good craftsman. His wages were five pence (5d) an hour. The oak choir stalls he made for the village church are there to this day. He worked from a workshop in Cranleigh, to which he walked, there and back daily, for years; a distance of four miles each way. I can remember in later years, how he used to draw up architectural plans for people, but he did not charge for the service, because he had not qualified.

Life must have been traumatic for him at first, and he must have suffered quite a bit when he first came to Ewhurst. Folk were snobbish, then. Labour was cheap, and often treated cheaply. He had been used to playing all kind of sports; he had belonged to a rowing club and had enjoyed a social life. He found the southern people very different from those in the Midlands. They seemed to him to be suspicious of those they felt were superior to themselves, and of necessity servile to those in authority. However, he adapted and always seemed content. He managed to get into the Cricket Team, which had previously been the preserve of the sons of farmers and professional people, and he was later to become Captain several times. His name is still on the record books, as he was a fine player.

Father also had a fine bass voice and joined the Church choir and the Village Choral Society. I can remember him singing in village concerts, and also setting off in a horse-drawn charabanc to the Leith Hill Festival – and winning prizes! My mother, all her life, was to admire him tremendously. He, in turn, sometimes seemed jealous of her contact with anyone outside the family. This I never quite understood, but I feel now, they were an ideal match for each other

I remember my father chiefly for his gentleness and loving nature towards his children. He never, ever, became irritable or raised a hand to we children, and my strongest memories are of him singing to us, or reading aloud to us in the lamplit evenings, whilst Mother darned or mended the never ending pile of clothes. Father read a lot; he had bound copies of the Boys' Own Newspaper from his childhood in the 1870's. He also read stories by Dickens and Jules Verne, or heroic tales of the Boer War, but I most vividly remember his reading of The Last of the Mohicans. On Sunday the Bible was read.

The story goes that the only time Father struck one of his children was when Phil – the second eldest – took Father's flute to school, to show his friends. This was before my time, but Father's anger was mainly because of the deceit in which Phil took the flute apart and secreted it in pieces under his jacket. Possibly it was also because the flute was one of the few things of value Father possessed and was a link with old times long gone. Phil subsequently played the piccolo: I can remember them both practising by the light of the candle. Phil later belonged to the village Brass and Reed band.

My father was often chided by Mother for not keeping up to date with the boot-mending. I think he was a dreamer, perhaps a fatalist, for once he discovered he was merely expected to provide the basics for his growing family he just went daily to work. Politically he favoured Liberalism, and later, Socialism, neither of which was to do much for him in his lifetime. As a family we had good standards and good manners were expected at all times. Father always said: "Civility, not Servility." Once, I was told off by the vicar's daughter for not curtseying when I spoke to her. When next my father and I met her, he said: "My daughters dip their skirts in the dust for no-one, save Royalty" – raised his hat, said "Good morning" and passed by.

Looking back, we were poor, but as children do, we accepted it as a way of life; for thousands like ourselves, it was. I realise now what marvellous parents we had. There were in those days no hand-outs, no school dinners, not free milk, no family allowances, just their own ordinary decent standards, a fierce pride, and hard work.

We often referred to an old relation of ours, - Jenner. Mary Ann Jenner was in fact my mother's aunt, and had died before I was born, but such was her fame within the family that she remained an ever present factor in our lives. My older sisters could remember her. She was a seamstress and carried a little chain-stitch sewing machine from house to house, where she made anything from loose covers to men's suits. She also acted as midwife to many of the local women, including my mother, and having ushered in the new generation she would also perform the last offices of the departed.

She seemed possessed of a wide range of knowledge and a deep fount of common sense. She taught my mother a great deal and probably passed on ways and ideas that had stood the test of time. In all events, we were lucky as a large family to have the combined good fortune of robust constitutions, a hardworking mother and sensible advice from this wise old lady. Her workbox remains in the family. My mother gave it to me and I passed it on to the eldest daughter of my eldest sister. It still contains the little ivory spool of cotton with which Aunt Jenner sewed back the top of brother Phil's finger when he chopped it off while cutting up kindling wood!

I remember our doctor; a great favourite. He was called Doctor Napper and made his house calls riding on horseback. If he called at our house, one of the boys would be sent outside to hold the horse's head until it was time for the doctor to leave. Towards the end of his time in practice he was driven in a smart gig by a coachman. The doctor also rode to hounds, which sometimes met on Ewhurst Green. The charge for a visit was two shillings and sixpence (2/6d) and he was only called if life was in danger. He and many others were known to give their time and skills free, if there was poverty and need.

In those far off days there were no buses, no telephones, no tarmac on the roads and indeed no cars to need the tarmac. I remember the excitement of seeing my first car; it was a mustard yellow colour and seemed to roar up the road towards the village at a terrifying speed, with smoke billowing out at the back and all the local children racing along behind, laughing and shouting in excitement. We waved it out of sight and marvelled amongst ourselves at its turn of speed - surely, at least fifteen miles an hour! There were no postmen in those days, only mailmen. Our mailman used to sit high up in a horse drawn van, and wore a hat which seemed to cover his face and go right down over the back of his neck. He used to empty the mail boxes, and later we had a mailman who did his rounds on foot until he was given a bicycle. This one went off to the First World War - "to bring back the Kaiser's moustache," but he never returned. Like most men of the village who went to the 1914-1918 war, he stayed in Flander's Field.

My brothers and sisters attended the village school, at the top of the Mount, opposite the church, but I went to a little private school. The village school had about 85-100 children in total. The rooms were heated by a stove in the middle of the room and the children sat at double desks. In my brothers' and sisters' day there was a schoolmaster and two schoolmistresses. I envied the children who went there, and felt I was missing something by not going. I had a close friend there; we were to remain friends until she died, aged eighty four. She married at twenty one - rather, I feel, to gain the family and security she had previously lacked, having been fostered from birth. She did not really know her parents, but was visited by someone (probably from a legal firm) every year until she was fourteen and left school to go to work. I think she discovered enough to know that it was a story common enough in 1903; she was the illegitimate child of the 'gentleman' of the house and some poor luckless servant girl.

In the village school the schoolmaster's word was law. Discipline was strict and learning rigid. Children stayed at school until they were fourteen at the latest, but my brothers passed the Labour Exam at thirteen, so left to go to work. None of my siblings did brilliantly, though they were all intelligent and hardworking. Had there been the opportunity I am sure they would have done well; as it was, they all carried out whatever work they found themselves in, to the best of their ability. They always received good character reports, and were respected for their honesty and thoroughness.

I attended a little private school at Hazelbank, in the village, run by a Miss Annie Wells, who sometimes had the help of her friend. Miss Wells was, I suppose a relic of the Victorian Era, and her school was run on the lines of a Dame School. The class consisted of about twelve children of all ages and abilities, and was held in the front bedroom of a cottage in the village. Why I was sent there, and not to the village school, I have no idea. Boys and girls were together, but the different ages were taught individually. Miss Wells taught us everything she knew, and in retrospect I feel she was quite a clever woman of her time.

For sixpence or eight pence a week (6d or 8d) we were taught the basic Three R's, History, Geography, Botany, Music and Sewing. We used slates and copy books, and sat on benches with our arms behind our backs to chant our tables and spellings. We sang to the accompaniment of an 'American Organ' - this was a harmonium - and some of us who wanted, were taught to play the instrument. I can remember at the end of the day, playing for our closing prayers: "We are but little children weak," and "Do no sinful action". As many of us were not tall enough to reach the pedals which activated the bellows, the harmonium was not always harmonious, wailing up and down between spasmodic bursts of pedalling, or sometimes someone else would kneel on the floor and work the pedal-bellows by hand. This often led to giggles, mistakes and a brisk telling off!

We learnt our lessons parrot-fashion: for example, in music we chanted: "Crotchet-quaver-demi- semi-quaver-minim", but to this day I don't know what they signified. Tables were chanted on Friday afternoons and spellings followed the same routines. I can even remember learning the countries of the Empire and the capital cities of Europe in the same way. Most of my generation remember these basics for life. When the Great War began in 1914 we were reduced to using scraps of paper for lessons, because paper was in such short supply. We made numerous 'comforts' for the troops; we knitted scarves, hats, socks, etc. Miss Wells spent most of her teaching time with a long white 'operation' sock dangling under her arm as knitting needles clicked and clacked away. We had to put our names on items, to say who had made them, and once my eldest brother, Fred, received a pair I had knitted. I don't think the two socks were a perfect match., but he was thrilled to have such a surprise!

Life was grim for most working people; the houses were draughty and sometimes damp, they had no drains or light, except lamps or candles. Maybe it seems romantic now, but it was bad for the eyesight. There seemed to be many very old people around when I was a child, who walked with sticks or crutches and had knobbly, swollen, arthritic hands. They looked incredibly old, but I suppose this was because they dressed the part, with bonnets and shawls, or lace caps in the house, and elastic-sided boots. Many of the old men wore traditional smocks. Middle class men wore frock coats and everyone wore hats.

There was one old lady who sold sweets from the front room of her cottage. She was about eighty and had no teeth; her wispy grey hair was scraped back into a small bun at the back of her head and held in place by a chenille net. She always wore a little white apron the top of her head. Her room had a flagstone floor with a rag mat in front of the fire. The fire was on the bricks with fire dogs at the side to support the pots and pans. In front of the fire was a settle, a straight backed, upright seat with a high back and semi-circular in shape. It was the draught-proof at least. Beside the fire, she kept a goose wing to sweep the ashes together, mostly wood ash. This old lady was known as 'Dame Luff'. She had very poor feet and arthritic hands with misshapen joints, yet she lived to the great age of ninety three. There seemed to be many old ladies in the village called 'Dame'. The old men were called 'Maas' which was short for Master.

Dame Luff sold sweets and chocolate and ginger beer. A twist of newspaper with a ha'peth of raspberry drops was a thrill. We could seldom rise to a bar of chocolate, which was a penny! The sweets were kept on an old oak dresser, and weighed out on a swinging brass balance-scale. The room also had several rush bottom chairs and a large grandfather clock. This clock was trusted to always give the correct time

and many neighbours put their own clocks right by it. There were many requests to Dame Luff of: "Please could you tell us the time?"

When Dame Luff's husband died, I was taken upstairs to see him. I seem to remember it was an old custom; something to do with releasing his soul through the touch of an innocent. I must have been about five years old at the time, and was petrified when invited to view him, but I was also a little curious to see this dead person. He was laid out on the four poster bed and I was lifted up to kiss him on the forehead. After getting over the shock of seeing my first dead human being I became quite boastful about it to my friends. Later we children spent some time peeping from behind the hedge to glimpse the cortege leaving the house. The coffin was pushed on a bier all the way to the church, with the mourners following on foot; all, bar the old Dame who rode in a 'fly' - a pony trap.

I once remember going with a large bottle to the doctor for Dame Luff, to fetch her medicine from the surgery in the village. It was filled with some concoction and when I brought it to her she gave me a bag of sweets.

I started to earn a little money at about the age of eleven, usually by 'helping out' someone in the village. I seemed to spend a lot of time keeping old ladies company, often by sleeping in the house with them if they were alone, or acting as an agile messenger if somebody was ill. I stayed at one old lady's house - a Mrs. William Weller of Upper House - and her housekeeper sent me out at 2.30 am one very dark, wet morning to fetch help when the old lady was taken ill. I had to go and wake her son at the farm at the bottom of the Green. I had to put on wooden-soled pattens to keep my feet dry in the wet and muddy paths, and I carried a lighted candle. It was quite an effort to protect the spluttering candle with my hand as I walked, because I didn't want it to go out, leaving me in the dark. Somehow I got there and delivered my message, then had the comfort of an adult with me on my return.

Another old lady I kept company was housekeeper to an old man of ninety eight who was supposed to have been injured in the head by a cannon ball during the Indian Mutiny. I was terrified of him, or rather, by the idea of him, for I only ever saw him through a crack in the bedroom door. He looked terribly gaunt and wore a night cap on his head, so I never knew the truth of the head wound.

In the village we had a baker's shop, a butcher's shop and a general store called 'Surrey Trading'. The store sold just about everything; bread, candles, paraffin, boots, tea, coffee, flannelette, unbleached calico and so on. It was also a sub post office and the coal merchants. It was run by a family of two brothers and two sisters, whose surname was Ede. The butcher's shop had its own slaughterhouse where the beef cattle were

pole-axed. We once tried to look under the door, but thankfully nothing was happening and we were caught and chased away.

I can remember pigs being killed on the Green, by a man known as 'Pig-killer' Rose. Many cottagers had their own pigs, and he visited those cottages that had pig-sties and killed the pigs on the spot. A big copper would be set up on bricks on the village green and a fire lit underneath. Then it would be filled with water. What an awful squealing and carry on there would be. Mind you any country person will tell you what a noise pigs make if you try to pick them up or move them. There was no gratuitous cruelty, it was just the way things were in those days, and no animal rights protesters around. 'Pig-killer' Rose was quick and efficient and the water was used for cleaning up afterwards. We came in for pig's liver and chittlings, as we took our vegetable and house scraps for swill.

I can also remember the cider press at work in the autumn, as the Stemp family, who lived nearby, made their own cider. It was consumed soon after, and my father used to say it was pretty raw and sharp; they usually invited him to sample it, but he wasn't too impressed.

At this time we had a lovely collie bitch, called Fluff. We adored her. She used to help brother Bill pull the truck when he fetched the coal from the village, before school. She came to a tragic and untimely end by being run over by the village's only taxi. I can still remember the awful anguish of seeing her lifeless body. We had numerous small pets, but she was the best.

I do not remember feeling unhappy in my childhood; if we lacked material comforts we scarcely noticed, because everyone else also seemed to lack them. The differences in families was more a matter of standards. By dint of sheer hard work my mother kept us and our home spotless. Courtesy, high morals and good manners were instilled in us from the cradle and we all went regularly to church.

I remember once when my sister Gertrude was home from London, we were all waiting for her in the hall before setting off to church. She appeared at the top of the stairs, wearing the very latest in fashion - a 'hobble' skirt, so named because it was so straight and tight the wearer could do no more than hobble along. I thought she looked marvellously sophisticated, but Mother gave a horrified gasp and Father said sternly: "Gertrude, that is not suitable attire for church. Go and change at once." Gertrude, the most daring of all my siblings, huffed and glowered, but still she went and changed, joining us rather sulkily as our family crocodile set off up the lane. She was probably in her mid-twenties at the time!

Mother had her own term for families who did not keep good standards: they were 'feckless'. Several such families had fewer children and the father earned as much, if not more than ours did, but they still seemed to slip down to a level of poverty more akin to the cities than to country

living. Usually, this was a result of the father drinking and the mother being too downtrodden to cope. Even so, my own mother would be the first to try and help if things became too awful for them, but she still maintained they were feckless. In those days, if the mother could not cope. The whole family suffered; it was the women who held things together.

Before the First World War, I can remember my father reading out to us the news of Captain Scott's failed expedition to the Antarctic. Father was one of the few in our neighbourhood who took a newspaper and many of the neighbours would come round to hear certain important news events. I can also remember Father reading the account of the sinking of the 'Titanic', and how upset people seemed to be.

My parents used to talk about the "Old Queen" by whom I presumed them to mean Queen Victoria. I was born in the reign of King Edward VII, but an only remember wearing a black arm band when he died. I remember the Coronation of King George V better. There is a photograph somewhere of all we village children on the Mount in Ewhurst. After it was taken, we all fell in to lines and marched behind the village band to Malquoits, where we had tea in the barn at High Elsen. The people from the next village came in farm wagons, to join us, but we children were not always kind to theirs. We were very insular in those days and treated outsiders as people from another planet. We used to call them 'Ellen's Greeners' and thought nothing of shouting cheeky rhymes at them. Mind you they felt exactly the same about us and were well capable of holding their own.

There seemed to be nowhere beyond the village; it was the boundary of my existence. Events in our young lives were few, and those we had seemed to centre around the Church and Sunday School. We also celebrated Empire Day and danced around the maypole.

Another part of country life was Fox-Hunting. The hounds would meet on our village green twice a year. The Master and the Huntsmen looked marvellous in their red coats - which of course were always called Hunting Pink; I've never understood why - and the local farmers made up a large part of the hunt. My young brothers and I once saw a 'kill' (the only time we saw it), when the fox ran to earth under the granary of the farm opposite. It was finally hauled out by the huntsman and quickly dispatched with a long knife. The 'brush' was given to a lady. My brothers and I were rather upset by this 'kill'. Up till then it had all seemed a wonderful spectacle and I really don't think we'd ever thought about its purpose. However, foxes used to do a lot of damage locally and I

can remember being equally upset seeing the mutilated chickens in the fields where they roamed free, after 'Reynard' had passed by.

Far worse than fox-hunting to me, seemed the Stag Hunt, though the stag was never killed. The stag was brought to the village in a horse-drawn horsebox. It was released and the hounds held in check to give it a head start. The stag raced across the field and the hunt gave chase. It seemed to be chased for miles, and then when tired it was caught, returned to the horsebox and taken back to the herd.

There were great pheasant shoots at the local estates. My older brothers used to act as beaters and were paid a shilling, given a good lunch and at the end of the day they received a rabbit. It was a long day, standing around in wet grass and muddy fields - often in cold winds - for there were no wellingtons or anoraks then, but the rabbits were good, nourishing food for a large family.

Home life was grim really, but I don't remember realising it at the time. Mother had a great leaning towards sons, and the Victorian idea of females being of less value than males came through very strongly in her attitude. She expected the daughters to do a great deal in the house once they were eight or nine years old. Perhaps she also thought girls were more capable than boys, as well!

I was expected to cope with an enormous slop pail in the bedrooms, as we all had chamber pots that all had to be emptied. Mother however, carried the pail downstairs! Each day, there were great pots of potatoes to be peeled or scraped, according to the season. Steel knives had to be cleaned; we used some kind of block which was scraped to produce powder, then we mixed it with a dash of vinegar and rubbed this on the knife blades with a cork. Also, in the old house, there was the front step to hearthstone. This was done with a piece of chalky-like stone which whitened the step and the hearth. Children were really regarded as cheap labour, but I suppose they had to be, in the days of large families.

Our village was surrounded by the large country estates of the nobility, and the country houses of the gentry. At one time the Home Secretary graced our congregation at church, and to see his party arrive on a Sunday morning was quite something. He, his family and any house guests arrived in several horse-drawn carriages. On other occasions, when the servants came they arrived in a large, open, horse-drawn brake. We regarded the house parties with a certain awe, as the guests and particularly the ladies, wore the latest fashions and seemed to us like something from a storybook.

Our Rector was called The Rev. Clark-Kennedy and he was a kindly person, if a little distant in his manner. His wife was a tall, regal woman, as were

her daughters, and her son became quite well known doctor in London; one of the daughters also became a respected doctor. We called the Rector's children Miss Letitia, Miss Gladys and Miss Bertha and the son Mr. Archibald.

The Rector's daughters were good to the children of the parish. They put on plays in the village, such as *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Pied Piper* and *Snow White*. Some of us were trained to dance in a sort of balletic fashion, and thundered enthusiastically around the stage in some of the scenes. The stage in this village hall was lit by footlights made of a row of small oil lamps; there was also some kind of gauze safety curtain between us on the stage and the audience beyond. Just how 'safe' this was I shudder to think.

The Rector helped to form the first boy scout troop in the village. My brothers Bob and Bill joined and later the two younger brothers joined. It brought great interest to the village boys, opening up new worlds to them. They were taught all kinds of skills and went camping around the district, pushing a 'trek' cart for miles which was loaded with their gear. Later, the Girl Guides was formed, but I never became one, mainly because I was nearly fourteen and expected to go out to work. Mother, despite her incredibly strong personality, did not really believe in the emancipation of women. However, from the age of eleven I did a paper round - such a thrill, earning a shilling a week, which was handed over to Mother!

Events in our young lives were few, but we did go to Guildford at Christmas time. A trip to Guildford meant a walk to Cranleigh, to the station. This was a distance of about three and a half miles each way. We then caught the train to Guildford. I can remember the thrill of walking down from Guildford station to the High Street. The first conscious smell was that of the Friary Brewery - a heady, cloying mixture of hops, barley and yeast which seemed to hang over the whole town.

There was a Penny Bazaar in the High Street and we would rush excitedly to look at the lead soldiers, and wax dolls with paper dresses, both of which were objects of desire to young eyes; there were marbles and whipping tops and glass beads which could be threaded on strings; it was like an Aladdin's cave to us.

We would look around the shops and then have the really special treat of something to eat in Brett's Restaurant, where we sat at a long table, shared with other people. We had nothing more exciting than bread and butter, cake and tea, but although our money didn't run to luxuries, this meal seemed to taste like no other in its delights of novelty. Then there was the thrill of coming home again, on the train. Father would meet us at the railway station and we would walk home in the dark, my small brothers taking turns to ride on Father's shoulders.

I remember Mother, Father, Bob and Bill going to church on Sunday evenings. We three smaller ones, Harold, Gerald and I, were left at home, with the oil lamp put in a place of safety. We would be far more worried about what mother would say than about any danger in playing about, so there was never a mishap!

Later, on summer evenings, we all went to church and then for a pleasant evening stroll afterwards, enjoying the sights and sounds of a summer dusk. Whilst in church I can call to mind the shrill cry of the swifts through the open door as they winged and darted back and forth. There was no traffic then to disturb the peace of the village. As they became old enough, my brothers Bob, Bill, Harold and Gerald sang in the choir with my father.

The thing I missed most in my childhood was books to read. I had long exhausted the ones my father had from his boyhood, though I read and re-read those, - often under the bed clothes with a candle, when I should have been asleep. It was a miracle we did not all burn in our beds! There were no village or school libraries in those days and few comics, except 'Chips' and 'Comic Cuts' which I loved to get hold of. We sometimes had 'The Boys' Own Paper', and later 'The Children's Newspaper'.

My first doll was given to me by my older sister, Daisy. She was working away from home as an under nurse to a family who lived partly in Ireland and partly in England, at that time. The doll could stand alone and close and open its eyes; I was thrilled, as I had never owned anything so beautiful before. I was about nine years old, but, during the War, I discovered when its hair came off that it was made in Germany. Such were our feelings at that time, I wouldn't play with it again, and gave it away to a small girl living nearby. She apparently did not share such fine sentiments!

The more I think about my childhood, the more I wonder why the masses were neglected and wasted. Did they really feel we were worthless, fit only for menial work? There was a chronic lack of education, no health care; it was such a squandering of abilities and talent.

The years must have passed quickly. I can honestly say I had no knowledge of any other part of the world, other than close neighbouring areas, so it was a great thrill when I first saw the sea, at the age of eleven. By then we were a year into the Great War, and it was 1915. I was taken to Bognor Regis by Mr and Mrs Weller, to help look after their three little children, but it was also a holiday for me in many ways. We travelled by train and I was amazed at the huge expanse of water that seemed to

stretch for ever; I developed a love and longing for the sea that has remained with me all my life. We stayed for two weeks, and although the war was raging, it did not seem to affect our stay at all.

I can vividly remember the first days of the war. There was an intensity and fervour of patriotism surging through the land. The first men and boys of the village to join up were all volunteers, my twenty year old brother Phil being one of them.

In September 1914, brother Phil and several other local men went to join up. A large recruiting sergeant, with a bunch of red, white and blue ribbons tied to his hat, stood on the Mount, loudly urging the young men to "fight for King and Country", and many rallied to the call. I suppose folk were carried away by waves of patriotism, even though in meant wounding, or death.

They were driven off in flower decorated cars, with people waving and cheering as though it was a party. The cars, of course, belonged to the local gentry, but taxis were also brought into use. The men were driven to Cranleigh station, where they entrained for Guildford Barracks and enlistment. Many of them joined the "queen's" or Royal West Surrey's, and many were never to return to the village; their graves lie outside other villages in France, or Belgium, or Italy.

My biggest surprise was seeing my father in tears. No doubt he knew enough to realise there was more to this than flag waving and 'licking the Hun'. My little brother prayed every night for his brothers and relations in "this drefful war-", little dreaming that he would himself be caught up in another dreadful conflict a mere two decades later.

The years of the Great War are a bit blurred in my mind. I was too young to grasp the full impact, and the action was too remote, at first, to have any immediacy of daily fear in my life, but I do remember seeing a German Zeppelin. It came over one moonlit night in 1916 and dropped two bombs on Guildford, near the River Wey. It looked like huge cigar and made a peculiar humming sound as it floated along above our heads. The grown-ups seemed even more excited than we children, but none of us appeared to realise the danger or threat it posed.

My two eldest brothers served throughout the war, and a third joined them later. Fred, the eldest, was in the Army Veterinary Corps, working mostly with wounded and sick horses and mules. He caught malaria in Salonica, which affected him throughout his life. My second brother, Phil, eventually joined the K.R.R.C. with a friend, in Winchester, and fought in the Battle of the Somme. Afterwards he transferred to the Royal Tank Corps, in which he held a Commission, ending the war as a Captain.

Before this, I can remember the two elder boys coming home on leave from the trenches with all their equipment, including rifles, mud and fleas!

They were both practised marksmen, having been members of the village rifle club. My third brother, Bob, was called up towards the end of the war and served in the Middlesex Regiment. He went with the Army of Occupation on the Rhine and stayed in Cologne until about 1920 or 1921.

Father, who was in the L.D.V. (Local Defence Volunteers), fought the war at home, mostly with our neighbour, Hans Ungrecht! They had many fairly friendly arguments and enjoyed the mental sparring this allowed. Hans Ungrecht was a Swiss gardener, and we children had been friends with his children - Ida, Hugo and Rudolph. However, when the war started with became certain that Mr Ungrecht's guttural accent meant that he must be a German spy, and we were horrid to the poor children for a while. We soon made friends again, when our ignorance was uncovered.

Their's was the first Christmas tree I had seen in someone's home. It was a fairylike affair, with baubles glinting in the soft light of dozens of tiny candles, and the faint scent of resin from the fir branches; I thought it was magical. We were invited to take tea with them and had some delicious little thin sugary pastries quite unlike anything I had tasted before. Mrs. Ungrecht was German and was so very good and kind to us all. I found myself wondering at this whole, strange, war set up.

I remember saying goodbye to Ida and her family after the war. It was a bitterly cold, wintry, January morning when they left for Switzerland. We wrote to each other for a while, but sadly Ida died aged seventeen from tuberculosis, as did several girls in our village.

During the war there was great excitement at home, caused by the visit of one of our cousins from America. He as serving with the United States Forces and was billeted at Seaford, in Sussex. He caused a great stir in the village because he had money to spend and in those times of rationing he seemed able to get food that we had not seen for a long time, such as meat, butter and jam. When he arrived, he brought us some wonderful presents, and he returned to the States in 1919 having not seen any fighting at all!

Food was scarce in the Great War. There was rationing but the rations were not good. I can remember the dreadful margarine, and vowing that when the war was over I would never eat marge again; it would be butter or nothing for me! I do not remember much about the actual current events at that time, although words like Mons, Marne and Messines, Ypres and the Somme were banded about; it was only later that I came to understand their importance. Likewise, the adults talked of Kaiser Bill, Little Willie, Hindenburg and Tirpitz, but it was only seeing these words in the newspaper that made me stop and think about them. We had The Chronicle newspaper during the week and The Reynolds News on Sundays; we heard of Asquith and Lloyd George, Kitchener and Earl Beatty, but despite Father reading news items aloud and discussing events we did not take in much detail.

Father couldn't stand Winston Churchill (which is odd, since I was born on Churchill's 30th birthday, and christened Winnie) - possibly because he did not seem to stay true to his Party. My father took a great interest in politics and was known to favour the Blue Men - the Liberals. He would talk at length of Lloyd George and even Gladstone.

Our American grandmother's remarks notwithstanding, my four older sisters were all in Service during the war. Then sister Gertrude - always a free spirit - left, to work as a conductress on the General Buses. With so many men away in the trenches, women were recruited to fill their places. Mother was furious. She thought this was degrading work for a young woman. She virtually refused to recognise her, until the daylight raids began on London and Gertrude was working in the midst of danger; then Mother relented and had her home for a break.

Daisy was a children's Nanny, to a family who lived part of the time in Ireland. She and the family travelled back to England across the Iris Sea, which had been mined, but she always said the raging storm which tossed them and their boat for nearly four hours was far more terrifying than any threat from under the water.

I left school in 1917, at the age of thirteen, to work in my uncle's bakehouse. This was Carpenter's Bakery, my maternal grandmother's family. It was a busy place. My older brother Bill was already working there and he and I would go out on the bread round together, with one of our cousins. I smell bread baking now, I can close my eyes and be transported back to Uncle Fred and the bakehouse.

The bread was baked in an old brick oven, actually on the bricks. To achieve this about three wood-faggots (large bundles of sticks) were placed inside the oven and set fire to, then the doors were closed. When the wood was reduced to embers the hot oven was sluiced out and the bread placed inside to cook. The loaves were placed on long wooden 'peels' which were pushed inside the oven and the loaves expertly slid off in to position. When the bread was cooked, the same procedure was followed in reverse. The bakehouse also boasted a steam oven, which had a coal fire at the side.

Bread was delivered for miles around. The local deliveries were in a horse drawn van, but further afield Ford motor vans were used. With so many men away at the war these vans were driven by women and girls. Although they were fairly easy to drive, they tended to break down in remote areas, and help had to be fetched. Once, brother Bill was out with one of the girl drivers and they turned the van over. They couldn't get out until a passer-by happened upon them and went and summoned help.

Our bread round took us through some of the loveliest scenery in Surrey. The lanes were narrow and winding, twisting in and out of farmland and copses, bordered either side by hedgerows and ditches. In Spring and Summer the roadsides were scattered with a profusion of wildflowers; the hedgerows teemed with small wildlife, yet over everything lay the quiet peacefulness of the countryside. In winter, if we were in the horse drawn van, we would wrap clean sacks around our shoulders and pack straw around our feet to keep out the cold on the exposed front seat. Holding the reins in our mittened fingers, we would often chew on one of the warm bread rolls as we trotted along.

Ewhurst lies in a fertile plain at the edge of wooded hillsides. One of our rounds took up into the steep little roads and scattered hamlets of Pitch Hill and the Hurtwood. One of these roads was called Horse-block Hollow, and got its name from the heavy blocks of wood that had to be put in front of the cart wheels in icy weather, to stop the horses and carts from sliding down the steep incline.

In the motor vans we used to travel through the Hurtwood to the village of Holmbury -St-Mary, delivering bread. There was a German prisoner of war camp there, and the prisoners worked in the local sawmill. Sometimes they had to be called out to give us a push-start when the van wouldn't go!

I can vividly remember Armistice Day, Monday 11th November 1918. My eighteen year old cousin, Helen, and I were delivering bread as usual. As we drove up the Mount we saw the husband of the Postmistress pinning a telegram to the door of the Post Office. It gave the news of the signing of the Armistice. We rushed back to tell everyone at the bakehouse, then went back to Surrey Trading to see what we could find in the shop to help us celebrate. We bought red, white and blue ribbons and tied them in bunches to the van, then drove on to Holmbury-St-Mary, giving the news to everybody we met on the way, until we reached the saw mill. Everybody was so excited, we shook hands with the German prisoners and one of them took out a mouth organ and began to play. My cousin and I danced with some of them in some kind of country dance-jig until we were all laughing and happy.

It was quite extraordinary, really, to think these men had so recently been our enemies. Now they just looked like the men and boys of our own villages. It was so exciting to think that hostilities had ceased, and my cousin and I sang all the way home. That evening there was a service of Thanksgiving in an absolutely packed village church, and the realisation that the whole hideous episode was at an end, began to dawn.

There was a dreadful 'flu epidemic at the end of the war. I seem to remember about ten people died in our village; six of them were from one

family. This family lived in a farm cottage at Coxland, set away from any neighbours. By the time news got around that there was 'flu at their cottage they were already very ill. My mother went to visit, taking soup and little comforts for them. She found the woman sitting on the doorstep, to ill to move, and with her dying baby in her arms. My father and other men rallied round, but it was mainly to arrange funerals. I remember their coffins being taken to the funeral on a farm wagon drawn by two cart horses. My mother became very ill with 'flu, but recovered - as she did from most ailments.

The end of the First World War brought with it many changes. The old way of life was departing, never to return, though the changes were slow to show themselves in our village. My eldest brother, Fred, married Amy in Stratford, East London. They came to live with us for a while until they had their own cottage two doors away. Their first baby was born in 191. This was my lovely niece, Joan, who was in later years to become my bridesmaid.

Also in 1919 my brother Bill and I were confirmed in Ewhurst Parish Church by the Bishop of Winchester, in whose diocese we were. (Ewhurst is now in Guildford Diocese). I remember he had a gammy leg - I don't remember what was wrong with it - and had to sit at the Chancel steps with his leg sticking out stiffly in front of him. Bill and I knelt either side of the Bishop's protruding leg to receive his blessing, and I remember my main thought was not to trip over the leg when we stood up to move.

With my 'confirmation' into the adult church I also moved into the reality of the adult world of work. My happy-go-lucky days at the bakery came to an end. Some of the men returning from the war needed to reclaim their jobs, and for me there seemed only one route ahead: I was to go into service.

PART 2

IN SERVICE 1919-1934

It was January 1919 when my mother decided I must go into Domestic Service. I was fourteen years old and still had two younger brothers at home, Harold aged twelve years and Gerald aged ten years. It seemed that several local people were looking for a young servant to train. I was destined to go to a house called Spange Hawe, on the outskirts of the village, where my Aunt Emmie was in charge. Aunt Emmie was my mother's youngest sister and was housekeeper at this house. (Incidentally, my aunt married later in life, I think she was about forty, and was widowed after about ten years. She lived to be 102 years of age - in fact she died just before her one hundred and second birthday.)

Apart from a cook, there were no other servants in the house so I became a 'tweeny' - a between maid, who helped both in the kitchen and upstairs. I remember when I first went there to live I was thrilled with the bathroom, but we servants were not allowed to use it. Our baths were taken in an enamelled iron bath in my aunt's room on a Saturday night. The water had to be carried in from the bathroom in large enamel jugs, and afterwards the used water was emptied down the W.C. This was, however, still a modern touch compared to home! I had my own small bedroom and was supposed to be in bed by 9 o'clock. Of course, there was no electricity or gas, so we had oil lamps and candlesticks.

I was allowed access to the books in the house, which was wonderful, but I remember reading "The Woman Thou Gavest" by Hall Caine, and the daughter of the house, who was about thirty five at the time, sneaked it away and wouldn't let me read it. She had previously been my Sunday School teacher and also a Guide Captain, and she obviously felt the book was unsuitable. During the Great War she had worked with the Red Cross and was also a V.A.D. She had also ridden a motorbike, which was very daring and modern even in war time. I believe she subsequently became a missionary somewhere abroad.

Despite all these novelties, I hated working there. The mistress of the house was an elderly lady, very Victorian in outlook. I was restricted in what I was allowed to do: there were no other young people around, and with my employer's set ideas and forbidding outlook there was little or no fun. Once a week I had half a day off - which invariably meant from after lunch and I had to be back by 9 o'clock. On alternate Sunday I had the afternoon off. I used to read in bed, by candlelight, and was severely reprimanded for this very innocent pastime. Once a fortnight I was allowed to go to church, which at that time I was not particularly interested in, but it was a change of scene and I sometimes saw my

friends. I was in bed by 9 o'clock most nights. After the freedom of my previous life I found it difficult and hateful, having to fit in with all these 'old' people.

There was no wireless in those days and the only escape was to read I suppose in her own way Mrs Fowler was kind to me. She certainly let me read the books from her shelves, but she guided me in what I should read. I am very grateful to her for introducing me to many more of the Classics when my real inclination was to read love stories. I suppose it was form of escapism from my surroundings, from the boredom of having nobody of my own age to talk to, and from my feelings of servitude. My mother and her side of the family seemed to have no problem with this, but perhaps I had inherited some rogue genes from my father!

I remember I had to help wait at table, and thought it was rather stupid that sometimes there were two of us waiting on only one woman, but of course, I was being trained in the process. I loved the beauty of the glass and silver, the white damask tablecloths and napkins, and the variety of the food, which seemed good, despite the ongoing rationing. In a way I was fortunate in that I worked in a pleasant house among lovely things. There was a beautiful garden, good food and a comfortable bed, but I was young and impatient and wanted to see and do things beyond this backwater. I begged my mother to let me leave, but so soon after the war there was very little for girls to do at that time. There were highlights; the grandsons used to come and visit from Dartmouth. Their father was a Naval Officer who lectured at the Naval College. They were younger than me and I was able to play cricket with them and enjoyed being with them.

During my time there, the Peace celebrations were held. There was to be a big bonfire and fireworks on Pitch Hill but it rained, so the fireworks had to be held another evening. I was allowed to go to the Bonfire, as my father was helping to run it. I went with my friend Madge and we met two local lads. One was in the R.A.M.C. and the other was in the Navy. They treated us to a port and lemon - something neither of us had ever tasted before. I remember we both felt rather sick, and we finally went home at 11.30 p.m. Aunt Em was outraged at the 'loose' behaviour and I was forbidden to go to the fireworks when they were finally put on, so I climbed out on to the roof and watched from there. They were let off in the village, so I was able to see them quite well.

Mrs Fowler was elderly, about eighty five, and very finicky. Her bed was never made well enough for her liking. She had linen sheets and pillowslips and once made me make her bed three times, because there was a wrinkle in the under-sheet. She told me that Queen Victoria had her sheets stitched to the bed to avoid wrinkles in the sheet. I stifled the urge to retort that she wasn't Queen Victoria, but probably just looked sullen.

There was a Queen Anne silver tea pot that had to be wrapped and carried upstairs each evening, and placed under my aunt's bed for safety. One night, I was dawdling up the stairs, trying to read a book in one hand and carrying a candle and the tea pot in the other, when I dropped the tea pot. It bumped down from step to step while I struggled to catch up with it, but sadly despite its wrapping, the spout was damaged. This caused a terrible rumpus.

My aunt had a bicycle, which I longed to ride. I only managed it once, when I was sent to the Post Office with an important letter one afternoon. Of course I couldn't resist going on a bit further; it was such a lovely feeling of freedom, bowling along on a bike on traffic free roads.

Having been confirmed by Bishop Talbot, I took my first Communion at Easter 1919. This is mainly imprinted on my mind because I had raging toothache. I remember walking down to the church in the village for the 7 a.m. service, with my face jarring to every footstep. I had to wait for my first month's wages of one pound and my next half day off to walk to the dentist in Cranleigh. There I paid Mr Peafield 5s (five shillings) for a tooth extraction.

I then had to pay a further five shillings to Miss Fowler for the material she had provided for my uniforms. My mother had made them, using her own cotton fastenings and trimmings, and of course her time, effort and expertise, but that was not a consideration. To round off my outfit, Miss Fowler handed me some huge, white ex-V.A.D. aprons and a mob cap. This cap I hated. To me it was a badge of servitude and I left it lying around at every opportunity. I was constantly being told to wear my cap!

I became more and more frustrated, and longed to do something different, when suddenly it was announced we were going to Dartmouth for six weeks. There would be Aunt Em, Mrs Fowler and me. I refused to go. I could only imagine how restricted I would be, between them. There was a lot of argument, but I managed to persuade them that I should not go. The outcome was that I was to do some temporary work until their return.

I went to a house called Copse Hill, at Pitch Hill, to a Colonel and Mrs Cresswell. Mrs Cresswell was French and she was the Colonel's second wife. There were lots of grown up children from the first marriage, and a great coming and going the whole time as everyone tried to sort out their lives after the War. There seemed to be a lot of handsome officers everywhere, as the older daughters were married. It was an exciting atmosphere, full of life and vitality.

Colonel and Mrs Cresswell had a son, Michael, who was then about seven years old. He was his mother's pride and joy and a spoilt, if loveable, little boy. He had a governess, but sometimes I was left to amuse him. Having grown up with four brothers, I was used to boys, and I would play with him and his train set, which covered the floor of the schoolroom. If

crossed, he sometimes flew into a rage. On one occasion, I dared to argue some trivial point with him and he rammed a large wicker wastepaper basket down over my head and arms and left me! I finally ventured out into the corridor to find someone to remove it and the first person I met was the Colonel. I was terrified of him, but he removed the basket and yelled for his son, who was severely reprimanded and made to apologise to me. Michael grew up to be very clever, and a charming gentleman; he joined the Diplomatic Corps and became an Ambassador. I really enjoyed working there, although it was only for six weeks; then the Fowlers returned.

I flatly refused to go back to them, and was the cause of friction between my mother and Aunt Em. Also, Miss Fowler demanded fifteen shillings as the remainder of the money for my uniforms. I told her that my mother had found all the extras and spent time making them and refused to pay.

I then went, again on a temporary basis, to the house of a young Naval officer, who had been wounded in the leg in the War. His wife couldn't have been more than twenty two, and I soon realised she was pregnant, 'though at fifteen I wasn't supposed to know about such things. There was only me and an elderly woman who came in each day to cook, yet her family were Irish nobility of some note. It was a dreary place too, as it was in an isolated spot and there were few cars around. The only people I saw to talk to were the tradesmen who called. Food was still rationed and I was once severely told off by my employer, who accused me of eating their butter ration. As if I would: I was most indignant. But later, to justify being told off I did eat some: poetic justice, I felt! From that point onwards I insisted on keeping my own 3 oz. (ounce) ration separate from theirs.

I used to trudge down to my home on Ewhurst Green on my day off - half day - and my father walked me back at night. The Christmas of 1919 was the first I had spent away from home, and it was terrible. I can scarcely remember what I did or ate as I seemed to be working the whole time. I was allowed home on Boxing Day afternoon, and I stayed home that night, returning the next morning to my employer's sarcastic remarks.

I didn't like Mr Gray; I didn't trust him. Later, he had a friend to stay, another Naval officer, and they both used to tease me. Often I didn't understand, but I was very suspicious of their motives and didn't like it. It would seem I was justified, from Mr Gray lent me a clock for my bedroom because I didn't have one, then he took to calling in at night to ask the time. He must have thought me totally naive and I asked him what was wrong with the other clocks in the house. After a while I said one evening: "I told my father you came into my room in your pyjamas, and he says he will come here and take me away, after he has given you a good hiding." My faith in my father was such that I knew he would do this and more! Mr Gray never came to my room again.

The baby of the house was eventually born in 1920. He had a very grand Christening at Black Heath Monastery – they were Irish Catholics – and I can still remember his names: George Arthur Patrick Gordon. The midwife came and stayed to nurse the new baby for one month, and a local doctor was also in attendance. The actual birth terrified me. I had not realised there would be yells and screams, and within the month the nurse was gone, leaving this poor frightened young mother in the care of me, who was even younger and more ignorant. I washed the nappies and helped with the bottle feeding and bathing, not to mention carrying on with the other household chores.

It was the first time also, that I had ever come across contraceptives, which he was quite capable of leaving around. So much for catholicism; presumably the laws applied only to the poor and the pious. They left High Broom eventually, to settle in Cheltenham. He had been to my mother to try to persuade her to let me go with them, to look after the baby, but again, I refused to go. Instead, I was only too pleased to wave them goodbye when the time came.

At about this time a lady wrote from Brussels, in Belgium, to ask if I could go to help look after two little children. The family had been refugees here in the War and wanted to keep up their English. Of course, I at once wanted to go, but this time it was my father who said no. He considered Belgium had not sufficiently recovered from the war and it was not an ideal place to be. There followed a time when my mother began to lose patience with me. I suppose it was the usual “teenage” thing, but there were no teenagers in those days and I just seemed headstrong, but I was always a person with strong ideas.

Then an opportunity arose through an acquaintance of mother, for me to work in a Girls’ School, in Eastbourne. I liked the idea, and my mother fell to it straight away, possibly in sheer relief. My sister Daisy’s old, battered tin trunk was hauled into use, and my brother Fred (now married and living nearby) knocked out most of the dents, painted it black and put my initials on it. His wife Amy helped Mother get some clothes ready. She was an excellent needlewoman and I remember she completely ‘turned’ a suit I had been given and it looked like new. I was terribly proud of it. And so equipped, I set off for Eastbourne, in April 1920, in the charge of a woman from the village who was a cook at this school.

I loved living in Eastbourne. At that time, I was told, there were some 365 schools in the area. Ours was called ‘Deerhaddon’ and had no long been open. The Principal was a very nice woman, so kind and understanding it seemed to me. She had a little Sealyham dog called Trimmer, who was sadly run over outside the school by a taxi and killed, despite the efforts of the vet to save him. I was to live there from 1920 until 1923.

We worked hard at the school, but I enjoyed the work, as I worked with the Matron. She was a trained nurse and I spent most of my time with the girls: when I first went there I was the same age as some of them. There were about fifty boarders and several day-girls, ranging in age from seven to fourteen. The seniors, of whom there were about six, went each day to a senior school nearby.

A film was often shown on a Saturday evening in the large dining-hall, and the Staff were allowed to attend. Also we could borrow books from the Library and use the Gymnasium, and I made the most of these opportunities.

There was an assortment of girls at the school. I worked mostly with the younger ones. Matron was a lovely woman; she was almost saintly in her kindness to me, and she was firm but kind to the girls. Several of the parents were abroad with various branches of the Services and scarcely saw their children.

I remember one girl in particular. Her name was Penelope, and her father was Governor of Peshawar in India. She badly wanted to have her hair cut in the newly fashionable ‘bob’, but because her parent were abroad and couldn’t give their permission it was thought better not to. The dormitory for the Juniors was divided into curtained cubicles and it was my job to go around at 7.30 each morning to see that the girls were awake. I was confronted by Penelope sitting crossed-legged on her bed, surrounded by a sea of lopped off hair, which she had hacked off with a very blunt pair of scissors! She was whisked off to the Sanitorium, before the others could see her, on the pretext of being sick, and I later had to escort her by taxi to the barber, to have her hair shaped properly and made tidy. But she had got her way! Many years later I remember seeing her name linked in connection with Dutch Royalty.

In retrospect, what a tough time some of those children had. Some hadn’t seen their parents for years, spending holidays with relatives because sea journeys to far flung places took such a long time in those days. Some children even spent the holidays in school, if they had no close relatives. The school was at Meads, overlooking the sea, and was comfortable as far as the beds and dormitories went, but the food was awful. At first there was still rationing, but the fees seemed high – about £60 a year, and subjects such as dancing, riding and tennis were extra. The girls were from very mixed backgrounds; some were very wealthy, other less so, but they all seemed to come from the ‘right’ social bracket.

The food was rather sparse. Breakfast in winter was porridge, marmalade and bread; in summer they had cereal. There was only one kind of cereal in those days, called ‘Force’ – a sort of forerunner of cornflakes. They had a reasonable lunch at mid-day, but a very sparse tea which was usually bread and marge, with either jam or fish paste, followed by a piece of cake or bun. Just before they went to bed they had

supper. This consisted of a mug of milk and two biscuits for the younger ones, and a mug of cocoa or soup with a slice of bread and marmalade for the older girls, who always seemed to be hungry. There was a bread slicing machine in dining room and I sometimes used to sneak extra slices for the older girls.

There was, of course, no central heating in the school, just open fires in the classrooms and large areas of plain wooden floors, or linoleum. It was all a bit Spartan. On Saturday afternoons in the summertime we took a picnic tea down to the beach; again, it was only slices of bread and marmalade and lemonade, but it always seemed to taste better in the open air. There were always two of the mistresses, plus myself with the girls and we played games on the sands. I had quite a nice time there, despite having to work.

It was at Eastbourne that I first went to a Cinema and to the Theatre. The theatres drew many famous actors, and I saw Fred Terry in "Henry of Navarre", then he and Julia Neilson Terry in "Trilby". I also saw him again, with Phyllis Neilson Terry in "The Scarlet Pimpernel" - very exciting stuff. I also saw Owen Nares in "The Charm School". The Cinema was a great magnet, as it was such a new and exciting medium and I went whenever I could.

I had made friends with a girl who worked at the school, Clarice Rock. We remained friends for life. Once Rocky - as she was known - was poorly, so I was sent with her to see the doctor, who said he thought she might be coming down with chicken pox. On the way back, we saw "The Sheik" advertised at the Cinema, starring Rudolph Valentino, so we went in and sat through it with Rocky getting hotter and hotter and her rash beginning to come through.

Another time, on our half-day, we went up to Beachy Head. Rocky had a bicycle and we took a wind up gramophone with us. We balanced it on the saddle and trudged our way to the top, grasping the gramophone to stop it slipping off. I seem to remember we only had two records, and played them over and over again, singing at the tops of our voices, but there were only the seagulls to hear us. One of the records was "The Sheik of Araby". Coming back, Rocky rode the bike with me sitting on the luggage grid at the back, clutching the precious gramophone, my legs sticking out at the side to keep them from hitting the ground. We bounced and slithered back down the hill, alternately singing and squealing with fits of giggles, until I finally fell off. All the same, I managed to save the gramophone, as it landed on top of me.

The film stars of the day seemed very glamorous to our eyes. There was Pola Negri, Lillian Gish and, of course, Mary Pickford. We also used to see a serial occasionally, starring Pearl White, that carried on from week to week and always ended on a cliff hanger.

On another occasion we saw the Gish Girls in "Way Down East" and we saw many films starring Douglas Fairbanks and Mar Pickford and the wonderful Charlie Chaplin comedies. The films were of course silent movies, and called movies simply because they moved. The 'Talkies' came much later. Unknown to me at that time, had an uncle in California who was lighting advisor and camera man to Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. They even went to my uncle's wedding, but I only found that out years later when I visited my cousin in Los Angeles.

There were dramatic events at the school from time to time. I can remember my first Armistice Day there, when the little brother of one girl burst into tears. (There were one or two boys there, but they were under seven and had sisters at the school). Their father had been killed in the War, but the sister - who must have been all of ten years old - said "We mustn't cry. Our daddy was a V.C. and it wouldn't do".

On another occasion one of the senior girls, who was a real dare-devil, (she used to run a 'book' for bets on the Derby and the St Ledger), took a dare to walk along the narrow ledge outside her dormitory window. There was a six storey drop below! Our Principal was alerted by the Principal of the school opposite, but it was too late to do anything by the time we found out other than wait outside the door and not startle her. It was an agonising few moments, but she made it, landing safely inside the window of the next room along!!

I loved Eastbourne, and the sea, and my time there. I even had a nice boyfriend there. He was an apprentice butcher, tall, very good looking and a year older than me. We used to go to the pictures every week and paid 9d (nine pence) to go in. Afterwards we visited the café next door and had a big, fluffy cream bun and a cup of coffee each, for 1/6d (one shilling and six pence) in total. We had a long walk back along the promenade afterwards. Eastbourne has three tiers of parades, and in those days they were used in strict social order. We walked along the Lower Parade as far as the Ivy Walk, where we sat and had a chat and maybe a little cuddle. He was seventeen and I was sixteen. Sex was never mentioned.

I'm not suggesting that it didn't arise among the young, but it wasn't something that everyone was trying out and it wasn't socially acceptable. My generation had a lot of fun, most youngsters were what we called "decent". However, some poor girls 'got into trouble' as it was called, and what a disgrace it was, too. I would have been terrified to have to tell my mother of such a thing, and that probably helped to keep me clear of such problems! In later life my sisters and I used to say that if we'd had to confront our mother with such news, we'd have probably aborted going up the garden path! But on the other hand, I also know she would have taken it in her stride and told the neighbours to mind their own business.

I loved the life and the work at the school and would have liked to make a career of it. I learned a lot during my time there and developed high ideals. I started to write poetry, but never had the confidence to do anything with it, and I had dreams of doing something worthwhile with my life.

Unfortunately, my mother decided that working in a school was not the right thing, and it was about time I went into 'good' Service. I resented and regretted leaving the school. Matron, an austere but wonderful person, tried hard to persuade Mother that there was a future for me, but to no avail. Matron was herself a trained nurse and I might have been able to develop along those lines, but in those days you did as your parents said and I left there in 1923. My mother had always the very best in mind for me, and she felt she was doing her duty in guiding my future. She was essentially a Victorian and could see only the path she knew and valued as the way forward. She was totally unaware of the winds of change re-shaping the world at that time. Indeed, the changes were so slow at first and it was only later that they galloped ahead.

At first I went up to London to stay with my sister, Gertrude and her husband, who lived at Leyton. Whilst there, we went up to Piccadilly and waited under the arches of the Ritz Hotel to see the wedding procession of the Duke and Duchess of York (afterwards King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. She was such a pretty little bride and he looked so handsome. The crowds were enormous, but very orderly and everybody was in happy holiday mood. The Ritz was full of Americans, and as the Royal procession went by they threw flowers down from the windows and balconies onto the road below. I picked up a lovely tulip and waved it at my sister, saying: "look, I've got a souvenir of the wedding!" "Oh no you ain't" said a voice behind me, and a woman whipped the flower head off, leaving me with just the stalk.

That day, we also saw the Prince of Wales (later the Duke of Windsor), King George V and Queen Mary, and Queen Alexandra (widow of King Edward VII). We had a very close view, and the police and troops lining the route were friendly and good fun. That was also the year of the first Cup Final at Wembley Stadium - West Ham versus Bolton Wanderers. We were to have gone, but didn't! However, Gert's husband Billy Hopkins and his brother went. They lost their hats and Billy lost the sleeve of his coat in the skirmish after the game. That was when the policeman and his famous white horse helped to restore order.

I returned to Ewhurst and went back to work for the family, where I had worked before. The little boy was now away at school, later going on to Rugby School, and there were other changes. There were now working at Copse Hill some Danish girls. They were most enterprising and had come here to learn English. I wished I could do something similar and go abroad to work, but at least they had a head start by having been given a decent national education in their own country.

One of them, Olga, became a good friend and has remained so ever since. After the Second World War she sent me a little enamelled brooch of a white marguerite daisy. It was the wartime emblem of the Danish Resistance. On her return to Denmark she had taken up nursing and held the rank of Sister during the war. She kept a radio hidden in her poison cupboard, on which she listened to broadcasts from the B.B.C. Had she ever been discovered she would have been shot. She and the girls at Copse Hill used to teach me little Danish songs and dances, and I can still say Happy Christmas - 'Gledele Yulle'.

Despite these moments and the pleasant family I worked for, I still felt restricted and restless. There was no real freedom and one almost had to plead for permission to go to a dance. One's employers simply couldn't believe that servants either needed, or wanted to do anything other than work for them, but things were changing. The old orders were collapsing. Women had glimpsed a new and different future and my generation had begun to want more out of life. I loved to dance - something my mother had never done - and took any chance available. Dances were held in the village, but there was always a time limit for us to be back indoors; we were expected to leave a dance early to be back at what our employers considered to be the right time. Our escorts seldom sported more than a bicycle, but I had a boyfriend who had a motorbike. My mother lectured me on the dangers of riding 'pillion', but I became a pioneer in our village of this mode of transport. Mother was horrified.

It was at this time that I fell in love for the first time; with Alf Sawyer, the owner of the motorbike. I had known him since I was fourteen. His father was a Police Sergeant and Alf was nineteen and I was eighteen. Sadly, the romance finished because he was a very jealous person. I loved to dance; he did not. This gave rise to arguments when I danced with other people. It took me a long time to get over it.

Sometimes a group of us went further afield than the village to Dances, and then we hired a taxi between about six of us. Our Mistress was French and very flamboyant. She expected us to be back in the house within fifteen minutes of the Dance ending, which was ridiculous, and we were often reprimanded for a moment's lateness. We often had to resort to subterfuge, or even near deceitfulness, just to get to a Dance at all.

Although I enjoyed it there, I had many frustrations. I was lively and boisterous - noisy at times - and usually full of high spirits. I ached to do something, or go somewhere; in my youth and ignorance I thought the world was mine, and so it could have been with a little guidance or money. I had neither. I seldom seemed to be encouraged to do anything constructive, but so often corrected for what was wrong. I finally made up my mind to go and work in London. There was a lot of disapproval and argument from my family, and much conflicting advice from the

people I worked with, but I answered an advertisement in the newspaper and went up to South Kensington for an interview.

I applied to work for a Judge and his wife, and she engaged me on the spot. I had good references, but she also said I looked "a nice, bright and healthy country girl". Whether she thought I had come straight from pitching the hay and milking the cows, I didn't enquire. She was probably hoping that I wouldn't be ill or need time off work! She was an attractive woman of about forty four, and the Judge was terribly tall, about 6ft 4 ins - a handsome man. They had two sons; one at Eton and one at Stowe, which had only just come into being. They were cheeky lads, but I got on well with them.

I had thought Pitch Hill was a lonely place, but it was nothing compared to the loneliness of being in London for the first time. I had no friends there, really, and only stuck it out in defiance of all those people who had said I would come to a sticky end! I worked under the supervision of the Butler and was very hard work, with all the entertaining they did. I helped to care for the silver, and waited at table.

I spent my 21st Birthday at this place, but it passed me by in a whirl and blur of work, as a party was being given for someone who was getting married. It was a champagne dinner party and I remember they all began with six oysters each. There were seven course in all, with the champagne flowing freely. We, the staff, were assumed to be deaf and dumb, because I never ceased to be amazed at the things they spoke about, especially when it reached the port and cigars stage.

I only stayed four months in this job, because the butler was such an odious man. He was good looking, but I didn't trust him at all. I seem to remember he was one of the Judge's 'reformed' protest, but unbeknown to his employers he drank and could be most abusive to the Staff. I actually went to the Mistress to complain, but she said the Judge would hear no ill of him. He could also be suggestive and over friendly - a nasty piece of work. I refused to put up with it and give in my notice, much to the Mistress' annoyance, who thought I was being ridiculous. A few weeks later he attacked one of the maids with a knife and was arrested, so I felt vindicated.

I then worked for two years for a charming old gentleman and his much younger wife. He was a Wine Merchant and she was part American and about twenty five years his junior. They entertained on a large and lavish scale and were part of the London social scene. All the staff at the house were female and there were some jolly good sorts among them. The Wine Merchant's wife like her staff to look up to the minute, so we parlour maids had dresses made to measure at Peter Jones, in Sloane Square. With the dresses we wore parisian aprons and caps of an elegant and flattering design. The outfit seemed to have the effect of making any

young male guest smile, and one even chucked me under the chin, but I remained distant to such frivolity.

I got out and about from this house, seeing the sights and exploring London. I loved it, the great Parks especially. I went to one or two West End shows, to the Cinema and to dances; often, these were Police Dances. My sisters, Daisy and Gert, were both married, and I spent some of my free time visiting them. I was also able to wander freely around in London without fear of mishap. Standards seemed higher, despite the levels of poverty in some areas.

The unemployment and poverty of areas like the East End contrasted starkly with the lavish expenditure and wastefulness of places I work in. I often went down by bus through Aldgate, Stepney, Bow and Bethnal Green on my way to visit my sisters who lived in Leyton and Ilford. I remember seeing little barefoot children sitting outside the pubs, such as The Lame Cow or the Blind Beggar, waiting for their parents.

I first heard the Wireless, as it was then called, in May 1923. It was a great excitement to actually hear the voice of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Duke of Windsor), as he opened the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.

I was in London for the General Strike of 1926, which lasted for just over a week. It was a very serious time, but I am afraid some of we young people didn't always take it seriously. The buses were driven by undergraduates, and chauffeur-driven cars ran a sort of taxi service; they would pick people up and take them to their place of work and I can remember seeing beautiful cars with groups of giggling shop girls sitting in the back, waving as they went by. Hyde Park was closed to the public and became a huge encampment of soldiers. Troops were also guarding the Docks, though there didn't seem to be much trouble, as far as I could see.

Stanley Baldwin, the Conservative Prime Minister, broadcast every evening, but not everybody had wireless sets. Times were very bad in the North, the Midlands and South Wales, where the miners and shipbuilders were out of work. Later, some of them staged marches to London; it was pitiful, and should never have been. I saw one such march arriving. Their boots were broken, but their spirits weren't. They were orderly and dignified, yet they had marched all the way down from Jarrow. There was no Social Security in those days, but committees were organised to provide food for some of them. I was sent off to make sandwiches, along with many other maids, as part of our employers' efforts in this field! Well, at least they provided the money for it, and to be fair some of the ladies did roll up their sleeves and help out.

I remember some historic moments while I lived in London. There was the time Sir Alan Cobham returned from his record breaking flight to the

Cape in his seaplane. It flew right up the Thames and came to rest on the river in front of the Houses of Parliament. I also saw the return of the Duke and Duchess of York from their tour of Australia, when they first lived in their house 145 Piccadilly – just by Hyde Park Corner. (The house was destroyed by bombing in the Second World War. The Duke and Duchess drove up from Buckingham Palace with the baby Princess Elizabeth. She was sitting on somebody's lap, looking around at everything and clapping her little hands; she seemed very happy.

On several occasions I saw Queen Alexandra driving about in London. She was always very beautiful, even in old age. I watched her funeral procession. It had been snowing and was very cold. Shops of the West End and Knightsbridge had wide bands of mourning across their windows. Harrods had huge swathes of black crepe swathed diagonally across from top to bottom.

Whilst I was working for the Wine Merchant, he and his wife rented a house in Surrey for the wife's brother, who needed somewhere to spend the school holidays with his children. He was in the Diplomatic Corps – in Iraq, I think – and was separated from his wife. I went with them. The house was The Old Rectory, Albury, and fate was to take me back there at a later date.

I loved London, and enjoyed its delights as much as was possible. I heard my first 'Talkie' – or rather the first voice on film – at the Marble Arch Pavilion. I went several times to the theatre, such as the Alhambra, the Paladium and the Victoria Palace Music Hall. Once, some friends and I queued to see Anna Pavlova, the great ballerina, but the seats were all sold out. I went to Police dances at Chelsea Town Hall and at the Hammersmith Palais de Dance (which was later hit by a bomb in the war). I also saw the "Trooping of the Colour" ceremony and the Lord Mayor's Show.

I used to walk around Harrod's store; such beautiful things they had there. The Food Hall fascinated me. There was such a huge choice of things to eat, which a few years previously would have seemed beyond belief, but now I had become used to many of the exotic ingredients through seeing them in my work. London was such a grand place in those days, very much the capital of the world's greatest Empire and so very English in essence.

I had several boyfriends whilst I was in London. One was a very nice Irish Guardsman, who always wore his scarlet tunic and uniform. Whilst wearing this he was not allowed to be seen so much as holding hands, so we always seemed very correct! He was strict Catholic, but I didn't fancy Catholicism. Another was a London policeman, but he was quite a bit older than me and a rather serious person. At that time I had no desire to become engaged or to get married, so the relationship came to nothing.

Quite suddenly, in 1927, three of us were given notice. I never knew why, as there had been no upsets, but we were given good characters, excellent references and our full salaries. In addition, we were given 'Board Wages' for three months; these were the basic subsistence wages, aimed to tide us over until we found new jobs. It was a generous arrangement and I decided to take the opportunity to go home for a while. My mother was not too well, having a badly ulcerated leg, so I stayed at home throughout the winter, helping her. I enjoyed being back with my family, without any restraints.

I tried at this time to do something other than Domestic work. I would have like to train as a nurse, but hadn't the school qualifications. Not only that, but the Depression was beginning to bite. True, the Wall Street Crash was still a year away, but the country had never really recovered from the Great War. Thousands of men had returned to the promise of "A world fit for heroes", only to find it fit for nothing save unemployment. I was even worse for those wounded in conflict; ten years on, and very little progress made.

Wars are blamed for a lot, but wars don't happen on their own. I blame those power-hungry men – of both world war – who brought them about. Peace? We hardly know the meaning of it. Wars seem to me to be an excuse for politicians and scientists to invent more, and worse, means of destroying humanity – the more quickly and hideously the better, it would seem. 1928 moved on and I was glad to be able to go back into service in April of that year.

I finally found the ideal post, where I was to remain happily for the next six and a half years, until my marriage in 1934. I was engaged as head parlour maid to Lord and Lady Eustace Percy, at the Old Rectory, Albury, but my duties altered and expanded over the years. Lord Eustace was the seventh son of the seventh Duke of Northumberland, and brother to the eighth Duke, who had an estate in Albury. Lord and Lady Eustace had two daughters: Mary was nearly seven and Dorothy Ann was eighteen months old when I went there to work. They were a lovely family to work for, and had the charm and courtesy of the true aristocracy.

There were six members of staff, including a chauffeur, plus Nanny and a nursery maid for the children, and the three gardeners. Working there was of constant interest, because Lord Eustace was at that time a Member of Parliament. He was a Cabinet Minister, the Minister for Education, in the Baldwin government. I had a lot of responsibility and enjoyed all of it. I looked after his Lordship and did the duties of a butler, which meant I was also responsible for the silver. There was very little in the way of housework, because I had an under parlour maid, and I only had the Dining Room to look after. I had to lay the table and was expected to know exactly what was needed for any given occasion, as any well trained person should.

I also valeted His Lordship, and any gentlemen guests who stayed, including at one time the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin. He was a nice old chap but his wife seemed a rather fussy little thing who never seemed relaxed or at home in her surroundings.

There was a constant stream of varied and interesting guests at the Old Rectory. At different times I met the Duchess of Atholl, Lady Astor, Lord and Lady Baden Powell, the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, the Marquis and Marchioness of Hartington (later the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire), the Indian High Commissioner and his wife, Bishops and M.P's and many others. Before he had a secretary, I did a lot of telephone work for His Lordship. There were messages, telegrams, late night phone calls and cablegrams, and everything had to be taken down in writing with care and accuracy.

I accompanied him to Hastings for two separate elections, because he was Member of Parliament for Hastings and St. Leonards. This was a pretty safe seat, I believe. It was hard work, as there were only two of us with him, but it was interesting and enjoyable. Lord Eustace took a small house there for about six weeks at a time, and Frank, the chauffeur, and I looked after him.

He was an honourable member of the Hastings Winkle Club, and had a small case which contained a silver winkle shell. Apparently, if one was with other club members and could not produce the shell on the cry of "Up winkles!" one had to buy a round of drinks for everyone. I had been forewarned of the shell's importance when packing prior to the visit, even so, I had difficulty keeping a serious face when his Lordship enquired solemnly: "Have you seen my winkle, Winnie?"

Lord Eustace was responsible for many improvements in Primary Schools, but I sometimes wondered what he could have known about such schools, as I believe he was brought up far from the world of "The Masses" as he sometimes referred to them.

In the summer I went with the family to a rented house in Cornwall, at Carbis Bay, near St. Ives, for six weeks. There was just Nanny and me with the family, and a little local Cornish girl came in daily to do the chores. At one time Mr. Eustace Maxwell joined us. He was a young nephew of his Lordship and a bother of the author Gavin Maxwell. I remember how he raced about on the sands with the two children and me, as we tried to fly a kite. It was a happy, relaxed time.

The years 1928-32 were years of depression. Unemployment was high, up and down the British Isles, particularly in mining and all the heavy industries. I can remember there being working parties in the village, making up garments to send to women and children in the distressed areas, mainly South Wales and the North East of England. At this time some ladies in London formed a committee and brought some of the youth

from these depressed areas to train for Domestic Service. It was well meant, but didn't always work out, as the girls were far from home and if they returned to their own areas, there was no similar work with which they could continue.

We had one young girl with us for a short while. She was from the N.E. and when she arrived the housemaid showed her to her room and ran a bath for her. The girl flatly refused to get in, as she had never been in a bath before. I was called on to try to help persuade her, and she eventually said she might try, - but only if she could keep her shift on! It was only when she realised she would be on her own, in privacy, that she ventured to go ahead,, but I think she must have been afraid of water, because she would only ever have a couple of inches in the bath.

Albury Village was its own self-contained unit in the late 1920's and early 1930's. There was no electricity in the village, but there was gas. We at the Old Rectory, had our own electricity generator - housed in the garage - but this was unusual. We also had a good solid-fuel boiler which provided central heating in the house and a wonderful non stop supply of hot water in the four bathrooms, the bedrooms (which had wash basins) and the kitchen. Part of the house was very old, dating back, I think, to Tudor times. Nowadays the house is divided into two, but it used to be one huge house. The old part had rats in the cavities of the walls and a rat catcher used to come about three times a year. He seemed to feed them, but presumably it was poison, because they finally died out. In fact, one died under the old, unused range in the kitchen, but it couldn't be reached, so we had to burn incense sticks for weeks to cover up the smell!

One year, a Davy fire escape was fitted to the house. My room had the best window through which to climb, on the upper floor, so the contraption was fixed outside. I was asked to test it, and as the rope-held sling did not protrude very far from the wall, I more or less slid down the wall. The Fire Inspector and Lord Eustace watched my progress from below and I nearly died of embarrassment as my skirts were slowly dragged up under my armpits as I slithered and slid down. The whole scene was also witnessed by Chris and Jack Nicholls, who were delivering goods from Pratts Stores at the time, as they often took delight in reminding me over the years.

As the children grew older, there were changes in the house and household. A governess was installed, who taught Miss Mary and Miss Margaret Bray, who lived in Shere and came over daily. Margaret later became Mrs Elston and still lives in Shere. The governess remained until both girls went away to school in 1933.

Well before this, we also had a secretary, so my duties came to an end in that direction. The first secretary was very much out of the top drawer, but she was a very nice young thing and very friendly. In fact, when she

married at St Michael's, Chester Square, she invited both me and Laura, the housemaid, to the service and to the Reception at the Rembrandt Hotel, Knightsbridge. The second secretary was an absolute dear, and so efficient. She was tall and slim, aged about twenty four, and had suffered a broken romance. However, she married after I left the Old Rectory and wrote to me from Norway, where she spent her honeymoon. She also lent me her pearls and long, white kid gloves to wear at my own wedding.

It was while I was working at the Old Rectory that I met my future husband, John Anthony Browne - Jack to all. He was a type I had never really met before - intelligent, kindly, good fun and quite well educated. He had been to a private school, where he had stayed until he was nearly eighteen, learning such things as Latin and French and the Sciences. His family were builders and property owners, and I don't know that they were wildly excited about him taking up with me when we first met. I had not thought of any future with him at first. We met at one of the Village dances and belonged to a wide group of friends whose families were trades people and farmers in the village. Jack's closest friends had started at the village school with him, then gone to Archbishop Abbott School in Guildford. Jack had wanted to study Medicine, but his father insisted he join the family business. Had he taken any other course, it is doubtful our paths would have ever crossed.

Many people were employed at Albury Park, a country estate belonging to the Duke of Northumberland. Every year, the Duke and Family arrived to spend a few months at the Park. They came complete with horses, carriages, grooms, cars and chauffeurs, plus all their 'indoor' staff, which lent a bit of extra life to the village. For the rest of the year the Park and house were run by a skeleton staff.

Albury was a busy village, with its many businesses, yet without the noise of traffic today. There were many shops and it was always bustling, yet retained a peaceful air. The sound of the blacksmith's anvil could be heard ringing out on weekdays and most of the people who lived in the village also worked in the village. The Estate employed a great many people, and they lived largely in Estate cottages. The Estate Office was in Weston Yard and when I first came to the village the Agent was a Major Meacher, and Mr Day was in charge of the Office. The Estate also employed a Clerk of the Works, numerous foresters, gardeners, carpenters, plumbers, labourers and farm worker. Other farms were leased out to tenant farmers.

The Irvingite Catholic Apostolic Church functioned then and quite a few people went to it. The Old Church, as we called it, in the grounds of Albury Park, had been closed, and I went to the Church of St Peter and St Paul, in the village. Canon Skene was the Rector and there was a curate who lived at Rosehill, called The Rev. Moore. There was a full choir of men and boys and church services were quite well attended. By the nineteen thirties there were buses running through the village on a

regular basis. The Tillingbourne buses went to Farley Green, and the East Surrey's went to Dorking. All of them went to Guildford.

Every fortnight, from October to March or April, Whist Drives were held in the Village Hall. These were attended by a wide cross section of the community, as they were organised by different local organisations. There was a Cricket Club, Bowls and Football Clubs, the Choral Society and the W.I., which also held a Fancy Dress Dance on New Year's Eve in aid of Dr. Barnardo's.

One of the most active organisations in the village was The Bonfire Boys. This raised money for Guildford Hospital and every year they spent three weeks holding parades in the local villages. They held torchlight processions led by the village band, which went around collecting money in Albury, Blackheath and Farley Green. They then held a Whist Drive and Fancy Dress in the village hall, which was a happy, crowded and popular affair to raise more funds. The climax of their efforts was the huge Bonfire and fireworks on Shere Heath, in November. A lot of beer was consumed and there was the odd fight, but it was mostly good humoured. Jack and his friends worked very hard towards this charity, playing in the 'mouth organ band' and making torches and some of the homemade fireworks. The enterprise continued until the outbreak of the Second World War.

Jack and I married on 30th June 1934. I was twenty nine and he was twenty seven. I had never expected to marry, but Jack was a lovely person and we fell very much in love. We were married in the Parish Church of St Peter and St. Paul in Albury, and I was given away by my eldest brother, Fred, whose daughter Joan was my bridesmaid. My beloved father had died, suddenly and tragically in 1932, following an operation. We, the family, were devastated, as he was only sixty five years old.

Our wedding Reception was a wedding gift from Lord and Lady Eustace Percy and was held in the grounds of the Old Rectory on a glorious summer's day. Everything was provided by my employers, and the wedding cake was made by their cook, my dear friend Gertrude Aries. As many of our families as could be were there. Jack's friend, Hector Holt, was his Best Man. Dear Hector, he was such fun and so lively; sadly he was later killed in the War. He was in the Navy and killed in action in Dieppe in 1942. His father, old Frederick Holt, lived to be one hundred years old and died in Brook, Albury in 1944.

Lord and Lady Eustace, and Mary, went away for the day, but Dorothy Ann came with Nanny. Years later she told me she desperately wanted to be asked to be a bridesmaid, but it would simply never have occurred to me to even think of involving my employers in such an idea. Dear Dorothy Ann, at the age of seven, had no idea of class distinctions. Years later, in 1957, my daughter Sue and I went to her own wedding at St

Columba's, Pont Street. The Reception was held in Lord Astor's house in Mayfair. It was the last time I saw Lord Eustace, for he died in 1959.

After our lovely Reception at the Old Rectory, Jack and I left for our honeymoon in Devon, travelling by his Royal Enfield motorcycle and side car. We stopped for the first night at Stoney Cross in the New Forest, going on the next day to Lynton, North Devon, where we spent a wonderful fortnight. We walked and explored the beautiful Devon countryside, went to Clovelly and on to Exmoor and the Doone Valley. We met two brothers there, staying in the same farmhouse as us. They were George and Cyril Irons, from Buckhurst Hill, Essex. Cyril remained a lovely friend for the rest of his life.

We enjoyed a wonderful holiday, with beautiful weather, and explored large parts of Devon. At the end of the two weeks we returned to live in Little London, Albury, to the cottage we named 'Jacquin Cottage'. The house belonged to Jack's father and had few modern amenities, but it was our first home and we loved it. Jack had painted and decorated it and I had made curtains and set all our presents around. We had some lovely wedding gifts, not only from family and friends, but even from the friends and relatives of the Percy family, most of which had been delivered direct from Harrods.

I had, of course given up work on my marriage. Her Ladyship told me that Lord Eustace had been very upset that I was leaving, and I was certainly sad to go, in many ways. However, at nearly thirty years of age I was about to begin a new life, as a married woman.



Part 3

Marriage and the War years

1934 - 1946

Jack and I lived at Jacquin Cottage, Little London, Albury. We made up the house name by mixing Jack and Win, but didn't want it to seem too obvious. It was Jack who came up with the spelling and lots of people had no idea of its origins. I wish now, that we had taken the name with us when we move, and left the property as Number One, Block Cottages, as it was when we arrived!

Jack had decorated the cottage right through and I felt so proud of it. There was no water, no light, no drains and no sanitation! Instead, we had a pump at a well in the driveway, Aladdin brass and copper lamps, buckets to store water, and a lavatory in the garden. Despite all this I was very proud of our home and so happy. Despite all this, I was very proud of our home and so happy. Grandpa Browne had promised that as soon as a better property became available we should have it. At that time all his properties had tenants, but it was to be many long years before we move.

My housekeeping was 30/- a week (thirty shillings - £1.50 in today's coin!) Jack earned very little working for his father, doing awful, menial jobs. It was such a waste of an intelligent man, who should have gone to further education: such short sightedness. However, we were happy and we managed. Sometimes I had 5d (five pence) in hand at the end of the week! I always paid for everything and what we could not afford we went without. We had a few savings, we dug the garden and planted vegetables and flowers and went out in the motorbike and side car. Later, we had a three-wheeler car.

We also had Nelson, a cross-bred fox terrier and whippet, who was with us for nearly fourteen years. He was white with black patches and we called him Nelson because one eye was completely covered by a patch of black hair. He was later joined by Napoleon, the huge marmalade cat: he was a terrific fighter, always in the wars, and we thought the names went well together though they were the best of friends.

I had a dear neighbour, whom we called Nana Elliot. She was so kind to me, always ready to help and advise, but never interfering. I miss her still. Grandad Elliot, her husband, had been the local Carrier to Guildford. He had used a horse and trap in earlier days, but by this time he had a Ford lorry. They also had a cow and some chickens, kept in the field opposite, by the railway embankment. High above this ran the railway

line. We had some stables and a garage block off the drive and the Elliots kept their livestock in there in winter. Their house and the one next door were also some of Grandpa Browne's properties.

I was busy in my little house, but found it vastly different from working at the Old Rectory, where I had lived in comparative luxury. Now, I had to collect water from the pump in the drive and carry it in buckets to store in the kitchen. Most of the neighbours lived in a similar way, but I found it a bit of a setback. I was very fond of my husband and felt a great sense of loyalty to him. He was always courteous and kindly to me.

In 1936 our first baby was born: Jennifer Maureen, on 23 May at 11.35 pm. Dr. Stent was wonderful and was to become a great factor in the wellbeing of our family, for many years. I was rather shy of him at first, but although his manner was gruff and his speech was short and to the point, his skill and aftercare were wonderful, and he was so kind. I suppose my confinement was not too bad, although I can't say I found it an exhilarating experience. I was filled with impatience at having to have help from others at such a time and really felt that nature had made a mistake in not making the birth of humans a more private affair. I would have liked to be like a cat, and just crawl of into a cupboard and get on with it!

We were thrilled with the baby. I had wanted a boy, passionately, but did not mind once she was born. Jennifer was a lovely baby and gave us so much pleasure. Jack adored her and called her "the Bundle" because she was always wrapped up in shawls. I was given twenty six hand-knitted matinee jackets by friends and well-wishers and she almost grew out of them before having a chance to wear them all.

I was wonderfully looked after by my sister, Daisy Ellis, and my dear old friend Gert Aries, from the old Rectory. Daisy was splendid, although she must have hated it, being an ex-children's nurse and used to up to date amenities. She had no children of her own. It was hard work for her, as water was a problem, having to be fetched from the pump outside. She had a great sense of humour, but could be scathingly sarcastic although this was rarely the barb it sounded. She would make a remark in her cut glass tones, but her eyes would twinkle.

Once, a neighbour called in to see the baby and remarked to Daisy as she was leaving: "She's a beautiful baby, isn't she?" To which Daisy snapped: "I haven't the slightest idea, I scarcely have time to see her." She would recount this story in later years, saying, "There was I in that terrible, inconvenient kitchen, nappies, dogs and cats everywhere, up to my armpits in soap suds: I ask you, what did she expect?" Then she would roar with laughter.

Jennifer was christened at Albury Parish Church in July 1936. Her god-parents were Clarice Rock (Rocky), Gertrude Aries and my youngest

brother, Gerald Warrington. Jennifer was a healthy, happy baby, though she had Jaundice when she was born. This might have had something to do with her being asthmatic when she was older, although both my sister Gertrude and Jack's father suffered from asthma. The summer of 1936 we went to stay at my sister Gertrude's house in Potter's Bar. Like Daisy, she also had no children of her own and loved the baby. Gertrude died in 1947, and was laid to rest in Ewhurst churchyard. She was the first of our adult brothers and sisters to die and it came as a great shock, as she was only 49 years old.

Jack was desperately ill in 1938. It really began at Christmas 1937, when he was first taken ill, but he was so very stubborn about giving in. It was found he had Empyema, a very nasty lung condition. He had an abscess in the lining of the lung, with the complication of double pneumonia. In order for the operation to take place, he had to have a piece of rib removed, in his back, and he was in hospital for several weeks. Grandpa Browne was also in hospital at the same time, having had a motorcycle accident the previous August. Jack finally came out of hospital in February, but had to go to a Convalescent Home before returning to work at Easter.

We had bought a car in 1937, a four-door, black Jowett, with running boards and green leather upholstery, and felt very up to the minute, driving about when so few people had cars. We also had one of only three telephones in Little London - yet we still had no plumbing or electricity! Jack's youngest sister, Elsha, was married at this time, to Reg King, of the Albury Bakery family, and Jack spent a lot of time ferrying furniture and household goods down to the house in Brighton where they were to live.

The rent and rates on Jacquin Cottage came to 10/6d (ten shillings and sixpence) in the old currency. That was quite a lot out of 30/- (thirty shillings), so for the first three years of our marriage we had a lodger during School Term time. Miss Dodsworth was a teacher at Albury School and a thoroughly delightful person. I was glad of her board money of 25/- a week, but it was quite hard work catering and coping with no amenities. Miss Dodsworth finally left to get married, but as we now had a baby it was a good thing.

Jack idolised the baby and we were very happy together, though life was often quite hard. I found the washing the hardest part, with the lack of water on tap. I had a large mangle to squeeze the water from the washing, and nappies were boiled in a large pot on the kitchen range. Later we had a four burner oil stove in the scullery, on which I could boil water and do the cooking, but we still had the range in the living room. I used to air the clothes on a wooden clothes-horse in front of the range, and in cold weather Nelson would stand with his paws on the fender to keep himself warm! This kitchen range had to be black-leaded regularly and the Aladdin lamps had to be polished as they were brass and copper;

also, their wicks had to be trimmed weekly and they had to be regularly refilled with oil. Sometimes I felt I had not progressed far from the way my mother had to cope.

Jack was wasting his talents working for his father, so gradually he began to do extra work in his own time. He was greatly interested in all things electrical and mechanical and he learned wiring and circuitry, working a great deal in the large country houses of the locality which were rapidly going in for modernisation in all areas. He had already gained many of the skills of the building trade from his father's and grandfather's businesses; now, he also swept chimneys and set up a workshop to recharge the accumulator batteries, used widely in the neighbourhood for wireless sets. Eventually, he set up his own business and his father retired to concentrate on his properties and rent collecting. Jack was a skilled and reliable worker and his business began to thrive. We even talked seriously of emigrating to New Zealand, and filled in our preliminary papers. However, there were rumbles of trouble in Europe, and I found I was expecting another baby.

Towards the end of 1938 I was approached by the local Refugee association, who knew I had previously had a lodger, to see if I could give shelter to a Jewish couple from Austria. Ernst and Adele Schiminecke came to stay for several weeks en-route to being resettled in America. Mrs Schiminecke could speak a little English, but her husband only spoke German. They arrived with virtually no possessions and were so grateful for anything we did to help them. Jack could neither speak nor understand German, but he and Ernst would sit together, Ernst chatting away and gesturing, with Jack nodding his head solemnly and saying from time to time: "Jah, Jah."

Mr Schiminecke had the Austrian custom when he said 'thank you' for anything, of clicking his heels together and giving a little bow. They both loved Jennifer, who at two and a half could speak quite well and was an engaging little girl. When the time came for them to leave, they bought her a beautiful ball as a parting gift. Jennifer came to show it to me and I asked her if she had thanked them properly. She disappeared back into the sitting room, and, tucking the ball under one arm, she smartly clicked her feet together, bowed her head and said "Thank you," to the laughing delight of them both.

Our second baby - Susan Eilsha - was born at Mount Alvernia Nursing Home, in Guildford, on 25th February 1939 in the shadow of war. I was rushed to the hospital in the middle of the night in Dr Stent's car. We raced from Little London up through the back lanes to Guildford, with Dr. Stent saying: "Don't you have that baby in my car!" He tore down a one way street next to St Luke's Hospital and rushed me in through the nursing home doors. The baby was born within minutes of our arrival, but I had a hideous time; a specialist was called and I was given an emergency operation.

Jack was phoned and told to come at once. He raced up to Heather Lea (Grandma and Grandpa Browne's house) with Jennifer and left her with Grandma, then rushed to my bedside. It was thanks to Dr Stent that I survived and he stayed with me all the rest of the night, and called daily until I had fully recovered. One wouldn't expect that level of care from the G.P. nowadays!

The other thing I most remember from my time in Mount Alvernia was that Pope Pious XII was crowned, and the nuns spent a great deal of time in the Chapel.

I remember the outbreak of the Second World War vividly. Dr Stent had called that morning to see Susan, now nine months old, who was really ill with a vicious attack of whooping cough. He asked me if he could listen to the News on the wireless, and we listened together. I can see him now, leaning against the cupboard in the living room, his arms folded, one hand supporting his chin, deep in concentration, whilst I sat nursing the baby, rocking to and fro to soothe her. We hear the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, telling us that we were at war with Germany. I remember that I wept and Dr Stent patted my arm in a kindly way. All I could think of was the 1914-18 war and all those dreadful years that followed, and here we were, about to go through it all again.

We had been expecting something of the kind for over a year, but it still came as a terrible shock to know that the war was a reality. In 1938 a survey had been made from house to house in the village to see how many evacuees could be accommodated, if it became necessary. Now the evacuees arrived and were gathered in the Village Hall for distribution. I think this was September 1939, but it might have been earlier. I wasn't expected to have any at first, as I had two young children. Some of the would-be foster parents went to the Hall and collected them - a child, or sometimes two children. Other evacuees were taken to the homes of those detailed to have them. There were some mothers and babies in the group, who were billeted in the larger houses. Weston House and Weston Lea had Elsan lavatories installed in readiness - presumably so that the visitors would not have to use the ones already in the houses!

Cook's Place became the school for the evacuees; they didn't attend the village school. Dinners were cooked there and some of the ladies in the village had a rota for serving them and washing up afterwards, as part of the war effort - everyone had to do something. The school had a permanent cook. Most of the evacuees came from the Earlsfield area of London, and one young boy, Derek Kean, stayed on after the war with his foster parents. He eventually married a local girl and settled in the village.

My sisters-in-law, Elsha and Phyllis, and I unpacked "Bundles for Britain", which were delivered to the Squash Courts at Albury Park. The courts had been adapted to store the contents, which came from Canada, the USA and Australia, before distribution to areas of need. They contained shoes, clothing, knitted quilts and blankets, and there were also "Shelter Bags", used by people in the underground shelters in cities. Often, these people had been bombed and lost their homes, so these bags contained toiletries and basic needs for everyday living. These were distributed to the bombed areas by the W.V.S.

Once again I had brothers serving in the war. The three youngest, Bill, Harold and Gerald were called up and joined the Army, but this war developed into something new and finally sucked in not only my older nephews, but nieces as well.

Jack applied to the Air force to be a pilot. He had the required education standard, but would need further tests. Then his medical results came back; he was graded C\$ and unfit for service. It was a tremendous blow to him, being the far reaching effects of his dreadful lung operation. He never really came to terms with the fact that he could not serve in uniform, and although he was to spend the war doing vital work in keeping the fighter planes and their crews in the air, he felt himself somehow inferior.

He had wound up his little business in readiness for active service, so now he went to work for Vickers Armstrong as an electrical engineer. He was in due course posted away from home, spending time in Shrewsbury, Shropshire and in Castle Bromwich, near Birmingham. He worked in both factories and airfields, but at first he was at Weybridge, Surrey, so he lived at home.

The railway line was up on an embankment opposite to our cottage, separated from us by a small field where 'Grandad' Elliot kept his cow. We became used to the Troop trains passing day and night, but in early 1940 we noticed more and more full trains going past on their way to the coast. By May we began to notice a lull in frequency, then there came many empty trains and many coaches, going east towards Dover.

The weather at that time was absolutely lovely so Jack having some time off, we took the girls up to Farley Heath for a picnic. Sitting there, amongst the gorse and broom, in the sunshine, we could hear the distant dull crump and thud of the guns from France. The news from France was very grave and although we were not told a lot on the wireless we knew there was talk and rumour of a retreat from France.

Within days, trains loaded with troops started to come back up the line. Thousands went past in the next ten days. The weather remained beautiful, with brilliant blue skies, and as the trains became more frequent they got held up along the line. My neighbours and I collected

biscuits, fruit and sweets from around the neighbourhood, and taking pails of water with us, we climbed up the railway bank and handed them out to the soldiers inside. They were wet, bedraggled and exhausted, although those we spoke to were cheerful. They had no idea where they were and just seemed grateful to be safe. The Red Cross trains followed on behind with the wounded.

At Brook Crossing on another occasion, the soldiers threw out postcards which had been issued to them, for us to post. They always seemed to before places far off, but among them was a local man who threw his card out tied to his penknife and it was delivered to his wife in Farley Green.

There was a searchlight post at Brook, in the bottom of the Broomfields. This was of course manned by the Army, in the charge of a Sergeant and Crew. A crew would be there for several months, so of course we local people got to know them after a while. We also, over the years, became used to the great searchlight beam raking the skies, often joining up with others from nearby locations. We felt it to be a mixed blessing; on the one hand it was a good defence in spotting enemy aircraft, but on the other hand it gave enemy aircraft a target to aim for, perilously near our homes!

One evening, after dusk, around the time of Dunkirk, a lone enemy bomber came and flung out two bombs in the general direction of the searchlight, but they dropped wide. The fell in one of Holt's fields and made two large craters, but nobody was injured.

There was quite a lot of activity overhead during 1940, which developed into the Battle of Britain, though we didn't call it that at the time. During the 'dogfights' overhead the empty bullet cases crashed down into our gardens. I once had to dash out to the garden and snatch Susan from her pram during one such session - in fact, the first real word she ever uttered was "boolits"!

We had no air raid shelters provided as we were supposed to be in a 'safe zone'. A Molotov Basket was dropped in Albury Park, just by South Lode. The incendiaries scattered over the roofs of houses in Little London and along the railway bank. Some of these fell behind our house in a field where our neighbour Henry Cumper kept some pigs in a sty. They set up a terrible racket and at first I thought they'd been hit, but they were just terrified by the noise.

Henry himself often hid in the pig-sties, either away from the bombing, or more often, away from anyone in authority coming to find where he was and why he hadn't joined up. He was determined he wasn't going to fight and his old mother said she wasn't going to let anyone boss her "Enery" around; she'd never let anyone take him! In the end, he became a Conscientious Objector, though heaven knows on what grounds. Eventually he had to join the Home Guard.

The incendiary fires were finally put out by the A.F.S. (Auxiliary Fire Service), helped by the Home Guard. Later, a stick of bombs – twenty five pounders – were dropped in a line from the railway bridge at the top of Shere Heath down to the cross roads above the William IV Pub. The craters were there for years. Presumably they were aiming to hit the railway line.

As a result of the constant aerial bombardment we were all issued with air-raid shelters. Living as we did between London and the south coast, we seemed to get the flack from raids, bombing sorties and dog-fights which were not even aimed at our area, and the German planes seemed to jettison their unused bombs over us on their way back from raids on London. We were issued with Anderson shelters; these were the ones that were built in the garden as opposed to the Morrison shelters which were like upturned iron bedsteads and were designed to go inside the house.

Jack erected our Anderson shelter with as much care as he would have built a new house. He was always a perfectionist in anything he made. It was partly underground and was turfed all over, so that it looked like a small hillock in the garden. It was lined with arched sheets of corrugated iron and had duck boards on the floor and wooden benches along both sides to sleep on, if necessary. You went down four steps to get inside, making sure to duck your head as the door wasn't very high, and it wasn't very wide either. For a long time we kept a large tin box with emergency rations, candles and matches in the shelter, but it was rarely used.

The children and I hated it and preferred instead to sleep under the stairs, where we put a camp bed and Susan's cot. Later the greatest use it was put to was as a sort of play-house, but it got water-logged too easily, and the girls spent hours playing on the top of it as it gave a good view around the garden!

1940 and 1941 were dark days indeed, but Winston Churchill kept us all going. I remember once just before Jack was posted away, we were whitewashing the kitchen. He had to go off to fetch something and I listened to the news. It was so depressing, so worrying that I sat down and nearly cried. When Jack came back I said it was no use us decorating the place just so the Germans could come and bomb it, or worse still, invade us. Later Mr Churchill came on the wireless and gave that wonderful speech about "fighting them on the beaches" and "fighting them in the fields". He didn't rant, he just told us almost matter of fact that we "would never surrender". And we believed him. I really think we would have gone at them with pitch forks and broom handles. Anyway, I remember picking up the paint brush and attacking the walls with a new spirit of strength and determination!

There was scarcely a family in the whole country whose lives were not touched by tragedy. In 1942 I remember Elsha, my sister-in-law, came one day to the door. It took only one look at her face to know something

dreadful had happened. In one hand she held the dreaded telegram announcing that her husband Reg was missing. We found out later that he had been killed at the Battle of El Alamein: she was only twenty nine and their little son, John, only three and a half. It wasn't much comfort that this battle was the first real Allied victory, or that Reg was given a citation for bravery. Poor Mr and Mrs King: they were to lose two sons Reg and Bob, by the time the war ended.

Whilst still at home, Jack joined the A.F.S. (the Auxiliary Fire Service) with Harold Thomas, Sonny Knapp and Harry Spragg. They attended Fire-Drill in Guildford and we kept some of the fire-fighting apparatus in our garden shed. There was a stirrup-pump, a galvanised bucket, a manual pump and a spade. The manual pump needed someone at either end to get the water into the several yards of hose that were attached.

We had the equipment because we had a telephone. Captain Thomas (no relation to Harold) lived at Weston Lea in Albury, and was in charge; when there was a call out he would ring through and say: "Air Raid Warning, Red Alert!" This was fine if the fire-fighters happened to be on duty together, but could give rise to difficulties, as Harold lived on Albury Heath, Sonny at Farley Green and Harry down at the watercress beds above Birmingham Lane!

Once Jack got into trouble when incendiaries fell along the railway line beyond our garden, towards Shere Heath. The embankment caught fire and quite a blaze started; this, at a time when ammunition trains were constantly passing along the line. Jack rushed up with his equipment and managed to put it out before it got a grip, returning covered in soot and grime and feeling a sense of relief. He was later hauled onto the carpet because "it wasn't his area of action", being about ten yards the other side of the Albury boundary! It would probably have taken the Shere fighters at least three quarters of an hour just to get to the spot, by which time I dread to think what might have happened.

The Home Guard had their headquarters at the Cricket Pavilion on Albury Heath. Mr McIndoe and Mr Cleverley were the officers, as far as I can remember, and many of the village men were involved; some did a short stint with it before being called up in the Armed Forces. The Pavilion was also the A.R.P. post in the early years of the war, with Capt. Thomas as Chief Warden. Later, Alf Hughes of the William IV Public House took over. Because of the fear of gas attack, early in the war Capt. Thomas had made enquiries as to how many people in the village had bathrooms: there were very few! Apparently these were to be used in the event of a gas attack, but it would not have been very effective – it would at least have been a bit crowded!

One night in 193, during Army manoeuvres, a canister of gas was accidentally dropped by the Military near Talgai, on Albury Heath. The fumes drifted around the area and even reached us in Little London.

There was a very strong smell of pear drops and Jennifer, Susan and I all awoke with streaming eyes, which I bathed in cold water. Weeks later an officer called round to the houses to see whether anyone had suffered any real damage! Fortunately, many people had put on their gas masks. The event had a slightly amusing footnote:

On the night of the accident, with the first traces of the gas-leak swirling around, the Air-raid Warden and Harold Thomas donned their gas protection clothes and went to investigate. After the emergency had been cleared, they went straight from the scene to answer a call from two elderly ladies whose gas masks had been taken in for repair. They were worried about the dangerous effects and were greatly relieved when the wardens came and told them all was now safe. The two ladies asked the wardens in for a cup of tea, but once inside, the fumes from their heavily impregnated clothes nearly asphyxiated them all and they had to rush into the garden! How we laughed when Harold relayed the story, but it could have been dreadful.

Albury village School carried on all through the war years. The number of local children attending then was quite high: well over a hundred. There were no air-raid shelters at the school: the children simply crawled under their desks if there was an air-raid warning. Of course, the desks were of solid wood with stout iron frames so they were probably as safe there as anywhere. The children carried their gas-masks with them, slung round their necks on strings, as did everybody. Jennifer managed to mislay hers on a regular basis. Susan didn't go to school until 1944, and she, like all the younger children, had a "Micky Mouse" mask; these were red with floppy tongues and rounded ears on the top, designed to make the children enjoy wearing them. They didn't.

Of course, in those days there were no school dinners, so some of the other mothers and I had a rota and made soup, which was served daily. This was partly for safety reasons, to cut down on children having to go back and forth to their homes for dinner. It was also a chance for some of the children to have something to eat at all. There was one family of seventeen children – a good hard working family, but poor – who used to bring a baked potato each for lunch time, as they lived a very long way from the school. (Obviously, they weren't all at the school at the same time!) Others weren't so well looked after.

We mostly made vegetable soup, with a good, nourishing meat stock. Once a week the butcher – Mr Jack Miles of Albury – delivered a sheep's head (halved) which was boiled for stock. The meat was taken off and we made it into brawn which was put into sandwiches for the older children.

In those days pupils stayed on at the school until they were fourteen, as there were no senior schools except in Guildford. The children paid 2 1/2d (tuppence ha'penny) for a basin of soup or a round of sandwiches. The older girls used to help to make dumplings in the kitchen, often fooling

around and throwing the dumplings up and catching them. Many a time they stuck to the ceiling, leaving a mark, but they still ended up being boiled along with the other! All this, with no running water, no proper cooker – just a boiler with an open fire underneath – and only a big stone sink in which to wash up.

The older boys used to go out and collect wood and kindling for the fire before school. We struggled on through the worst of the war years, like this, until all came to an end in 1944 with the introduction of School Dinners. These new meals were cooked at Chilworth and arrived in great sealed metal tins and cannisters. I left at this point, but some of the mothers stayed on in new, paid jobs.

Towards the end of the war, a Rural Pie Scheme was introduced, and pies were distributed for sale from three venues in the village. I suppose it couldn't have come in before that time, because there was little meat to put in them! Meat pies were sold once a week in the Village Hall, (in the Council Room, behind the stage) and in Mrs. Maurice Marchant's house in Little London: hers was the second semi-detached cottage on the left going up from the Archway. I think Mrs Killick also sold them from her house in Farley Green. Families were allowed to buy one pie per member and all the helpers were volunteers. Albury W.I. ran the financial side and profits were to be used for village purposes. We made donations to the Brownie pack, the Memorial Library, the Children's Ward at St. Luke's Hospital, and the remainder finally went towards the Coronation celebrations in 1953.

We were very busy all through the war with fund raising activities; I seem to remember knitting everywhere! Once, we all combined to make balaclavas for the entire crew of a mine-sweeper. I was not much of a knitter, but followed the pattern and the finished thing was big enough to go over one of those underwater diving helmets!

Some women also helped at the canteen for the Canadian Forces at Newlands Corner. At the far end of Newlands Corner – the Pewley Downs end – there was a German Prisoner of War Camp, but nobody was involved with that – in fact you'd hardly know it was there. We did have one Italian prisoner of war who helped out at Pond's Farm. We called him "Itye" and he moved about doing his work around Little London, often singing at the top of his voice. There never seemed to be the slightest worry of him disappearing: I think he must have realised he was far better off here than in war-torn Italy.

Then of course there were the evacuees. We didn't have them at the start of the War, but I did have various Army wives and families staying for brief periods. One memorable Christmas, in 1942, I had two soldiers and their wives: Fred and Molly Rowe with their little son, Tommy, and Jack and Maisie Taylor. Jack was a Canadian and Molly and Maisie were sisters: very pretty girls in a bright, toothy way. We were quite a crowd,

but it was a very happy Christmas, despite the dreadful background. We managed to get little things together to fill the children's stockings, and by scrimping and saving, and pooling rations we also had quite a good Christmas dinner. By an extraordinary coincidence of later years it turned out that Fred Rowe was a friend of Stn Croucher, but we had no inkling then of the future.

Our first evacuee was Myfanwy from Cardiff, who received oranges in parcels from home (a great luxury - perhaps her family knew someone in Cardiff Docks!) - and ate them in bed, pushing the orange peel under her pillows. Then we had Richard and Keith Woodland from Wimbledon, who, when the "Doodlebugs" passed overhead with their menacingly throbbing engines, stood looking up at the ceiling and chanting: "Keep going Herbert, keep going Herbert," until the had passed. It didn't always work, for a Doodlebug fell in Weston Woods in the Brickyard. Some of the windows in the Parish Church were blown out, as well as in the village Hall and some shops and cottages in Albury, but nobody was injured. This was in 1944.

A bomb was dropped on Nurse Truscott's bungalow in Weston Yard which did not explode. She was the District Nurse and lived there with her husband. All the people living in Weston Yard were evacuated to the Village Hall while the bomb disposal people were called. It was always referred to as 'Nurse's Bomb' and it seemed to remain beside the house for a few days. In fact, there is somewhere a photo of Christine Nicholas (whose father ran Pratt's Stores) sitting astride the bomb. The mind boggles!!

Early in May 1944 a large company of Canadian troops arrived in lorries and entered Albury Park through the gates at South Lodge, on Albury Heath. (This lodge was where Mr Billy Browne and his wife lived, and was pulled down and a new house erected some years after the war.) The Canadians drew their lorries up with their backs facing the park palings and the road. The soldiers lived and slept in these lorries and ate in a big tent in the Park. Albury Park House itself (we never called it the Mansion in those days) was the Spanish Embassy during the war and the Duke of Elba was the Spanish Ambassador. We knew his chauffeur, a Mr Johnson, and we went to Maureen Johnson's Wedding Reception in Albury Park House. Maureen was his elder daughter and married a Canadian. We still keep in touch to this day.

We mothers took our children across the Heath to School each day, warning them not to speak to the soldiers or to take sweets and chewing gum from them. However, one turned up on our doorstep one day and Jennifer said she'd spoken to him and told him where we lived. His name was Gary Tait and he seemed little more than a boy himself at only twenty four. He became a good friend and we kept in touch for years. He left the Heath to on the D-Day landings and later, when he reached Belgium, he sent two lovely dolls for Jennifer and Susan. (N.B. Contact with him was

re-established in the 1990's by Jeremy and Garnet and Ruby Tait still keep in touch).

The Canadian soldiers practised rifle and machine gun drill in the many sandpits around the Heath, and they drilled and held manoeuvres around the Cricket Pitch. They even held a Sports Day there. One day there was a great deal of increased activity around the Heath. The soldiers from the Park spent days preparing the Heath for something. They came and borrowed tools from we local people and cut back the gorse and heather around the edges of the cricket and football pitches. It was all very hush-hush, but we knew something was going on.

Then, lorry loads of Canadian troops began arriving from all over Surrey to attend a Review there. Despite the secrecy and our mounting curiosity, rumours began to circulate as to who was coming to take the Review. Several of we mother went up on to the road that stretches from the top of New Road across the Heath towards the level-crossing, but we were herded up to the stretch up near the School; the children were also brought up from the school to line the sides of the road. Some of us had flags - Susan insisted on bringing a large stars and stripes nearly as big as herself - and at first we all thought it must be the King who was coming. There were civilian and military police there and at last a big black car with outriders appeared. Inside was General (later Field Marshall) Montgomery. He came to address them prior to what we were later to find out were the D-Day landings. We were all kept well out of hearing range, but we saw Monty clearly on his way there and back.

In later years, when I recounted this story, I wasn't believed. I can't think why as there was so much going on in the war that was extraordinary that one certainly didn't need to imagine things. Eventually it was verified and in 1984 a plaque to commemorate the event was placed at the spot, donated by the Albury Trust, and I was asked to unveil it. Strange to think that by this time only I and my two girls are left who remember it.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

There are no further "War recollections" or continuing remembrances in the journals and note books. Entries jump to what were then contemporary jottings in diary form, at about 1961. She had begun the first journal on February 1st, 1958 and wrote purely about the past until this telling little entry:

Feb. 1961 I find this writing rather difficult; there is so much I could put down, but it takes along time. I am now writing this in Feb 1961. The years fly – in fact there is so much happening every day that it would be impossible to keep up with it all, so I will plod on with things of the past that I can think of.

The first 'Journal' weaves back and forth on the pages and through the years, finishing roughly in 1971/72. A second was begun in 1976 and doubles up on much in the first one. By 1969 there were a total of eight jotters and by 1998 at her death there were over fifteen, often beginning again and repeating the same facts. Occasionally there were new events and insights, but it is from this often rambling total that I have edited these chapter. I leave the original three main notebooks to maybe sort out at another time. They would probably be a better read in the original, but the content is at present too recent and raw for me to tackle.

S.E.R.

November 2000.

Susan Elisha Roberts nee Browne

EXTRACTS FROM HER ACTUAL DIARY OF 1945

(a very sparse little book)

JANUARY

Mon. 1st. Cold day. Letter from cousin Betty – America.
Thur. 4th. Bob King posted missing. Far East.
Fri. 5th. Letters from Harold and Gerald.
Sun. 7th. Girls to party. Called at William IV to see Margaret Hughes (Engaged to Bob King)
Mon. 8th. Charles and Arthur Wales home safely. Rushed out of bakery in village to see them. Found myself crying tears of relief. (They served as 'Chindits' in Burma)
Tues..9th. Jack home – very poorly. Snowed hard.
Thur. 11th. Walked to Dr. at Shere with Jennifer. Snowed hard. Roads awful.
Sat. 13th. Bob King reported safe. Great relief. (He was piloting a glider across Burma: crashed into jungle behind Japanese lines: Stranded alone for eight days. He was 19 years old.)
Mon. 15th. Parcel of food and clothes from Betty in USA. Wrote straight back to thank her.
Thur. 18th. Nephew Den Fentimen joined Army. Off to India.
Sat. 20th. V.2. rocket fell in Southgate Rd. Potter's Bar just along from sister Grace's house. She is safe. Mother came over from Ewhurst.
Thur. 25th. Beautiful dolls came for girls from Gary Tait in Belgium.
Wed. 31st. Thaw. Jennifer has measles.

FEBRUARY

Fri. 9th. Gerald wounded. Wrote to Mrs Woodland about buying her piano.
Sat. 17th. Jack home. Went to 'Playhouse'; saw 'Madonna of the Seven Moons'.
Tues. 20th. Half Term finished. Jack returned Shrewsbury.
Sun. 25th. Susan's 6th Birthday. All her life so far spent in War.

MARCH

Sat. 10th. Had teeth out.
Wed. 13th. Arthur Parfree home from Middle East.
Sat. 17th. Jack home for the weekend. Says the end in sight.
Fri. 30th. (Good Friday) Jack came home: not very well with sore throat.

APRIL

Tues. 3rd Jack suspected Scarlet Fever.
Fri. 6th Jack better. Food poisoning.
Sun. 15th Went for lovely walk across Blackheath. Picnic tea.
President Roosevelt died on 12th.
Mon. 16th Jack returned Shrewsbury; went with him to town. Very crowded and warm.
Thur. 19th Jack's 38th Birthday. Sent him pullover and tie.
Mon. 23rd Letters from Jack and Gary. Very busy at Library. Cold.
Planted French beans and lettuce. Sat. 28th
Sat. 28th Mussolini shot by Patriots. Mother's 78th Birthday. Went to Ewhurst for the day: Mother came back for weekend.

MAY

Wed. 2nd HITLER DEAD!!!!!!!!!!!!
Tues. 8th V.E. DAY. CELEBRATED. To church at Albury. Bonfire at Farley Green.
Wed. 9th Busy planning Party with Mrs Inwood and Mrs. Tugwell. Went to Fair at Shere with children.
Sat. 12th Party at back of William IV Pub. Grand time, in spite of awful news of poor Bob King.
(N.B. He had committed suicide, by hanging himself in one of the outbuildings of his father's bakery. Nobody ever seemed to know why, but possibly his experiences behind Japanese Lines were to blame. The war in the Far East was not yet over and Bob had been pronounced -medically fit to return to active service'. At nineteen.)
Wed. 16th Bob's funeral. Saddest affair I have ever attended. May he rest in peace for evermore. Pilot R.A.F.
Fri. 18th Jack home.
Tue. 22nd Jack and I took girls to London. Saw captured U-boat by Westminster Bridge.
Wed. 23rd Jennifer's 9th Birthday.

JUNE

Sat. 16th Nieces Joan's Wedding Day; married Ashley Mason at Ewhurst Church. Very nice day. Stayed two nights at Wayside with Mother. Joan and bridesmaids looked lovely.
Tue. 19th Alexandra Rose Day. Sold roses in the morning; Library in afternoon; meeting at night.
Sun. 24th Midsummer's Day. Had picnic by stream.
Sat. 30th Our Wedding Anniversary. Cyril Irons today married Freda Rowe.

JULY

Mon. 2nd Very busy getting ready for holiday at Shanklin, Isle of Wight.
Wed. 4th Jack and I to London; saw "Three Waltzes" - Evelyn Laye.
Sat. 7th Jack, John King, Jennifer, Susan and I to Shanklin. Journey rather a crush. Arrived 3.45 pm. Mrs. Major, The Limes, Atherley Road, Shanklin. IOW.
Sun. 8th Nice day on sands. Very nice people in the Limes. Elsha arrived.
Mon. 9th Went to Portsmouth with Jack; he returned to Shrewsbury.
Tues. 10th Poured with rain all day.
Wed. 11th Nice morning on sands. Walked to Sandown.
Sat. 14th All other guests left. New people came. Very Jolly crowd. Elsha and I to putting green with Ron - W.O., R.A.F. Terrible thunderstorm.
Mon. 16th Played cricket on sands.
Wed. 18th To the Needles, Alum Bay, Blackgang Chine. Ron, Elsha, kiddies and I.
Sat. 21st Return home. Hectic journey. Ron great help. Arrived home 5 o'clock.

AUGUST

Thur. 2nd Dentist 12.30. Blood Bank in afternoon. Gary arrived and stayed night.
Fri. 3rd Jack and I to Deepdene station with Gary.
Wed. 15th V.J. DAY. Gary came with us to Circus with children at Shalford Meadows. Bertram Mills.
Thur. 16th Celebrations on Albury Heath. Gary and Jack went back.
Sun. 19th To church in morning with Mrs Hughes and girls.
Tue. 21st To dentist in Guildford. Saw Dorrie and Den.
Thur. 23rd W.I. meeting Committee.
Fri. 24th Busy at Canteen.
Sun. 26th Went to Box Hill. Saw brother Bill; home for good now.

SEPTEMBER

Tue. 4th Got my new teeth. Ghastly.
Wed. 12th W.I. Members meeting.
Mon. 17th Mrs Cumber and I cycled to Ewhurst. Ron came for night.
Sat. 22nd Nephew Den married Babs - Christchurch, Guildford.
Wed. 26th Prize Giving - Albury School.
Frid. 28th Jack home for weekend.

OCTOBER

Mon. 1st Jack returned to Shrewsbury, by car!
Tues. 2nd Old Time Dance at Albury. Many of the old crowd. Lovely time; absent friends.

Wed.3rd Hubert Harrison returned home safely.
Tue.23rd 3 yrs since El Alaamein and Reg King's death. Poor Elsha.
Poor Mr and Mrs King.

DECEMBER

Tue.11th Old Time Dance.
Wed.12th W.I. Mrs Marshall and I did Drama sketch.
Thur.13th Paid Katie 15/- for Piano lessons.
Sat.22nd Met Jack in Guildford. Home in car.
Mon.24th Christmas Eve. Very busy.
Tue.25th First Christmas in Peacetime. Lovely day. Went to Don and Jane Holt's in evening.
Wed.26th Elsha, John and Mrs. Hughes to tea.
Mon.31st Dr. came to Jennifer. Jack and I saw old year out.

NOVEMBER

30th Win's 41st Birthday.

Wed 3rd Hubert Harrison returned home safely.
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Poor Mr and Mrs King.

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NOVEMBER

30th Win's 41st Birthday.

THE FAMILY OF WINNIE GWENDOLINE WARRINGTON.

JOSEPH CHAPPELL WARRINGTON	W. HARRIET WHISTON	b. 1841	d. 1939
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JOHN STANTON BROWNIE M JANE BROOKS
1871

1401
(1865)
GEORGE TICKNER M. ELLEN CARPENTER.
b. 1845. d. 1932

JOHN KENNEDY	WILSHIR
	FARGUHARSON
	(Farguharson)

HERBERT WARRINGTON	M	JANE TICKNER
b. 1867	d. 1932	b. 1867 d. 1960

EDWARD PHILIP BROWNE
b. 1874, d. 1948

W. GRACE KENNEDY,
b. 1876, d. 1968

WINNIE GWENDOLINE WARRINGTON
b. 1904 d. 1998

JOHN ANTHONY BROWNE
b. 1907 d. 1978

JENNIFER MAUREEN BROWNE b. 1936. d. 1998.

SUSAN EILSHA. BROWNE b.1939.
M GEORGE ROBERT TS b.1937
1973 d.2003

m ① PETER (1957) ② DAVID FAIRHURST (1983?)

JEREMY CROUCHER
b. 1963
E. LISA POTTER.

TIMOTHY CROUCHER,
b. 1965
~~JO EMBLETON~~
M. ZOBY

MICHAEL ROBERTS b. 1964
M. ANDREA JAMES

b. 1965 SIMON ROBERTS
② M DAWN MOULD
CAROLINE JUNE

NICHOLAS CROUCHER b. 1959.
M JULIE DESKETT

ALEXANDER CROUCHER
b. 1990

JAMES ROBERTS
b. 1991

SIMON ROBERTS
b. 1993



MOTHER - AGED 20.



GERTRUDE, BILLY HOPKINS, BILL.

REG & DORRIE'S
WEDDING.
1922.



BACK ROW: FATHER, MOTHER, FRED, REG, ~~GRACE~~, DAISY, BOB, ~~GRACE~~
CENTRE: GRANDMA TICKNER, DORRIE,
FRONT: GERALD, WIN, HAROLD.
AMY?
(FRED'S WIFE)



GRANDMA TICKNER AND
HER SON - UNCLE GEORGE.

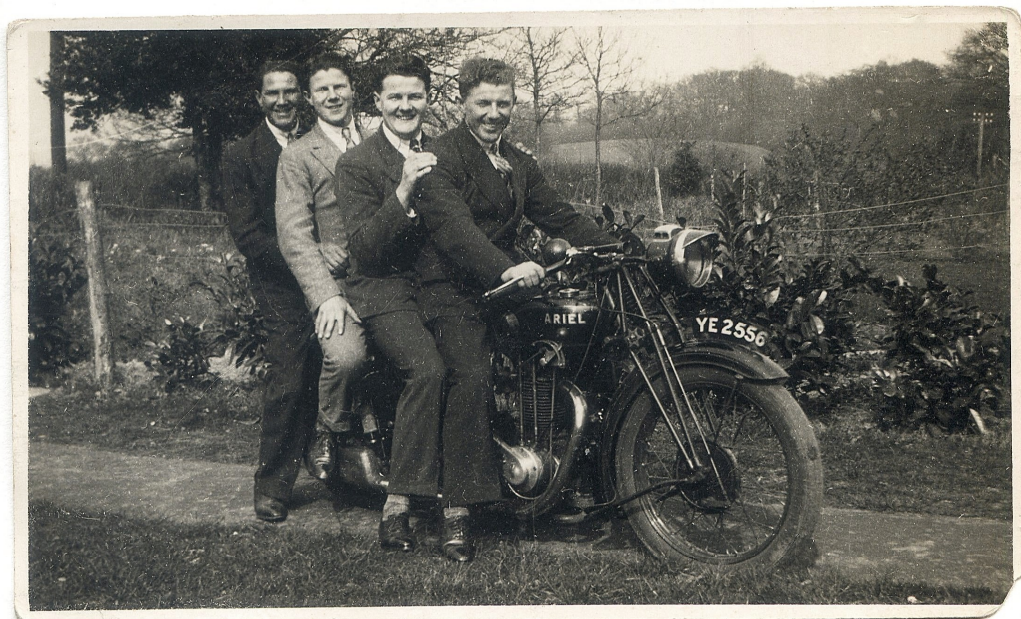
'FANNY' AND EDWARD DOES' WEDDING.
STEPHANIE VAN DEN BERN HAD BEEN A
BELGIAN REFUGEE AT EWHURST. 1914-18.



A 'FUN' MATCH - EWHURST
GREEN. OUR HOUSE AT
LEFT, REAR. FRED BATTING.



MY FATHER 1920.

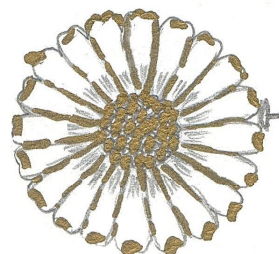


MY FOUR YOUNGER BROTHERS - AT WAYSIDE 1929.
L to R. HAROLD, GERALD, BOB, BILL.



OLGA OLSEN - 1966.
MY PEN FRIEND FOR OVER 70 YEARS.

THE MARGUERITE BROOCH
SHE SENT IN 1947.



GRANDMA TICKNER'S
WEDDING SHAWL - WORN AT HER
WEDDING AT ENHURST CHURCH
IN 1865. - GIVEN TO A
COLLECTOR AT SHAMLEY GREEN
BY AUNT EM. I WAS AT
THIS HISTORY SOCIETY SHOW
AT DR. BURTON'S HOUSE, ALBURY,
WHEN THIS MODEL SUDDENLY
APPEARED, WEARING IT!
MY DAUGHTER SUE WAS WITH
ME, AND I HAD JUST BEEN
TELLING HER ABOUT IT. -
STRANGE COINCIDENCE.





THE FAMILY MOVED TO 'WAYSIDE'
 PLOUGH LANE, EWHURST - 1925.
 BILL, HAROLD, GERALD, 'CHUM' + WIN.



WIN - OLD RECTORY GARDEN
 1930.



R.A. Old Rectory
 1928
 WIN AND KATHLEEN ARNOLD.



WIN AND DOROTHY ANN PERCY
 ST. IVES. 1920.



Hyde pk corner 1931

30TH JUNE
1934

WEDDING OF
JACK & WIN.



Hector Fred



L. to R.
Hector Holt - Best Man
Joan Warrington - Bridesmaid
Jack Browne
Winnie
Rev. Philip Gray



Joan. Jack. Win.

L. to R.
Grandma Warrington.
Hector
Grandpa Browne,
Jack
Grandma Browne (just!)
Win.
Rev. P. Gray.
Joan.



Far right - Grandma Browne
centre - Joan.



DOROTHY-ANN, 2nd From right.
- front row.



In the Old Rectory
Garden.



The cake, made by
Gertrude Aries.



LYNMOUTH - DEVON 1934.

JACK & WIN
1934



HONEYMOON



LULWORTH, DORSET



CLOVELLY - 1934.

JACK, with 'ROCKY' - PITCH HILL.



DERBY DAY 1932 - DON HOLT'S CAR.



JENNIFER MAUREEN.



JENNIFER AND 'GRANDAD ELLIOT' 1937



JACK, WIN AND JENNIFER 1936



JENNIFER 1939 - BRIDGE OVER BROOK
STREAM.



1938 JENNIFER 2ND BIRTHDAY. JACQUIN COTTAGE



JENNIFER AND GRANDMA
WARRINGTON - 'WAYSIDE'
1937



JACK, WIN, JENNIFER AND SUSAN - 1939
'WAYSIDE' - EWHURST.



JENNIFER AND SUSAN.
JACQUIN COTTAGE 1940



FARLEY HEATH . MAY 1940
WIN, SUSAN AND JENNIFER - DUNKIRK!



WINTER - WIN, JENNIFER, SUSAN.
1942 (RAILWAY EMBANKMENT
BEHIND)



BLACK HEATH 1941



NELSON, JENNIFER AND SUSAN ON
THE AIR-RAID SHELTER - JACQUIN COTTAGE
1943