

EARLY YEARS

I was born at 5 o'clock in the evening on December 23rd 1925. Apparently my mother gave birth to a stillborn child and I came as a surprise later – the other twin. A close family friend, Major Francis Skeet, insisted that I be baptized in the local Catholic church "in periculo mortis". On March 5th 1926, I was christened into the Church of Scotland by the Rev. A.H. Forbes, Minister of Cawdor. A good insurance policy!

My father died on November 14th 1927, just before my second birthday. My mother decided to go to London. She sold the house, put the furniture into store with Frazers in Inverness and moved to Wadhurst Castle, a high class guest house, just north of London. We were accompanied by Mary, my nanny. I never really knew why my mother moved to London. It was possibly to get away from the cold Scottish winters; but more likely because life in London could be easier and more sociable for a widow with a small boy. We stayed there for 1928 and 1929, when we moved to another guesthouse at West Lodge Park, at Potters Bar, just north of London, run by the North Lewises. In 1932, we spent the summer in a rented house at Haywards Heath and I started to learn to read and write with the nuns at the local convent. Then my mother rented a flat at 20 Hallam Street, W.1. About this time Mary, my nanny left to get married to a carpenter and went to live in South Africa. In 1933, we moved to 31 Wimpole Street and Freda joined us as a housekeeper and to look after me. I started school at the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus under Rev. Mother Gerrard and was there for four terms. In 1935 we moved to 27 Harley Street, where it was only a short walk to the Convent. The house had six stories. We had the top two, with doctors consulting rooms on the next three floors and a large waiting room on the ground floor. The caretakers lived in the basement and they attended the front door and directed the patients. There was secret panel on the right of the front door, where clandestine people could be let into a side room!

The summers of '33, '34. and '35 were spent at Le Zoute in Belgium with friends, the Godfreys at the villa Florida. In 1933, my mother had her portrait painted by Touzzaint, a well known Belgium artist. At Easter 1934, we joined the Blackwells (of Cross and Blackwell) on a cruise to Madiera, staying at the famous Reids Hotel. This was my last holiday before going to Hodder, the prep school for Stonyhurst, for the summer term of 1934. My Godfather, Major Skeet, who had had me baptized a catholic, offered to pay for my education at Hodder and Stonyhurst. An offer my mother was happy to accept and which enabled me to go to one of the top schools in the country.

I was at Hodder for nearly four years in classes, Preparatory, Elements I and II and then to Figures I. As a small boy away from home I was shy and nervous – not having had the experience of brothers or sisters. But I persevered and the Jesuit schooling was excellent. That summer we were at Le Zoute. In 1935, at Easter my mother took me to Nairn to see where I was born. We stayed in a guest house and I remember eating fresh herrings for breakfast (caught the night before), dipped in oatmeal and fried. We ate a lot of fish. Visits were made to Cawdor Castle (of MacBeth fame) and to Inverness. The summer was spent at Villa Florida at Le Zoute. In 1936 at Easter we went with the Blackwells by sea on SS Stuttgart to San Remo in NW Italy, staying 9 days. I remember the mimosa blossom with its sweet perfume. We returned on the SS Jan van Olden Barnivelt. That summer we stayed on a farm, by Loch Creran, near Oban on the east coast of the Scottish Highlands. We went on to spend two weeks with my cousin Peggy at Woodlea, Dunfries. I played with my Scottish cousins, damming the Glencrosh burn. We then went to the Empire Exhibition at Glasgow. Living in London

was no place for a small boy in the holidays and my mother was wonderful to take me to so many interesting places for the holidays. At this time Christmas holidays were spent with my Aunt Elizabeth at Bexwell Rectory in Norfolk. Some years my cousin, Gertrude Cooke and her daughter Anne were also there. I loved to help the gardener Mr. Lister and play with the dog, Bex, named after Bexwell.

In the autumn term I went to Stonyhurst College, where I spent the next four years graduating through Figures II, Grammar I and II, Poetry and Syntax, as the classes from forth form to twelfth form were called. I was very good at maths and latin, and for most years was either top or second in my class. I was not very good at games – rugby and cricket- , but played some squash and athletics. We all had to take part in the OTC but during my last year I was able to join the Air Corps, where I learnt some navigation. In 1938 I sat for a Stonyhurst Scholarship which I won. In 1942 I sat for the School Certificate, obtaining 3 As and 5 Bs.

With rumours of war my mother decided to spend the summer holidays of 1938 and 1939 in Brora, Sutherland in the highlands of Scotland, where she had cousins, Nanny and Jack Kidd and Totty Anne. They were from the Allan side of the family. They told us many stories about Dunrobin Castle, the seat of the Duke of Sutherland. In their youth they had been seamstresses at the Castle. In 1939, we saw German prisoners traveling south in a train. We stayed both years at the Sutherland Arms Hotel. I had a playmate, Joy Gemmill, and we used to follow the Territorial Army Pipe Band round Brora on a Saturday evenings, after cooking sausages, which I got from my cousin, Jack Kidd, the butcher. The winter holidays of 1938 were spent at Lech, Austria with my cousin Mary. We all learnt to ski for the first time and were not very good at it. In 1940 we could no longer go to Scotland for the summer, as the highlands was a restricted area. My mother heard about a guest house on Dartmoor in the west of England. This was a pleasant break for the summer holidays, but there wasn't much to do but go for walks in the lovely countryside.

On 1st October 1940, my dear aunt Elizabeth died at Bexwell. My mother was her trustee and assisted by my cousin Mary, her daughter, mother moved out of London and spent the next two years at Bexwell Rectory and I joined her for the school holidays. This was fine for me, as I had plenty to do in the garden accompanied by my dog, Rex, another fox terrier. Initially we still had the Listers, gardener and cook. But after a year they left and my mother and Mary ran the house and looked after the garden. To supplement the meat rationing, my mother bought a dozen white poulets to fatten up for the table. We also had rabbits, a Belgium Giant | Dutch Hare cross. They multiplied profusely and filled our larder. Another trick we had was to throw some chicken feed inside the entrance to the screened-in fruit garden (raspberries, gooseberries and strawberries) and when a pheasant went after the corn, I would creep up and close the gate, trapping the pheasant, which we later had for Sunday lunch! We had plenty of vegetables and apples and pears. Due to bombing of London, many families were evacuated. We had a family sent to us. They had two bedrooms upstairs and the old 'schoolroom' at the back of the house as a kitchen and living room. In the summer of 1942 we were approached by the Air Ministry for accommodation for civil engineers to build an Air Base on the other side of the main road. In fact they requisitioned the house as an officers mess. My mother went back to London, which was still being bombed despite the barrage balloons and antiaircraft batteries in Hyde Park. An incendiary bomb hit our building but there was no serious damage. Thank goodness.

The summer of 1942 was spent at Newtonmore, between Stirling and Inverness. We stayed at the Ballavil Arms Hotel and I found farm work at the nearby "Mains". I loved to be on the farm with

the haymaking and harvesting. I also helped to herd the Blackface sheep, which lived on the hillside and moor above the farm. I had my bicycle, and cycled to church in Kingussie each Sunday along the river Spey. This was Clan Gordon country with Rothymurcus forrest. It was also famous for a ruthless McPhearson Chief, the Wolf of Badenoch. Sometimes I would cycle down to Loch Laggan, surrounded by beautiful hills, covered with heather. By 1960 Newtonmore and Aviemore had become the top ski resorts in Britain. I enjoyed the area as it was!

By the summer of 1943, I had passed my HSC exams and was due to join the Navy in December. My mother had seen an advertisement in the Times for a school boy to help on a farm at Coulmore on the Black Isle across the estuary from Inverness. I was thrilled and took the train from Euston in London to Inverness, where I was met by Bunty, the daughter who ran the farm for her parents Colonel Ewen and Mrs Grant. Coulmore meant 'big bay' and was on the north side of the Beauly Firth, which stretched to the west from Inverness. There were six farm hands, each of whom had families and lived on crofts above the main house. The farm consisted of about 200 acres of arable land round the house and farm buildings and four hundred acres of hillside and heather. For the haymaking I was given my own carthorse and cart, which made me very proud. There was a two hour lunch break to enable the farmhands to tend to chores on their crofts. I used this time to set nooses to catch rabbits. Each Saturday I would cycle into Inverness with a dozen rabbits on the handlebars and sell them for sixpence each. This plus my wages gave me pocket money for when I went into the Navy. I stayed on the farm from July to October and then returned to London. I was to return to Coulmore the summer of 1947 and again had a wonderful time on the farm. Their son Haemish was now at home and helped Bunty (who was now engaged) run the farm. They now had a tractor which helped with the harvesting. I used to take oats to the nearby mill to grind into oatmeal, which I then cooked each morning for porridge. Their eldest son, a Naval Officer, had been killed in an accident just after the war and his widow and daughter lived in a separate part of the house. Sometimes the daughter and I would go to the cinema in Inverness. On Saturday evenings I would cycle to North Kessock, across from Inverness, and join the farm hands at the local pub. At the end of the summer, I went back to Oxford.

THE NAVY

At Stonyhurst, Freddie Bewlay and I had heard that if we volunteered for the service we wished to join, then we would be sent to that service when we were called up at the age of eighteen. We both had the same birthday, December 23rd. So during the summer term of 1943, we decided to volunteer for the Navy and were given the day off to travel to the recruitment office at Preston. Why the Navy? We felt that if hit in the RAF it was a long way to fall and if in the Army we would live in wet tents!! I was to learn later the validity of this, for in the Navy at sea in action or on patrol, we always had a dry bunk to turn into at the end of the day.

In October I received my call-up papers to report to HMS Collingwood at Fareham near Portsmouth on December 26th, Boxing Day. (I learnt later that my cousin, Commander Dick Graham-Reid was instrumental in having me go to Portsmouth rather than Chatham. He invited me out a couple of times, while I was there) After a very quiet Christmas spent with my mother in wartime London, I took the train to Fareham to become Ordinary Seaman Reid, Official Number JX 568212. The nine weeks initial training was tough, lonely and rather frightening, as I was in a class of 33 boys, mostly from the Gorbals of Glasgow. There was one other grammar school boy, OS Trinder, a cousin of Tommy Trinder, the top pop star of those days. After a few days I was made Class Leader with Trinder as deputy. What a terrifying prospect!!

We were billeted in a Nissen hut with one small stove to keep us warm. The bugle burst out with "Wakey-Wakey" each morning at 6 a.m. Fifteen minutes to shower, shave and get dressed. Then we went on parade. The training covered discipline, Naval Regulations and Admiralty Instructions, bends and hitches, and endless marching, "square bashing", climbing ropes and rigging and more marching..

After nine weeks, Trinder and I were selected as C&W (cadet and warrant) candidates and in a class of 50 were posted to a training ship based on Rosyth near Edinburgh. These ships were converted banana boats and used for training at sea. We slept in hammocks, which were remarkably warm and comfortable. We trained in all aspects of seamanship, rules of the road and some navigation.

After three weeks, in early April, about half of us were selected to go to H.M.S King Alfred at Hove, Sussex to train as officer cadets. Prewar the base had been the Hove City Baths and recreation grounds and our accommodation was underground in the old car park. We were a class of 54 under Lt Commander Ryecroft, Lieutenant Beatty and Sub Lieutenant Sunshine and the training and selection for promotion to commissioned officer became really serious. For about two months we were based at Lancing College, a famous boys school, now evacuated. The facilities were very good and it was a bonus in wartime to be by the sea in spring. The training was vigorous with much emphasis on drill, OLQ (officerlike qualities!), seamanship and navigation, which I found interesting and easy as I had done navigation for my HSC.

We returned to Hove for the last few weeks. At this time candidates were being dropped as not suitable and we were all on tenderhooks. On 21st July 1944, 33 of the original 54 were commissioned as Midshipmen. I learnt later from Lt Com Ryecroft that I had been borderline but that my maths and navigation was so good that they had passed me!!

After some leave in London with my mother and being shown off to all her friends in my smart Midshipmans uniform, I went to the Royal Naval College at Greenwich for a further navigation course, mainly sun and star sights. At this time the College was being used for a variety of officers'

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course and it seemed to be full of Commanders. In the huge dining hall, it was amusing to see officers duck under the huge oak tables when the sirens went off to announce a V1 or Bussbomb attack.

After more leave I was posted to H.M.S.Meynell, based at Sheerness, Kent on October 9th 1944. I was to remain with her until demobbed on October 5th 1946. Two of the best years of my life!!

H.M.S.Meynell (L82) was a Hunt class destroyer, a small warship built in Britain during the war. She was designed for escort duties around Britain and for hunting E-boats and submarines. They were named after the actual hunts, many of which adopted them and provided hunting prints and stuffed fox heads for the wardroom and care packages for the ships crew. There were about a dozen Hunt class destroyers based at Sheerness on the southside of the Thames estuary. We were under the command of Captain Grunow Davies R.N....Captain "D". We also worked with a number of V and W destroyers which I think came from the USA under the Lend-Lease deal. At this time Meynell was carrying out night patrols against E-boats off the coast of Harwich, Yarmouth and Hull.

The crew of H.M.S.Meynell consisted of:-

Commanding Officer –	Lt.Commander Jack Bitmead R.N.
First Lieutenant-	Lt. Geoffrey Mitchell R.N.
Engineer Officer-	Lt. Robert Livesy R.N.V.R
Gunnery Officer-	Lt. Stark R.S.A.N.V.R.
Navigation Officer-	Lt. John Mason R.N.R.
Medical Officer-	Surgeon Lt James R.N.V.R.
Other officers-	Lt. Chuck Wills R.C.N.V.R
	Sub Lt Hamish Taylor R.N.V.R.
	Sub Lt James Fyfe R.N.V.R.
	Midshipman Charles Reid R.N.V.R.

With about 40 Chief and Petty Officers, ERAs and 180 seaman and stokers.

As a midshipman, I was still under training and when not at sea or on watch, spent time in each section of the ship learning how and why it operated. I had to keep a notebook or journal recounting all my activities and observations, which was inspected by the captain every Sunday. I still have it – dated Oct 23 1944 to July 4 1945, by which time the war in Europe had ended.

I was also appointed Captain's Secretary and was responsible for all incoming and outgoing correspondence, preparing and typing reports and letters, keeping all the personnel files up to date, arranging ships pay, etc, etc. I was assisted by a seaman, AB George. This caused some raising of eyebrows when we had visitors and I was heard to address him as George – too familiar.

Our routine was to go to sea in the evening and head for a particular section of the east coast patrol area, marked out by a series of buoys from off Dover to Hull. We would commence patrol at about 7.30 pm and finish at sunrise. During this period we did not encounter any E-boats on the radar. When the weather was rough they did not go to sea, I kept watch on the bridge with the First Lt. and Lt. Wills for the first watch (8.00 – 12.00 pm) and forenoon watch (8.00am to noon) . So I got a good nights sleep. I did not have a cabin. In harbour I slept on the bunk in the chartroom but at sea I had to sling my hammock in the officers bathroom.

On November 10th we received a signal to go on patrol just as it was getting dusk. This was unusual as we normally received the signal the day before . In the halfnight and low tide we ran aground in the harbour on some uncharted object and damaged our propeller shaft. The result was

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a four month refit in London docks (at Green and Siley Weirs Ltd.) until March 9th 1945. One disappointment, however, was that we missed all the support activity for the invasion of Europe.

We were assisted by tug and a sea pilot to Gravesend and then proceeded under our own steam to the West India Docks and finally to the Thames Iron Works Dry Dock. As my home was in London and there was no watchkeeping involved, I was given permission to sleep at home. So for the next four months I had a nine- to- five job!! During this period many of the officers went off on courses. I went on an ASDIC (antisubmarine) course at HMS Osprey at Campbelltown, Argyll, on the west coast of Scotland. At the end of the refit we went through a number of "basin" trials to check the shaft and propeller. Two days later we steamed down the River Thames, under London Bridge to the Thames estuary and on to Sheerness. During this trip Major Leigh Newton, Master of the Meynell Hunt and Chairman of Bass Breweries, was invited on board and made a fine figure on the bridge in his yachting rig. He presented the wardroom with six solid silver tankards, one of which I still possess.

At Sheerness we ammunitioned ship, carried out gunnery trials with our new Bofors guns, swung ship (to check the compasses) and tested out our new automatic plot in the charthouse/operations centre. At the end of the week, on Sunday March 18 we went on our first patrol – No. 6 patrol off Orfordness. Soon after we received a signal from the Shore Plot reporting 6 E-boats ten miles off the Hook of Holland, heading west at 40 knots. We increased speed and set course to intercept. Well illuminated with Starshells and rockets from No.1 gun, we opened fire with the Bofors and No. 2 gun. The enemy replied by firing torpedoes, which were picked up by our Asdic and radio operators, listening in to the Germans. We altered course immediately and the torpedoes passed down our port side. Then they opened fire with close range weapons. We made smoke to screen our position and set off at 40 knots to the northeast. In the meantime another E-boat had crossed the patrol line. Our radar picked him up and we opened up with Starshells and main armament. He made off to the east at speed. It was an exciting night, so soon after our refit. It was the only time we were in action during my time on board.

My training continued with several weeks spent with the Chief Stoker exploring the boiler rooms, engines and auxiliary equipment. The two boiler rooms with seven jets each, provided superheated steam which powered the two propellers through steam turbines. Next I learnt all about our 4inch guns in two twin turrets, one on the foredeck and one aft and all about ammunition, the magazines, depth charges, smoke generators and so on. At sea, on watch, I spent much time plotting our position and recording the time we passed the east coast buoys

VE DAY

VE day on May 8 marked the end of the war in Europe. It brought great excitement and much beer drinking and partying. Young officers were known to raid the Wrens Quarters and pinch their underwear off the clotheslines!! With Germany defeated, our role switched to escorting Thames-Antwerp convoys – the quickest route to the continent. The Belgium and Dutch coasts had been heavily mined and despite the noble efforts of our minesweepers, there were casualties. As escort, we sped to pick up survivors.

On June 4th, in company with HMS Fernie, we sailed for Wilhmeshaven, to show the flag and deliver rifles and equipment to the allied authorities. We provisioned for a two week trip. In Wilhmeshaven we secured alongside a Polish cruiser "Conrad". Much vodka was exchanged and consumed! In August we visited Hamburg and with loan of a jeep were able to tour the German

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countryside, in parts badly damaged by war. On leaving harbour there were many frauleins waving tearfully from the quay. The oldest profession still prospered.

In September we were ordered to Rosyth Dockyard, near Edinburgh, to have our 4inch guns removed and put into "mothballs". At this time I managed to keep a bicycle on board. One day I cycled up to a large estate to see if I could get some rabbit shooting. One of my trophies from Hamburg was a German shotgun. A week later our captain with the Commodore of the dockyard received an invitation for a days shooting with Earl Elgin. Years later, when I was at Oxford, the captain repayed me in full with many days shooting at his family farm at Cholsey. Also at Rosyth was the new aircraft carrier HMS Ocean carrying out trials with Hellcats and Vampires. A rapport was built up with her senior officers, which resulted in us later being posted to escort her to the Mediterranean in December.

In the meantime, we sailed round Cape Wrath in the North of Scotland, visited the Clyde and then anchored off the Isle of Man to provide a fireworks display for the VE and VJ-day celebrations. My mother had met the Governor, Sir Geoffrey Black, before the war. So on my bicycle, I went up to Government House with the introduction from my mother. This triggered off a round of parties between our wardroom, a submarine in harbour and the city of Douglas, culminating with a Victory Ball in the Townhall. The ball was cut short by a recall of the officers and men of HMS Meynell, as an onshore gale had blown up. How we manoeuvred out of port in an on-shore gale with a half-drunk ships company only God can tell.

THE MEDITERRANEAN

Imagine a six month cruise on your own ship in the sunny Med after five years of war-torn Britain. That's what lay ahead of us. After flying trials with HMS Ocean off Portsmouth, in mid-December, we sailed for Gibraltar. We immediately encountered a full force gale in the Bay of Biscay. Everyone was seasick, there was a fire in No.1 boiler room, the motorboat was stove in, and HMS Ocean, some 8 cables ahead, disappeared from view most of the time as we sunk between the crest of the waves

Happily we arrived safely in Gibraltar on December 20th to a land of plenty. There was abundant fruit, vegetables, meat and all the things we missed in England like white bread, Cornflakes, jam and so on. We ate ashore at Jimmys, who fed us steaks that overlapped the plates and half a roast chicken. Sherry was 5 shillings a bottle. On my 20th birthday, December 25th, the Engineer Sub Lieut Holmes and I bicycled round the Rock and ended up gorging on sherry at a Bodega at sixpence a glass. At this time we had lost four of our wartime officers. Mason and the doctor had returned to civvy street and Stark and Wills had returned to their home countries. I now had a cabin to myself and on reaching 20 had been promoted to Sub Lieutenant – after only two years in the Navy.

After our Christmas break in Gibraltar, we sailed to Malta and anchored in Slima Harbour. Now our real work began. Ocean was to carry out deck-landing trials at night. We were her attendant destroyer, laying back a mile on her port quarter, ready to steam in and pick up any unfortunate pilot who ended up in the sea. Thankfully the only disaster was when the Training Commander went out in a Sea Otter, missed his landing and ended up in the sea.. We picked up him and his navigator with little problem. Our routine was to leave Malta on Monday afternoon, carry out landing trials from dusk until about 10 p.m., and then anchor off the south coast of Malta. This continued until Friday when we returned to Slima Harbour for the weekend. Slima was on the northeast side of Malta, well away from the main harbour of Valetta and Naval Headquarters at Fort St. Angelo. One day a messenger arrived with an invitation for "two young officers" to join Colonel -----and his family for

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dinner at the Slima Club. The Colonel turned out to be a prominent Maltese business man and each Saturday night made up a party for his teenage daughters and friends for dinner and dancing at the club. This developed into a number of picnic parties at the weekends. So much so that I was given a lecture by my captain "to beware Maltese girls, as they became round and fat in their twenties!" There was no need to worry!

After three months, HMS Ocean with us as escort was ordered to show the flag and we spent a few days in Alexandria in Egypt and then a week at Limassol, on the south coast of Cyprus. With the offer of a car, the Holmes and myself were driven to the top of Mount Olympus, donned skies and made painful attempts at skiing. In the meantime the Engineer Livesy, a confirmed bachelor, had struck up a relationship with the lighthouse keeper's daughter from Paphos, on the west coast. Multiple signals were exchanged as we passed the lighthouse on our way back to Malta. I was becoming increasingly involved with navigation and was now allowed to keep the morning watch on my own, although the captain was never far away. By the time we set sail for Britain at the end of June, I was granted my Watchkeeping Certificate, (like graduation) and a requirement for any future promotion.

On our return, we were stationed at Harwich, essentially to be decommissioned and mothballed. Later I read in Jane's Book of Fighting Ships that HMS Meynell had been sold to the Chilean Navy and renamed. One by one the officers left for other appointments or to be demobbed. There wasn't much to do except organize a recreation club and watch the Harwich-Hook Ferry go in and out every few days. On October 5th my turn came to be demobbed. I was given some civilian clothes and a ticket to London. Looking back on those three years I was extremely fortunate in having the opportunity of being an officer candidate, training as an officer, serving for two years on a very happy ship with an exceptional captain and fellow officers, who tolerated and moulded an inexperienced midshipman. My whole personality changed, gaining self-confidence, naval discipline and tradition, and management skills. And what a Mediterranean Cruise!!

OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Three days after leaving the Navy, I was enrolled as a freshman at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, reading Chemistry. Why chemistry and why Oxford? I had wanted to study Agriculture (or Rural Economy as Oxford called it!) but without a family farm, it held little hope for the future. I checked with Stonyhurst on my HSC results to find I had done marginally better in chemistry than physics and maths. My mother had talked to a lot of her friends and been advised by a professor at Lever Bros. that Oxford was the place to go for chemistry. So in my last few months in the Navy, I applied to the Government for a University Grant, that was available to ex-servicemen with suitable HSC qualifications., and to Oxford for a place in the Chemistry Department, and also to St. Catherine's, which, being non-residential, was taking the overflow of students from the services.

On my first day at the Chemistry Department, I met another Stonyhurst Boy, Michael Williams, who was a few years older. For the next three years we attended classes, studied, played squash, sailed and partied together. We even had the same tutor, Dr Freddie Brewer, Head of the Inorganic Chemistry Department. He was a poor lecturer but an excellent tutor and administrator. Later he was to become Mayor of Oxford City. The three terms a year were only eight weeks long, but we were expected to stay up to 3 or 4 weeks to study. Mike and I joined the Oxford Union Debating Society, which had numerous comfortable reading rooms, where we could study. During this time Sir John Boyle and Anthony Wedgwood-Benn were presidents, both to later become Ministers. Mike had digs at Iffley, about 3 miles from the centre of Oxford and I had digs at 315 Iffley Road with a Commander Dundas-Grant RNRV. Most weekday afternoons we worked in the labs but on Wednesdays and most weekends we played squash and in the summer months sailed 9ft. dingies on the Thames at Port Meadow.

During the first long summer vacation, I returned to the Grants farm at Coulmore on the Black Isle, across from Inverness. I had a wonderful time haymaking, harvesting, and shooting rabbits. I earned some useful pocket money! The next summer I spent at the Bitmead farm at Cholsey, near Oxford, where I drove a combine harvester and had plenty of shooting. Through an Oxford friend, Chris Bretherton, whose family also lived in Cholsey, I was introduced to Fiona Ingham-Clark, whose family lived at Mill Court, in the same village. Thus started a romance that ended in marriage the following summer

I spent Christmases in Ireland where my mother, who had married Eric Hulme-King, when I went to Oxford, lived at Curraglass House, Co. Kerry. The second Christmas Fiona came with me and at Easter we went to Glen Calladh, the Ingham Clark ancestral home on the Kyles of Bute Scotland, with her parents, Bobby and Nancy, and her brother Alastair.

The Oxford system of exams, "Finals", came at the end of three years, when everything that we had studied was covered by six written papers and three practicals. (No wonder there were a few suicides.) we also had exams on X-ray Crystallography and Biochemistry which we had taken as extra subjects. We then had to wait several weeks for the results. Happily we both passed and I received a second class honours degree, my B.A. Due to war service and paying a years college dues (a few pounds) we were given our M.A. degrees a year later, without having to write a thesis. The following year I applied for membership of the Royal Society of Chemistry, which was granted on the strength of my degrees.

THE WEDDING

On leaving Oxford at the end of June 1949, I spent two weeks at Mill Court, helping my future in-laws with their large garden. I then joined my mother and Eric in London. On July 19th I was married to Fiona at St. James Church, Spanish Place, with a nuptial mass said by Monsignor Val Elwes, our chaplain at Oxford. A piper met us at the church door and a horse-drawn carriage, organized by Alastair, took us to the reception at Gunters. Over a hundred guests attended, including my Aunt Madge from Bath. She and Fiona's step-mother, Nancy, had a great gossip together. A car drove us to Mill Court, where we switched to my Austin 7, which I had bought during my last term at Oxford. We set off for Fishguard and took the ferry to Ireland, where we spent two weeks at Curraglass House, which my mother had lent us. We then had ten days at Cannero on Lago Maggiore in Italy, a wedding present from Bobby and Nancy.

BURT, BOULTON AND HEYWOOD

During our last term at Oxford, Mike and I were approached by several companies recruiting young graduates. With wartime inventions and the postwar demand for plastics, pharmaceuticals, farm chemicals and synthetic fibres, the chemical industry was expanding rapidly. Thus there was a high demand for chemistry graduates. I had been interviewed by ICI, which had been formed in 1926 from my grandfather's company, Nobel Industries Ltd, but all the opportunities were in the north of England, and I wanted to remain in the London area. Eventually both Mike and I accepted research jobs offered by Captain China of BB and H at Belvedere in Kent. So in August, I bought a house called Warren Wood at Bexley Heath, an outer suburb of London to the south of the Thames. Most mornings I took the train and bus to Silvertown in East London to supervise the manufacture of 2,4 D, a selective weedkiller. This was an important period for me, as I was exposed to industry for the first time and learnt to work with a foreman and chemical workers. In the afternoons I returned to Belvedere and worked in the laboratory on formulating emulsions.

A German au pair girl came to stay and helped with our firstborn, Catriona Jean, born on July 15th 1950. In those days fathers were not allowed to attend births and I was watching the Eton Harrow cricket match at Lords when the news came through. I was allowed to see the baby the next day! Sadly my mother had died three weeks earlier and so never saw her grand daughter. She had had a lump on her breast and had come to London for the operation. She died during the operation when her heart stopped. The lump turned out to be malignant. She was buried at the Marylebone Cemetery in North London.

Up to this time I had spent 14 years of institutional life and was anxious for a change. I went over to Ireland to clear up my mother's affairs. Eric, my step-father was not well and had been advised to go to a warmer climate – Portugal. As it was difficult to get a quick sale, I agreed to buy the 50 acres of 'bog and rock' and take a year's sabbatical. Fiona jumped at the idea. and brought over her horse from Mill Court. I resigned from BB and H and in November we moved to Curraglass House and Fiona brought over her horse from Mill Court.

CURRAGLASS HOUSE

Eric had bought the house when he married my mother in 1946 and had renovated it adding bathrooms and rooms at the back for the two Irish maids and the cattleman, Scanal. The next year and a half were happy times with my mothers corgies, two horses, a pony and trap, cows for milk and, of course the baby. We were a bit isolated at Glenflesk, being 7 miles from Killarney, where we had a number of friends, particularly the Hillards, who owned the local Emporium and the shoe factory. We played golf, and badmington, and extensively toured the Kerry countryside. One evening we went to the ball at the Golf Club. As usual the bar closed at ten o'clock and in came the Guardie (the local police) to check and then disappeared to the kitchens. As soon as they had gone, the bar opened up again. Truly Irish! In the winter we often played bridge. I shot woodcock, snipe and also pheasants on the Macgillicuddy estate. My favorite outings were with an Irish neighbour, Michael Joseph O'Donoghue, clambouring over the hillsides and bogs shooting woodcock. We usually came home with 4 or 5. On the farm I bought 6 breeding sows, which produced litters of 12 to 16 every six months. I sold the bonnums (piglets) at the weekly Killarney markets. I bought a Farmall Cub tractor and ploughed a further 5 acres for barley and won first prize at the Killarney Show. We had half a dozen steers for fattening. I enjoyed the farm life.

On November 20th 1951 Caroline Margaret was born and christened in Killarney Cathedral. In the nursing home the sister had given the Registrar for Births the wrong name "Reed". As a result, when we received her birth certificate, there was an asterisk in the top left hand corner saying "FOR REED READ REID". How Irish! The girls loved growing up in the country atmosphere. The grandparents, Bobby with Nancy and later Audrey came over to visit us.

MONSANTO CHEMICAL COMPANY

Early in 1952, it was clear that I had return to the chemical industry. I had a series of interviews, ending up with offers from ICI and Monsanto. As the Monsanto one was near London and they offered me L50 a year more, I took it. For the next 30 years I worked for them, being posted all over the world. Audrey let us use her flat in London for a month and then we rented in Inverness Terrace, while we looked for a house in Gerrards Cross, near Fulmer Hall, Monsanto's laboratories. We moved into Jordans End, on the Oxford Road, 20 miles west of London, where we lived for the next 10 years. Our first son, Iain Alasdair (named after myself and his uncle) was born on July 25th 1953 and Charles Gordon (named after myself and his grandmother Lady Fitch nee Gordon). Here we had a series of German au pair girls who came to learn English and look after the children.

My first two years with Monsanto were spent at their Technical service Laboratories at Fulmer Hall, two miles from Gerrards Cross. I worked on latex paints and formulating wood preservatives (pentachlorophenol), for which I obtained a patent. One day an urgent phone call from Waddesdon Manor, the Rothschild "Chateau", some 20 miles from Gerrards Cross, seeking advice on treating the rafters for dryrot. As all our salesmen were away, I was sent over to assist with the problem which involved treatment with pentachlorophenol. After dealing with the problem, the butler gave me a tour of the house with its magnificent French furniture. This was some five years before it was opened to the public. One day I received a phone call from Mike Waugh in London, who interviewed me for a job as a Technical Representative in the prestigious Rubber Chemicals Division. First I was sent to the Avon Tyre Company at Melksham, Wilts, for two weeks training in

their factory and later as a special favour from Goodyear, I spent a month at their factory in Wolverhampton in their training squadron. Not only did I get excellent training on how tyres were made but also contacts that were invaluable in later years around the world. The next four years were spent on the road selling to half the rubber companies in the U.K. John Mason had the other half.

When I filled in my application form to join Monsanto, it asked if I was prepared to travel. I had answered "YES". Now after six years I was asked to the Far East in January 1958. I was thrilled. The selling trip covered Turkey, Lebanon, Pakistan, India – Calcutta, Bombay, and Cochin-, Burma, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan and Korea. I came home via Honolulu and Washington, where I stayed with Bob and Jane Curtin (US airforce friends from Gerrards Cross). The trip took 78 days, two less than Jules Verne! What made such a long trip possible was slower aircraft, only flying in the daytime, all first class and the full attention of our agents. Shorter trips were made in 1959, '60 and '61. In December 1958 I went on a sales trip to Poland with Noel Thomas and the following summer, we rented a Renault in Vienna and covered Hungary and Poland for three weeks. The friendliness of the factory and purchasing people was quite overwhelming.

While I was away on my FAR East trip in 1958, Fiona and the four children, (aged 8, 7,5 and 4) went to stay in Seefeld, Austria. This was partly to get away from the ghastly winter weather but also to let them learn to ski. They are now all beautiful skiers. We were all reunited at the end of March. Late May I came home from a Catenian meeting to find that Fiona had left. A week later I found that she had gone back to Seefeld and was with Curt Carolus, who had been their ski instructor. Although we had Chrystal, our au pair girl, I needed more help to look after the family. Audrey came to the rescue and through the agency looking after her mother, Lady Fitch, and found Sister Jacqui Bull to come for two weeks. (This included a garden party on the first Sunday of June with 50 guests!) Jacqui stayed for over a year and then went "special nursing" until returning to Australia in early 1960, as her work permit expired.

At this time the girls were at Holy Cross Convent at Gerrards Cross. We entered them to board at the Holy Child School at Mayfield. (I had been at their day school at Cavandish Square, London, as a little boy). It was a wrench but gave them stability for most of the year and they spent their summer holidays with Audrey at Brighton. The boys were at the Irish run Catholic Day School in Gerrards Cross, but were not doing too well. So Gordon was moved to Oakend School and Ian to special school in High Wycomb to improve his reading.

In June 1960 Fiona and I were divorced. During my Far East trip I had met Jacqui's boat in Singapore and we decided to get married, but I was still hung up on the Church's disapproval. In December Jacqui flew back to England and after much soul searching, I decided to go ahead with our marriage. On December 2nd, we were married at the Chelsea Registry Office with Hugh and Edith Butterworth and John and Sheila Sproule, as witnesses. The Butterworths gave us a wonderful reception at their house in Gerrards Cross, catered by Fortnum and Mason. We had a car "to drive us to Stratford-on-Avon" but ended up at London Airport to be heralded by more of our friends and flew to Paris for a week's honeymoon.

The previous January we had gone to Kitzbuhel in the Austrian Tyrol for a two weeks ski holiday. In January 1961 we took all the children to Sistrans for Christmas and they then joined

Fiona and Curt for New Year. Everyone got on very well. On October 4 Dominique Jann was born in St. Joseph's Nursing Home in High Wycombe.

After my Far East trip in 1961, I was promoted to Sales Manager in charge of the Rubber Chemicals Group in the U.K. and supplying the world except for North America, which MCC covered. My travel now was confined to Tyre customers in Europe and my favorite account, The Irish Dunlop Co., Cork. Jacqui and I visited them at Easter that year. In spring 1963, I was due to visit India, the Phillipines and to sort out some problems with Monsanto Australia. Jacqui's mother, Sadie, who was now living in London, looked after the house and Dominique and the boys. I paid Jacqui's fare to Australia and we met up in Bombay, and had a Fabulous time in the Phillipines with our agent and the Collins-Taylors. I was Elspeth's god-father. We were met in Sydney by all Jacqui's relatives and then stayed with the Deals at Avalon. We returned via Toronto and New York.

In November, we were coming back from the theatre in Windsor with the Butterworths, when Edith told us that the Meyers' house in Gerrards Cross was up for sale. We called on them the next day and after the third gin and tonic offered to buy the house. Some quick talking with the agent who had another client and the house was ours. Soon after we sold Jordans end, which had served me well for ten years and moved into Jonesboro', which we named Khancoban House, after Jacqui's cousins property in the Snowy Mountains. It was an Edwardian house, built in 1906 and standing in an acre of gardens, with lovely lawns and huge Deodar trees. The house was in very good condition, but we added fitted cupboards to the bedrooms, a shower in ours and fitted new kitchen units in the old scullery. We moved into the house in a snowstorm in January 1963. In the garden we cut down a 60 year old Deodar that had been planted 15 feet from the house and whose branches now swept the roof. We thought the Meyers would be upset but they were thrilled and had never had the courage to do it.. With the help of our gardener, Harold, who came on Saturday afternoons we established a herbaceous border with 100 plants from Jacksons and established a kitchen garden with currant and gooseberry bushes. In the front we planted a rose garden. It was a house we could live in for the next 50 years!!

At this time Monsanto decided that Sales managers did not need cars. So I now had to travel to London by train, leaving at 7 a.m. and not getting back until after 6 p.m. Most of my travel was to tyre companies in Europe. After a visit to Dunlop, Germany, with John Mason, Jack Payne and our agent we spent the night at Aussmanshausen on the Rhine. The evening before, we took Lore (my earlier au pair girl) to dinner and ended up at her father's winery, where we drank delicious wines until after midnight. Next day we counted a dozen empty bottles in the asparagus bed. Just before New Year 1964, I flew to Rio and San Paulo to negotiate with the Banco do Brasil to release letters of credit from the tyre companies. It was an interesting first visit to South America.

With the loss of my car, the change from John Mason to Don Cameron as my boss and a general feeling of frustration, I wrote to Ken Stelloh, Director of Marketing for Monsanto's International Division in St. Louis. I had met him on my trip in 1963 and put my name down forward for a post in the new Asia Sales Office in Hong Kong. Monsanto was taking over the agents office from Sydney Hill, who wanted to retire. Brewen Cheney would be my boss and I would be Area Director for Organic Division, which included Rubber Chemicals, covering South East Asia.

OFF TO THE USA.

When I told Jacqui, I had got the job, she said we couldn't go as she had planned all the girls' weddings from our lovely house. The next question was how do we move? "Well, call Harrods, of course." Jacqui did so. "One moment, Madam. Where do you want to go? Have you an inventory and valuation of the furniture? We will send our Mr.B---- down to you on Monday" And so it was arranged. Next we had to get the court's permission to take the children out of the country. Fiona raised no objections. The girls, who were now at Mayfield, would spend Christmas and Easter holidays with her and come out to Hong Kong for the summer. The boys would fly back to her for Christmas. Thankfully Monsanto was paying the air fares, as we were on an overseas posting. For the last Easter holiday in England in 1964, we rented a river cruiser on the River Thames, which we boarded at Cookham. We met up with friends at the local pub, and while we were drinking, Iain fell in the water. He had to be washed down with the only water available, a saucepan of artichoke water. Next day we picked up Sadie, Dominique and the Spencers at Maidenhead and had a lovely day on the river going past Windsor Castle. For the next four days we went upstream through countless locks to Wallingford, where we welcomed Bobby and Nancy on board. Next day we went on to the Old Abbey at Dorchester and then started downstream back to Bourne End. All acclaimed it was one of the best family holidays. The children then spent the summer holidays with Audrey at her villa at Eze-sur-mer in the South of France. Jacqui and I had a business trip to Rome and then a short visit to Pisa and Florence.

In September 1964, we sold the house, Harrods packed up the furniture and we went off to USA – sadly leaving the girls at Mayfield. (Later when we were living in Hong Kong we bought 3 small tape recorders- one for the girls, one for us and one for Sadie, and each week we exchanged tapes with everyone's news.) At St. Louis we were met by Bill Fisher and spent three nights at the King Brothers Motel at Clayton. We then moved into a small rented house at Big Bend Boulevard, Kirkwood. Monsanto provided us with a two-door Ford Fairlane. The boys went to Kirkwood Primary School and Dom to the playschool next door to us. We had several Monsanto friends nearby, George and Bev George and the Tungs. We met an English couple, Don and Sue Clark, and spent many weekends exploring the surrounding countryside. We also went to the Climatorn and Jewel Box at the Botanical Gardens, the Zoo, Forrest Park, a paddle steamer trip on the Mississippi, the old Basilica and watched the Arch being built – "The Gateway to the West". I went into hospital for an emergency appendectomy and was discharged two days later. At Monsanto, I linked up with Don Blair, (whom we were later to meet again in Akron.) and spent time with all the Product Groups of International Division. By March 1965 the orientation was complete and we set off for Hong Kong. First the boys went to Austria to spend Easter with Fiona, and we took Dom to Disneyland and then on to Honolulu and Tokyo, where I met Brewin Cheney, my new boss. In Hong Kong, we were met by Chris Lovett and stayed at the Repulse Bay Hotel until our furniture arrived.

From hereon, the Reid Saga is mainly covered by the Christmas letters we sent out each year describing the year's activities. These have been combined in a bound booklet spanning 1964 to 1990 and a copy given to each of the children.

HONGKONG

These were happy years, all four and a half of them, from April 1965 to July 1969. We rented a large flat in one of three tower blocks at Wong Nei Chong Gap at the top of Happy Valley, with four bedrooms, a sitting room, dining room. There was also a small flat for the servants, Ah Chung, his wife and the wash amah. The girls, who were still at Mayfield, spent Christmas and Easter holidays with Fiona at Seefeld and came out to us for the summer holidays. There were so many expatriate children coming to Hong Kong that the place was alive with balls at the Hong Kong club, launch parties and any number of private parties. The last bus from central left at 11.30 pm so the girls were home by midnight. The boys went to the King George V grammar school on Kowloonside the only English Secondary School in the colony. For the last year they went to the new International School at Repulse Bay and were joined by Caroline for her year 12.

We took a half share in a 35ft pleasure junk, moored at Deep Water Bay and went out each weekend on Saturday or Sunday. All the kids learnt to swim and dive and later learnt to sail on a Sailfish.

In December 1967, I was due for leave and we went to Sydney for Christmas, renting a house at Clareville near Sydney for six weeks. We all enjoyed the Australian atmosphere and way of life.

AKRON, OHIO

We lived here from September 1969 to March 1976. Before leaving Hong Kong we went to the American Consulate General to obtain our residents visas (Green Cards), which we needed to enter and live in the USA. At this time Charry was attending a Teachers Training course in London, Caroline was due to go to college and the boys needed to go to an American highschool. So I lobbied Monsanto for a job back in the US, especially if I could go back to the Organic Division. Costas Anagnostopoulos offered me a planning job with rubber chemicals in Akron. Later I was to move with him to Textiles Division as Planning Director for Industrial Yarns, which was mainly tyre yarn. We bought a house at 2154 Westpark Road. Caroline went to Akron University, the boys attended Walsh Jesuit High School, and Dominique went to Our Lady of the Elms Secondary school. My job was to organise the planning for tyre yarn production and attended monthly meetings in St Louis, Atlanta or Greenville, SC.

Caroline spent a year at Akron University and then moved to Miami University at Oxford, Ohio to major in Geography. Her last year was spent in their overseas campus at Luxembourg. She became engaged to Michael Bowen, whom she had met at Akron University. They were married in the summer of 1972 at our local Catholic Church by a Father from the Jesuit High School with a reception at the Akron Country Club. At that time Michael worked for one of the cigarette companies, but later joined Pepsi. After high school Iain went to Dayton University to major in electrical engineering. During his last semester he was offered a job by Reliance Electric in their office in Dayton. He has been with them ever since but is now living in Chesapeake, Virginia. Gordon went to Ohio State University to major in horticulture. During this time I spent many weekends with Jack Payne, whom I had known from Fulmer Hall days in England. We joined a club and went out shooting, pheasant and chukka, which kept our ladders full. On Saturday summer evenings Jacqui and I went to the summer home of the Cleveland Orchestra at Blossom Music

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Centre for a series of concerts and also to Gilbert and Sullivan operettas put on by Kent State University. On July 21 1975 I went into Akron General Hospital for major surgery on a slipped disc. This was followed by several weeks of convalescence during which time I collected extensive data on tyre yarn usage in cars, trucks and recreational vehicles. This data was analysed by computer and fed on to charts covering the forecast for the next five years. These charts were of great interest to the tyre companies and were the basis for many presentations, which in turn gave us an insight into their future tyre yarn requirements.

Early in 1976, I received a phone call from John Mason (my boss in London days) to see if I would come to Brussels and be responsible for opening up a Monsanto office in Moscow. There were many perks with this including a supplementary salary for Moscow and overseas travel as I would be an expat from the USA. However, the Russians wanted an American citizen. As I had lived in the USA for more than 5 years I applied for US citizenship and was fast tracked by Monsanto's office in Washington and the senator for Ohio. So with some regrets, leaving Caroline, Iain and Gordon behind we set off for Brussels in April 1976.

BRUSSELS AND MOSCOW

After the usual red tape of getting our resident papers and checking in with the local commune, we managed to buy a three bedroom apartment on the 5th floor of 7 Square de Vieux Tilleul, which suited us well as we only had Dominique living with us at this time. She went to an nearby International school, but as we would be doing a lot of traveling, we found a boarding school in Devon, where she spent the next three years with holidays in Brussels.

About once a month I would visit Moscow, usually with Mike Waugh, Mike Smith and one of the Rubber Chemical or Agriculture salesmen. Meetings were set up for us with the various Ministries by our agents Golodetz, all of whom spoke Russian and English. We stayed in one of the few hotels at that time - The Metro, National or Rossia. Our hotel reservations were given to us on arrival at the Moscow Airport !! At the hotel we were provided with a car and driver. We had very good relations with the buying organizations as they were anxious to obtain our rubber and agricultural chemicals, and instruments. Back in Brussels each morning I attended Berlitz to learn Russian. I never became very proficient but could at least get along with casual conversation and could read the Russian script. Our visits to Moscow were sponsored by GKNT (the State Committee for Science and Technology), which ranked higher than the Ministries. As the US had banned technology and computer companies like Hewlett Packard and GE, the Russians were very happy to welcome chemical companies. GKNT had offered to sponsor us to open an office in Moscow and Monsanto had chosen me for the job as I was from USA and had wide experience of Monsanto's various Divisions. In December 1977, GKNT approved our request to open an office and I was allocated a secretary, Nadia, and a driver Gennia. Monsanto bought a Mercedes, which was shipped in from Brussels for the office and Gennia took over. We operated out of a small office and I commuted from Brussels as necessary. At this time the Chamber of Commerce was building an International Trade Centre, a 20 storey office building for foreign companies next to their Soyuz Hotel. I applied for office space (with a kitchen) on the 19th floor and worked with the Polish office constructor to plan out the office with a conference room and 4 small offices plus mine, which overlooked the Moscow river! All this took nearly a year. When I went to Moscow for a couple of weeks at a time Jacqui would join me in the Soyuz Hotel, where we had a small suite. As I was an American citizen

representing an American company, my mail was sent to the Us Consulate Office. We were also allowed to use the cafeteria, Uncle Sam's, whose Yugoslav staff provided excellent meals. I could also get fresh milk shipped down from Finland. At the weekends the expat community gathered at the Down Under Club at the Australian Embassy. (Jacqui was the Ambassadors only parishioner!!), on Saturday evenings we went to the NZ Embassy and for Sunday Lunch to the British Commercial Office. As I was born in Britain and was still a British subject, I received many invitations to parties at the British Embassy, including a party given for the retiring Ambassador on a boat on the Moscow river. I danced I Scottish reel with the anbossador's wife, who was a Scot. There were so few foreign residents or tourists in Moscow that the Embassies welcomed the few resident businessmen. During the next four years there were a number of International Exhibitions, in which Monsanto took part; one in Tibilisi, Georgia, another in Yerevan, Armenia and several in Moscow. A team of about a eight people would come out from Brussels to man the stand and we all got the opportunity of seeing the countryside and sampling the local specialities. One time our stand in Moscow was visited by the Prime Minister, Kosygen, who came and shook my hand!! In 1980, the year of the Moscow Olympics, all offices were closed down and all expats sent away to make room in the hotels for tourists. As there was little activity in Moscow in July and August, each year we rented a house for a month in the Algarve, South Portugal. We had Akron friends to stay one year and Norman and Chary another. All the houses had swimming pools and eating out in the villages was excellent and very cheap. By the summer of 1981 my tour of duty was complete and I handed over to a Frenchman, who had studied at Moscow University.

Back in Brussels, I joined the "chasse" on the Prince de Narode estate, with Mike Waugh, Nick Chorine and Jack Payne, which was run by the postman, Urbane. On Saturdays in October and December, we had 6 drives, with beaters, before lunch for pheasants, duck and an occasional woodcock. Many of the drives were quite tricky with high flying birds. We then went to a barn at the dower house where one of the members, a restaurantier, put on a fabulous lunch.

They had been five stressful years, but a wonderful experience, and getting away to Portugal for the summers was very relaxing. Back in Brussels, Monsanto Europe no longer had a job for me and St. Louis had no opportunities in the Textile or Organic Divisions. I had worked myself out of a job!! So Monsanto gave me early retirement with full pension (and a bonus pension until I was 62). So it was time to leave Brussels. Jacqui and I had considered many places we would like to retire to, but as her father and mother lived in Sydney and I had no ties to the UK, we decided to go to Australia. The Ambassador in Moscow had given me a six months visa. So off we went again, with our furniture to follow.

SYDNEY

During home leave in 1980, when we attended the International Wine and Food Society reunion in Sydney and Melbourne, we went to visit a 1100 acre dairy farm at Box Hill, (30 miles NW of Sydney), which was being sold off in 25 acre lots. We picked one with 20 acres of pasture, running down to 5 acres of bush with a stream running through it. There were about a dozen large gum trees in the pasture. Near the top of the property we built a house designed by a Sydney architect. The 'big' room was 25 X 50 feet, with a fireplace at one end and a long kitchen bench at the other with cupboards and larder. The room had dining, sitting and writing areas. Around it was a 10ft veranda and all the roofs were white, to reflect the sun. Four high up fans in the big room also helped to keep it cool. Behind the kitchen end was a master bedroom, two dressing rooms and a bathroom with a glass ceiling over the bath! On one side a veranda led to two guest rooms with their own bathroom and at the back of the house was a two-car, one tractor garage and a workshop.

The house and driveway were fenced off and the fields divided into three paddocks with water laid on which was pumped up from the dam. Originally I had ten six month old Hereford steers for fattening but later found that six was better especially if there was a drought. We dug a huge pond (dam) at the bottom of the hill before the bush area, which kept the garden and the cows in drinking water. After 18 months I sent the cattle to the local auction and kept one for slaughter by the local butcher. I insisted on hanging the meat for 3 weeks, which provided lovely tender meat for the house and our friends.

Around the house were lawns and garden with a "Ha-Ha" wall on the lower side. I built the wall and some of the neighbours walls with rocks from the bottom of the property. Around the house were 4 huge 8ft high tanks to collect the roof water for the house. I had a slasher fixed to the tractor so that I could mow the fields when the grass got too long and to keep down the weeds. I enjoyed the farm life.

For entertainment we had yearly tickets for the matinee performances at the Opera House and the State Theatre, which took us into the city twice a month. My neighbour, Ted Pike, and I were on the committee of the Museum of Fire at Penrith and helped to renovate an old coal fired power house where it was housed. We worked on this off and on for eight years. I also volunteered at the Library of the University of Western Sydney, where I catalogued all the art in the various offices and compiled it on a computer, using Windows for the first time! I worked with the Windsor Public Library and organized two tours to Parliament House in Sydney to have lunch with the Speaker in his private dining room. Ken Rizolli was the member for Windsor. So there was plenty to do! When I arrived in Box Hill, Jacqui's cousin Rob Simpson took me to Rotary meeting at Kenthurst. I was a member for 14 years, serving as treasurer, secretary and President. Later I joined the Rotary Club of East Sydney.

Caroline and Norman were posted to Fidelity in Hong Kong. In 1985 we visited them and went on a two week tour with them to China. It was still very restrictive, but fascinating. Gordon was getting tired of working for Gemlawn and wanted to come to Australia. We helped him get his resident visa and he stayed with us until he married Dale Green and

bought his own house near us at Windsor. Dominique had come out from England in 1983, so half the family were in Australia and half in USA!

About every two years, we took a trip to the US to visit Caroline's and Iain's families and attend the grandchildren's High School Graduation. By this time Caroline was in Montana and Iain still in Dayton. One year we continued on to Alaska, flew from Vancouver to Anchorage, and then took the train to Fairbanks via Denali park. After Fairbanks we took a bus trip to Prudoe Bay, along the oil pipeline. A remarkable trip. The bus driver was a University Professor and gave us a very interesting running commentary as we went along. We then sailed back to Vancouver on the SS Rotterdam.

In February 1975, Jacqui complained of a pain in her back. X-rays and an MRI scan found nothing and the pain continued. In June she had an ultrasound scan which showed a large lump on her pancreas and was taken to hospital. After a long talk with the surgeon, who pointed out the complexity of the operation and gave it a less than 50% chance of success as the tumour was malignant. She was persuaded not to have the operation. Her wish was to see Caroline and Iain and their families in USA. By this time she was taking morphine for the pain and under hospice care. We flew to Bozeman, MT, and stayed for a week, and Iain flew over from Dayton. On our return she spent more time in hospital and at the Lottee Stuart nursing home. On December 30th she died. The cremation service was carried out by Rev. J. Reid, the son of my Rotary friend, John Reid. I made arrangements to move into the Anglican Retirement village and put the house and farm up for sale.

In June I took off with Qantas and British Airways on a round the world trip visiting Caroline for six weeks, renting a condo at Big Sky so that I could readily visit Yellowstone Park. The Cheneys, Nathan, Peter and Iain all came to stay with me and visit Yellowstone. I then spent three weeks with Caroline and then took off to visit Jeff and Judy Boughrums in Las Vegas. At London Airport, I rented a car and explored several of the National Trust Houses in SW England and stayed with my cousins, the Halls. Then on to Dunfriesshire and my cousins, the Healds, and the Collins-Taylors. I then flew to Brussels to stay with the Cockburns and Waughs in Brussels. The next leg was to Hong Kong to stay with my god-daughter, Elspeth Collins-Taylor, who was on the staff of the Governor. I stayed in her cottage in the grounds of Government House! On my return I moved into the retirement village but still kept up with Kenthurst Rotary. All the members were very supportive.

During an earlier trip to Thailand, I learnt about ISP (International Study Programs), which was run by two retired teachers and led by a previous prime minister, Gough Whitlam and his wife, Margaret. They were advertising a three week tour of South America. This was one of the few places in the world that I had not been to. So I put my name down. On October, we met at Sydney Airport, and glancing round my fellow travelers, I noticed one lady, whom I considered "a Lady of Class". Most of the group of 28 were married couples but there were half a dozen of us, who were paired off on the bus and flights. I got to sit next to Nancy Cash on several occasions to find that we had a lot in common. By the end of the first week we had formed an attachment. By the end of the trip we were in love. The rest is told by Nancy in her book "Nancy and Charles"!!!