



Peter Clement Bartrum
1907 - 2008
Photo September 1986

Peter Bartrum Reminiscences

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REMINISCENCES Part 1

I, Peter Clement Bartrum was born on 4 December 1907 at 12 Heath Mansions, at the top of Holly Hill, Hampstead, and the earliest thing that I remember is coming out along the entrance path with my nanny and seeing the two dusky Greek children who also lived there. I must have been 3 or less as we moved to 32 Willoughby Road in February 1911. The front room on the first floor was the nursery and in the bay window the floor had been raised about six inches for the lady who had lived there previously so that she could see out of the window. It was an ideal place to play with toys.

The nursery opened directly into the back room which was the bedroom. Elizabeth, then called Betty, who was also born in Heath Mansions, and I slept there in two beds with nanny in the middle. Before she came to bed, she and the maid would talk in the front room and I remember hearing some horrific stories. It was probably somewhat later that I remember, presumably before nanny came to bed, that Betty and I were both standing up in bed and I was explaining to Betty how I differed from her. Helen who was born in 1910 slept in a cot in the upstairs front bedroom with mother and daddy.

Betty and I were always very close. I think we had very similar genes, very different from Helen's. In particular it is clear that Betty and I inherited the same genes from our father, representing an interest in mathematics.

My first sight of the sea was in August 1910 when I went with Mother and Daddy to Felixstowe. I am told that I complained that there was 'too much water'.

My only living grandparent was my father's mother, Granny, who lived at 14 Gayton Crescent with my aunts Florence and Gertrude. We all used to go there to tea on Sundays. The children had their own tea cups and saucers and plates. Mine had writing on the plate: 'If you can't be aisy be as aisy as you can'. On the way home down the steep part of Willow Road (Willow Hill?), Daddy used to take Betty and me by the hand and we went skipity skop down the hill. Later Granny and the two aunts moved to a smaller house, 4 Pilgrim's Lane. When granny died in 1921 aunt Florence went to Thanet to live with aunt Janet, and aunt Gertrude came to live in Willoughby Road..

When we were quite young Daddy got a carpenter to make a set of building bricks consisting of pieces measuring in inches 2x1x1, 3x1x1, 6x1x1, and 3x2x1. Later he had a set of larger bricks made. They came to be known as the little bricks and the big bricks. I remembered the size and numbers of the little bricks so well that in Bermuda I was able to have a similar set made for Jonathan in about 1940.

For Christmas when I was about six Daddy gave me a Meccano set size O which I loved though I could not make much with it. But I saved up my pocket money of sixpence a week to buy more bits and pieces and eventually had quite a useful collection.

Auntie Gertrude was my godmother. In September 1913 (mother's diary) Betty and I began 'school' with Auntie Gertrude. She took us in a small room at the top of the stairs. I remember in learning to read our first long words: Penmanship and Midshipman.

GWEN AUSTIN

Gwen and I first met when I went to kindergarten under her mother in Well Road. I was then 4 but do not actually remember this. Later the Austins moved to a house more or less opposite us in Willoughby Road, Mrs Austin was a retired missionary and Mr Austin was a wealthy business man who, according to Gwen, made shoe laces. I think rather more than that. I was once taken to his factory where there was a terrific clatter as the machinery moved the bobbins in opposite directions to make a double plait such as one finds on a blind cord. Gwen and I got very close. She was a bit domineering but we got on together all right.

THE ISLAND

My parents made friends with other parents in the neighbourhood. Besides the Austins, the Spencers opposite at the corner of Rudall Crescent, and the Fullers also in Rudall Crescent. Thus we got to know Mary Spencer and Elspeth Fuller, who was actually adopted. She called Mr Fuller 'Dumbbell'. Mr Spencer was a retired prospector of some sort in the tropics, not in good health, and Mr Fuller was headmaster of a school in London. Gwen, Mary, Elspeth, Betty, Helen and I were a group who did a lot of things together and somehow we came to call ourselves 'The Island'.

Another family whom we knew fairly well were the Turners. They lived in Gayton Crescent and their garden came down to Willoughby Road where there was a wooden fence and a gate. I think we got to know them because

Mrs Turner was a singer and mother used to play the piano for her. Mr Turner's business was paper. They had a large family: Stephen, Brian, Enid, Kathleen, Patrick and Desmond, twins, and Irene. I remember Mr Turner taking me and Brian to the baths in Finchley Road. Stephen had some other interest and didn't come.

On 15 May 1912 Helen had been sent to Auntie Janet's school, Valetta House, in Broadstairs, because she was unwell. While there she had a gland removed from her neck. She was still there when Betty and I went there with Mother on July 17 [From Mother's diary]. I remember that Betty and I slept in the same bed at opposite ends. When Auntie Janet retired the school was taken over by Miss Critall who renamed it 'Bartrum Gables'

After a lot of rehearsing Betty, Helen and I took part in a show at the Mission Hall, Hampstead. Helen and I were dressed in pyjamas but Elizabeth says that she had to wear a nightdress, much to her annoyance. We followed the leader, Miss May, who had Helen on her back and she sang 'Give me a piggy-back' [This was on 11 February 1914 according to Mother's diary. She says 'It brought the house down'].

Frances Sutton came as nanny on 28 February 1913 according to Mother's diary. She had a brother, Tom Sutton, who was a vergier at Hampstead Parish Church. Their father was a taxi driver. They had the first gramophone that I remember. It had a horn and sounded tinny.. Later I remember when Mother, Betty, Helen and I were approaching home after church on Christmas day, I said, "Hark, music" and we found that Daddy had bought a more modern gramophone, playing with a needle but no horn. I think it was playing Bach's Concerto for two violins.

Both my parents were musical and came from musical families. My father's father, Arthur Clement Bartrum, was an organist, and wrote some church music which was published. My mother's mother, Victoria Shattock née Sibold, had a brother, I forget which one, who published a Victorian ballad. I found copies of these at home and gave them to the British Library because they were not in the Library's music catalogue.

I believe it was Arthur Clement Bartrum who introduced the 'Bartrum Whistle', supposed to be based on the song of the blackbird. It was used by my father and all our family to use when out of doors to call attention. It was especially useful in crowds. The notes were G, B, D, B, D and the answer was D. B. G. lower D, G. I am sorry to say it has not been taken up by the next generation although my son, Jonathan, knows it.

My father was a tenor and sang in the church choir for a while. He organised a group of people who used to come to our house for a 'Sing-song'. I remember hearing them from my bed in the evening singing 'Airy, fairy Lilian...she wont tell me if she loves me'. He had a whole lot of part songs and madrigals which later formed part of my extensive collection for my Madrigal Groups in Bermuda.

My mother was an excellent pianist and only just failed in some examination for which she had been put in by the Hampstead Parish Church organist, George Aitken.

Mother used to make us do exercises in the drawing room while she played the piano. One of the things she played was a transcription for piano of the Gigue in Corelli's Violin Sonata in A, Op.5 No.9.

I don't know when we stopped calling our mother 'mummy' but we never stopped calling our father 'daddy'.

When I was seven I went to school at St. John's House in Shepherd's Walk. The colours were Light Blue and Dark Blue. I think the Headmaster, Mr Lewis, was Oxford and the Assistant, Mr Simpson, was Cambridge. My first teacher was Miss Hasenclever who lived in Willoughby Road. I began learning Latin immediately. Our French teacher at first, whose name I forget, used to say between sentences 'alors'. Mr Simpson taught maths. One of the boys there named Williams was in my class and we sat next to each other in a maths exam. He asked me to help him, which I did, and I was chagrined when he beat me in the marks.

There was a changing room in which there were rings hanging from the ceiling. I was swinging up with my legs over my head when I must have fainted, for the next I knew was that I was lying on the floor. I was dazed by concussion and was walked home by Mr Lewis. I had to stay in bed for some time. A very nice master was Mr Bury. War broke out in 1914 while I was there, and the French teacher left. Teachers were hard to get and Mrs Bury was roped in. She was not a good teacher. I remember on one occasion she translated 'I am going' into 'je suis allant'. I knew better but could not say anything. On another occasion I had written an essay or something for her and at the top of the second page I wrote 'cont.'. She gave me a hundred lines for scribbling. I suppose she was thinking of a word which I did not know then.

The school field was on the far side of Hampstead Heath between Kenwood and the Highgate ponds. We used to go there by road through Kentish Town and Highgate, first in a horse-drawn cab, which took about 12 boys and later in an open-topped omnibus. Some of us could sit with the driver on the horse-drawn cab. On one occasion I achieved a seat on top, subject to a promise to let Stromberg have my place on the return trip. However when the time came I took the seat again. (I think with some encouragement from other boys. Stromberg was a Jew and not very popular). Stromberg and I struggled on the top of the cab and Mr. Simpson ordered me down. When we got back to school Mr. Simpson took me up to his study, had my trousers down, put me across his knees and spanked me with his hand. It did not hurt, but my pride was very wounded and I cried copiously. The school had a

playground on a slight slope having a hard surface. We used to play 'Chevy Chase' a game where you had to run from one side of the playground to the other without being caught by one or two boys chosen to catch you. If you were caught you had to go to a corner on the far side where you could be rescued by someone else if he could avoid being caught. I remember rescuing this way a boy named Chisolm and I noticed how warm his hand was. My hands are nearly always cold.

A little further down Willoughby Road there lived two old ladies, sisters, Annie and Bessie Herford, and through them we got to know their brother, Henry Herford. They were all Unitarians and went to a church in Rosslyn Hill. Henry Herford had a very nice son, Geoffrey, who was at school with me and I remember going to tea with him. Before I left he asked me if I would like to have one of his toys. I was taken aback and naturally said, thank you but no.

Another boy that I got to know through my mother was Ambrose Watson. He lived in Arkwright Road. His father was dead but the family was well off. For awhile he and I went for religious instruction from a Mr Vereker. On one occasion I had been invited to tea and we played with his model trains. To my shame, knowing that they were well off I remembered what Geoffrey Herford had done, and decided to ask him for one of his wind-up railway engines, a thing which my parents could not afford. He spoke to his mother and gave me a beautiful one with reverse gear and other embellishments. My grandmother had given me enough money to buy ten or so straight nought gauge railway lines on which I ran it and cherished it until it finally gave up.

An obsession of mine was to put things into order. That is how I got interested in genealogies and the Classification of Animals. When I was quite young I remember at my aunt Emily's house in Ferncroft Avenue finding a pile of 'Home Chats' on a chair and putting them into order! The first genealogies I made were those of Greek Gods and Heroes, then the Anglo-Saxon royal families. At the local lending library I found a copy of a translation of Keating's History of Ireland which gave me plenty of material. I think it was Auntie Gertrude who produced a large sheet of paper containing a genealogical table of the Stotherts which included the Bartrums, drawn up by Bertram Marshal for legal purposes. It had no dates but it formed the basis of my genealogies of the Bartrums and Stotherts. Welsh Genealogies came later.

When war broke out on 4 August 1914 we were on holiday at Dunwich. Betty saw some warships, but I missed them. We came home the next day. Daddy being too old to fight was given a job in a factory. He walked into town and later came home with oil on his hands. Later he was given a job more suited to his talents in the Munitions Inventions Department of the Ministry of Munitions. He also was a special constable in Hampstead. He was under Mr. Mathews, a solicitor, who lived next door and Daddy thought him too bossy. London was subject to raids from Zeppelins. They were preceded and followed by warnings on sirens. At first we took refuge under the stairs, but Daddy worked out that the chance of our being hit was so small that we stayed in bed. I remember seeing through the bedroom curtains a very bright light as a Zeppelin was hit by anti-aircraft fire and came down in flames. I picked up from the streets some pieces of shell which I think I still have somewhere.

As a result of the raids many families left Hampstead. The Austins went to Watford. I went to stay with them for a while and while I was there Gwen developed mumps. So I came home and was kept in quarantine for 21 days which was considered sufficient and then went back to school. But 25 days was supposed to be the minimum. On the 25th day I got mumps. As a result I gave mumps to many boys at school and my father who suffered badly.

Occasionally we would walk over the heath to Highgate where we crossed the Archway to 44 Avenue Road for tea with Uncle Robert and Auntie Margaret. [First mention in Mother's diary Saturday 8 August 1916]. Uncle Robert had been a school teacher. After retirement he was a magistrate for a while and we used to use some of his old clothing for games.

Because so many people left Hampstead St. John's House school closed and my father had to find another school for me. Most of the boys went to another school in Hampstead, Heath Hall, but my father discussed the matter with the manager of Barclays Bank, Mr Herbage. His son, Julian Herbage, had gone to the South Kensington Preparatory School and recommended it. My father asked me if I would like to go there and I thought it would be nice. At first I went by Metropolitan from Finchley Road station to Baker Street and then Inner Circle to Gloucester Road. This meant a long walk down to Finchley Road and back in the evening. I soon gave this up and went by Tube from Hampstead to Leicester Square where I changed to the Piccadilly line for Gloucester Road.

The School in Rosemary Gardens was a very good one. The colours were purple and gold. The Headmaster was Mr Barton who lived next door and had two doors into the school one at ground floor and the other on the first floor. The assistant was Mr Hitchcock whom I liked. When I first arrived Miss Bousfield had to assess me and she was taken aback by my ability at maths. The head boy at that time was Aldous who was a mathematician. There was a Mr Dutton, very choleric, Miss Richards who left and married Mr Imlay who was head of Brown's House at Clifton and whom I met later, and a French Mademoiselle who didn't like me. As a result I learnt very little French. There was a system of Stars and Stripes in which one stripe cancelled two stars. Stripes were awarded on a form

from a book like a cheque book. I generally did very well with stars. The only stripe I remember getting was from Mademoiselle. It was probably this that enabled a boy named Lander to just top me in Stars one year. At breaks we would walk 'in crocodile' into Kensington Gardens. Once a week we went by train to Victoria where there were swimming baths. Mr Hitchcock held me upside down at the edge of the pool and dropped me in. That is how I learned to dive. I soon reached the sixth form which was taught by Mr Barton. He confessed that he had to study maths himself in order to teach me. I shared in turn as head boy with Richard Whitfield and Paul Grey who both lived near the school. After school I often went to one of their houses for a while with the result that I got home quite late. Sometimes I also used my Season Ticket to explore the underground and made maps of some of the exchange stations. This also got me home late. My parents were very patient about it though they must have been worried at times.

The school's playing fields were far away in Acton and we had to go by District line to get there. I was in the Football team where I played goal and in the Cricket team but not very good except at fielding.

Three boys at the school came from the local embassies. Two from the Siamese embassy, named Bunnag, one from the Japanese, Yamamuru. Another boy, named Legge lived in the same milieu. He was very athletic but irregular in attendance at school. So much so that he was not allowed to compete in the school sports. As a result I won in five events for which I received five silver cups to keep and the Victor Ludorum cup which I was allowed to keep for a year. The events were: 100 yards, Quarter mile, Long jump, High jump and Throwing the Cricket Ball. I think I was then the oldest boy in the school.

Another boy was Short major who was interested in genealogy and gave me a genealogy of Robin Hood. I suppose actually the man who was supposed to be Robin Hood. There was a much younger boy named Curry who told me that his sister was at Bartrum Gables. I took a fancy to him and I think it was the first intimation I had of the 'romantic friendship' syndrome.

I had piano lessons from a lady, Miss Norman, who rode a motor bicycle. She invited me to her house for some kind of concert in the afternoon. I quite forget where it was, but she gave me her address. I set out without the note but remembered the town and the road, but not the number of the house. At the end of the road I found a post office where I found the number. So I walked back along the road and knew the house immediately because I heard the sound of children singing 'Il etait une bergère'.

To prove that it was a good school Whitfield, Grey and I all got scholarships, Whitfield to Rosall, Grey to Winchester and I to Clifton.

When Betty, Helen and I were in our teens we used to go by tube to Victoria and walk to the Old Vic to hear performances of The Magic Flute and The Marriage of Figaro. We got seats in the Gallery for sixpence after standing in a queue.

In about 1921 I was at a party at the Austin's and Gwen had a friend there named Daphne Du Maurier. She was the daughter of Sir Gerald Du Maurier, the famous actor, who lived in Hampstead. I remember that it was my responsibility to escort her home. Later she became famous.

In about 1922 or 1923 according to Elizabeth, she, Helen and I used to play the last movement of Haydn's 'Gypsy Trio'. This was for minor entertainment at occasional social events. Mother was unhappy about me on the piano.

It must have been about the same time that I remember being in the drawing room while Helen was playing the violin, Mother accompanying her. I saw a man passing the window. He heard Helen's playing, stopped and rang the bell. Apparently he was so impressed that he got her a place at the Trinity College of Music. [not mentioned by Helen in her 'Some things Remembered'] She could not have gone there for long because in 1924 she went to boarding school at Calne in Wiltshire.

My father met a man at the Ministry of Musicians named Frank Lewis. He was an inventor by profession, lived on a yacht and was a chain cigarette smoker. He was invited to 32 Willoughby Road and I remember him sitting in a chair roaring with laughter and cigarette ash all over his clothes. He moored his yacht at Shoreham-by-Sea, and sometimes off Hayling Island. I occasionally went to stay with him on the yacht. I saw some of his inventions, which were ingenious: A table whose fourth leg was adjustable so that it would stand on uneven ground, a trip switch which I copied with meccano. He asked me to be his mathematical advisor and one thing which he asked me about I said would not work. I am not at all sure that I was right. He snored so loudly that it was difficult to sleep in his cabin.

He invited some of us down to see aircraft flying for the Schneider trophy, which had a triangular course, part of which could be seen over the channel. On another occasion my father and I were staying with him when he decided to sail over to Cowes in the Isle of Wight to get a washing-up cloth! It was fair weather going over, but I was slightly sick. However on the way back it was blowing a gale. I was too excited to be sick but my father succumbed. There were two forts in the Solent between which we had to sail and the wind was blowing straight

through against us. Mr Lewis, aware of the problem, jettisoned the row boat which he was towing, and had to tack very close to the wind to get through. He just managed but went dangerously near to the right-hand fort. Mr Lewis died while sailing. He was hit on the head by the boom. His funeral turned out to be at a synagogue and we first realised that he was a Jew.

HOLIDAYS

Our first holiday after war broke out was at Wigginton near Tring. We stayed with Mrs Dell at a farm which had a large barn with a swing in it Uncle John and Scrappie were with us. There are still Dells in Wigginton. [In April 1917] we joined the Fullers in Ecclesbourne Glen at Hastings. There was a covered water tank in an open space and I noticed it had small worms in it. An elder boy there tried to form us into a gang. Later the same year we went with the Austins to Selsey Bill. To get there, there was a narrow gauge railway from Chichester called 'The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway Company Limited'. It was noted for its slowness so that trains tended to leave just before the next train was due to leave according to the timetable. There was a picture postcard of passengers playing a game of cricket while the train passed. There was a good beach. When the wind was right you could hear the guns in northern France. We played on the beach with our spades. On one occasion we had left our spades for a while and when I went back I found a boy using Gwen's spade. I struggled with him. A lady who was sitting in a beach chair ticked him off and I recovered the spade. I went back to tell mother who was a little further along the beach. She came to thank the lady who said, 'He was a thorough little Briton'. Mother tried to teach Betty and me to ride bicycles while we were there. They were high and our feet could not reach the ground. But she would not let us go. We did not learn until nanny Frances Sutton came. She just let us go with a push. While she was there I said to nanny, 'I suppose I shall have to marry Gwen when I grow up'. She poopooed the idea and said, 'don't let Gwen boss you about', or words to that effect.

We went to Dymchurch several times. It had a lovely beach with breakwaters, which used to trap puddles. I used to have fun making canals with a spade. Uncle Robert and Auntie Margaret were with us on one occasion. Uncle Robert came down late for breakfast and I had put my empty eggshell upside down in the egg-holder. He picked it up and it crunched in his hand. He was not amused. At one of our holidays there [1916] mother met two old friends, sisters. They lived together at Winchelsea. One, [Maud] Varvill had a son Michael who was nearly 7, and I was invited to go and stay with them. Michael told me about some show he had seen. He kept saying 'and suddenly' which amused me. Mother had given me my meccano to take with me and we played with it quite a bit. But we didn't tighten our screws properly and when running about with models we had made we lost several nuts. Although the two sisters were very kind, I got homesick and after some days I got up courage to say I wanted to go home. They sent me home the next day. Michael eventually became a District Officer in Nigeria I think. During another holiday there [1919] I caught chickenpox. My father was conscientious and rather than coming home by train and spreading the infection Betty, Helen and I came all the way home by taxi while Daddy and Mother bicycled home,

When the Armistice was signed on 11 November 1918 we had a Half-Holiday. There was much celebration, Daddy and I went on the top of a number 24 bus from Hampstead Heath station through London and heard the church bells clashing.

I went to Wales several times to stay with Uncle Robert and Auntie Margaret at Capel Curig. Uncle Robert hired a car to take us to Pen-y-pass from where the PYG (Penygwryd) track goes up Snowdon. One can start here also to go up over Crib Goch and Crib y Ddysgl. Going over these cribs is not for people who suffer from vertigo in high places. But I was happy standing up using my stick. It was a different matter going over at night. This happened once when we were supposed to have a moon but it set too early. Even with the moon it would have been scary. On this occasion Elizabeth and Helen were also with us. We had to crawl, feeling our way, and when we got to the top Snowdon was in cloud. What a come-down! Uncle Robert also liked going up the Devil's Kitchen, which was a crevice on the side of the Glyders. Another scary feat, which I did, was to jump from Adam to Eve, two tall, flat-topped rocks on the top of Tryfan.

I went to Clifton College in September 1921 and was put in Dakyns' House. There was a new House Master a bit earlier, Mr Keigwin. The house had been in a bad state under the previous House Master, a Mr Barff. The head boy then was Harrison, who had little control. At the school, boys wore their caps on the back of their heads. This had previously been the privilege of senior boys.

I still had a treble voice when I arrived and joined the chapel choir and the choral society as an alto till my voice began to break. I left the choir on the 4th of May 1922. When it had settled down I was not sure whether to be a tenor or a bass. So I rejoined the choir as a tenor and the choral society as a bass.

I was told that I had been given the scholarship to be a foil to H.L.Pryce who was good at maths, and better than me. He was in Wiseman's House. Being a scholar I was automatically put on the Classical Side. The result was that I had to learn Greek. It was not until I got into a form with Mr Mayor that I really took to it. He was inspiring. My maths master was Mr Beaven. He was called 'Fuzzy B.' He really taught me most of the maths that I know. He was succeeded by Mr Unwin later.

In my first term I did some carpentry at the work shop and made a toboggan. When I brought it home it was fixed with runners (metal strips). Elizabeth and I used it that winter on the snow on the heath on the north side of the Whitestone Pond going down to the Leg of Mutton Pond. When we had finished some boys asked if they could borrow it for a while. I said they could have it if they returned it tomorrow. It was very trusting, but the next day they were there to return it

One of the boys in the house was Michael Redgrave. He used to write short articles for the school magazine. I remember that there was a series of 'fables'. But his chief notability was for taking part in school plays. Before his voice broke he was the girl in 'The Admirable Crichton'. Later in 'The Rivals' he was Captain Absolute and I was his servant. When MrToms was dressing me he said 'what nice legs!'

When I first came to the house there was fagging. A praeposter would call 'fag' in the hall and all the junior boys were supposed to come running. This custom ceased on what authority I don't know. After a time I was senior enough in the house to be a praeposter. One of our jobs was to do beatings. We had to get permission from Mr Keigwin but the head of the house was responsible. I remember that when Arthur Luce was head of the house I had to beat Michael Redgrave for using a Primus (paraffin) stove in his study.

Mr Keigwin was a very keen player of tennis and other games where a keen eye is necessary. When he saw how useless I was at cricket he advised me to take up rowing, which I did. He taught on the Modern Side and I am told that his classes were chaotic. Nevertheless he taught well. In the house he organised a reading society of some of the senior boys of which Michael Redgrave and I were members. We used to read plays and I was given the job of working out who should read each part so that different parts would not clash. Keigwin was keen on music and although he couldn't play he had a pianola and took some of us to see 'Madam Butterfly'. He got a second hand piano for the house, which was put in the library. Lings and I used to play it a lot.

I had piano lessons. I was first tested by Dr. Beachcroft the head music master. I played him a Toccata by Paradies which I knew by heart. He turned me over to Mr Hight. I remember he gave me the job of turning over when he gave a recital at Bristol University. In my last year I asked to have organ lessons. They were given me by Mr Lang, the second in command, but I did not get very far. At this time I began composing some music for the piano which I finished at Oxford and called it 'Suite in B Minor'. Later when I was walking through London to the Air Ministry I saw a firm which would print photographically from manuscript so I gave them a copy of my suite and they made about 50(?) copies. This was in 1932, just before I went to Bermuda. I got Mother to send copies to many of my friends.

On 18 Sept. 1923 I fell in love with Elspeth Fuller. We were playing "Dead Man Arise" at the Fullers where I had gone to tea. I forget the details of the game, but we had to hide, and Elspeth and I were hiding under a bed. I put out my hand and she put out hers and we clasped. That's how it began. We used to talk a lot. We never got as far as kissing. Mother ticked me off for wasting time talking to her. On 8 Sept. 1925 I took Cecil Eaglesfield, who lived in Hampstead, to Maskelyne and Devant, the illusionists, at St. George's Hall in London and invited Elspeth to come with us. When we arrived home Elspeth was extremely rude to Eaglesfield while we were walking down the High Street from the tube station. At the corner of Willoughby Road I was so annoyed with her that I let her walk home to 4 Pilgrim's Lane, where the Fullers lived. When I got home I told Mother. She insisted that I ring the Fullers and apologise. Mr Fuller said he understood. After that I fell out of love with Elspeth. Much later, on 10 Aug. 1927, I wrote a letter to Elspeth hoping to cheer her up and apologise. I told her that I had been in love with her, but that now it was all over. So much for calf love. But I never kissed her. On Sept 19 she told me what a decent letter I had sent her but could not believe that I was not annoyed with her. Poor Elspeth! She could be very sweet and then harsh. She brought up the subject again on 14 Jan. 1928 and it was clear that she still loved me.

In Sept. 1924 I was head of the house. This had been planned, but Cecil Eaglesfield, at the last moment decided to return to school for another year. He expected to be head of the house, but Mr Keigwin would have none of it and insisted that I should be head. Eaglesfield took it in good heart and co-operated. In Sept. 1925 I was again head of the house which was most unusual. I think it was rather silly of me to concoct a list of rules for the boys. I think some of the praeposters under me thought it rather amusing but they were too polite to say anything. They were used as a punishment. Boys who strayed had to copy them as a punishment. Eventually they got lost. I suspect deliberately.

One of the boys, I forget his name, talked like an old man and was a bit hunched. For a minor offence I told him as punishment to learn 'When all the world is young lad and all the trees are green' by Charles Kingsley,

The highlight of my second year as head of the house was our becoming cock house in music. I had no part in this. It was entirely due to Michael Redgrave and William Luce - in particular to their performance of the two-piano duet, 'Variations on a theme of Beethoven' by Saint-Saens.

In a wholly male atmosphere 'romantic friendships' were bound to occur. My first experience was to fall in love with a boy named Derek Whitaker. My passion was not returned but he was quite friendly. However the situation resulted in an unfortunate state of affairs. During exams for school certificate I quite forgot that I should be taking a paper called Extra Maths and asked Whitaker to come with me to the 'flicks' (cinema). I think it was a film of the book Jane Eyre. Mr Beaven was furious when I did not turn up for the exam. He felt he had to beat me and did so though he was unhappy about it.

Michael Redgrave fell for a boy named Cyril White, though I never understood why. I was asked to go with Michael to stay with the Whites at Kingston St. Mary, Somerset. I think I was invited merely to be a chaperon! What I chiefly remember was hearing on the gramophone the Badinerie from Bach's Orchestral Suite No.2. In my last year as head boy I remember finding Michael in his study in tears because of some trouble with White.

When we had house rowing races we had to recruit a suitable cox - low weight and bright. A boy named Laurie Lang was chosen. As I got to know him I completely fell for him and he returned it in a shy sort of way. This 'case', as it was called, was well known to the house, and in some ways encouraged. My diary is full of it and there is no need to say anything more except that it was completely 'platonic'. (More about Laurie Lang in 23 October 1937).

In our last year Pryce won The Montefiore Scholarship to Balliol, but I had to go to Cambridge, and then Oxford to sit for scholarships. I remember in the train from Cambridge to Oxford which then ran between the two cities doing the Times crossword without any reference book. Of course they were easier in those days. I was given a scholarship by Queen's College, Oxford. I think it was worth about £300 a year. Mr Unwin told me that I could have got one at Cambridge but it would only be worth £25. Knowing that my father was not well off compared with the parents of other boys at Clifton I had the nerve to ask Mr C.F. Taylor, a sixth form master at Clifton with whom I was on good terms if I could also have a leaving exhibition. That was granted.

In order to get into Oxford one had to have passed some exams including two languages. My school certificates were mainly sufficient but not for two languages. Latin was OK, but I had not got good enough marks in French or Greek. The authorities at school recommended that I should do Greek. (I had always been badly taught in French). So I remember going through Xenophon's 'Anabasis' and took the exam. I have no idea how I did, but when I asked Mr Thompson when I got to Queen's, he dismissed the matter as of no importance.

On leaving school I somehow felt that I had lost my innocence and became obsessed with children - not as a paedophile - but in a completely non-sexual manner. I re-read children's books such as Alice in Wonderland, The Wind in the Willows, etc. This was rewarded when I was at Oxford. Pryce and I went out on our bicycles and were riding through Wood Eaton when we passed some children [2 - 11 - 26]. They were a bit rowdy and called to us. Pryce went on but I stopped and talked to them. That began a fruitful time. I used to go out and meet them and we used to play football and other games. Ronald MacKeith, with whom I shared a study at Queen's, was sympathetic with my interest in children. He became a paediatrician.

I did precious little work at Oxford, spending too much time on music and other activities - the result of sudden freedom from authority. I only went to one lecture and learnt very little more mathematics, somehow bluffing my tutor, Mr Thompson. However I got interested in Relativity, partly because my father had a book on it though he did not profess to understand it. I got Sir Arthur Eddington's book, 'The Mathematical Theory of Relativity' and purely from studying it was able to take the newly introduced examination special subject. Mr Love tried to lecture on it but did not know much and I was able to help him out. Several other men were interested but they all dropped out before the exam. The examiner was W. P. Milne who awarded me Distinction. But I only got a second class degree in maths.

Mother's brother Percy Shattock was vicar of Kingston St. Mary near Taunton. Having no children, he adopted two who were distant cousins on the Sibold side, Sheila and Peter Macrae. I remember that they came to 32 Willoughby Road. Peter was a bit of a tearaway and Sheila who was two years older had trouble looking after him. She was a very sweet girl. Later Uncle Percy sent Peter to Christ's Hospital (The blue-coat School) in Sussex. I was asked to meet Peter at Victoria Station and take him to Paddington Station. This happened three times, on 7 - 4 - 27, 26 - 7 - 27 and 4 - 4 - 28.

I think I can stop here as my diaries are sufficiently detailed. I only wish to say that after my Mother I never kissed anybody till I kissed Barbara when I proposed to her, and never had sex with anybody until I married Barbara.

Reminiscences part 2

Towards the end of my time at Oxford I had an interview with a man on the appointments committee and stressed that I would prefer an open air life. i.e. not a desk job, and it occurred to me that surveying would be in my line (4 June 1929). Canon Streeter who was connected with Queen's collected together a group of about 30 to study at Jordan's, the Quaker Meeting House, which had then been made a hotel. Each member had to read a paper on a subject chosen by the group of about 30. Someone asked for one on Relativity and I offered to do one. To lighten it I introduced a little humour. The group lasted for a week from 10 - 17 Jan 1929. My paper was very popular and formed the inspiration of the play that traditionally ends the group meeting. On 2 June 1930 I received a letter offering me a job as surveyor in Nigeria. This required a course of training. To begin with I had to go to Cambridge where I arrived on 3 Oct 1930. I was entered into St John's College. My 'moral tutor' was Mr. Wordie. My chief lecturer and 'quasi-tutor' was Sir Gerald Lenox Coningham. Mr Wordie gave me a note, which enabled me to get out from the library the two heavy volumes of Lewis Dwnn's *Heraldic Visitations of Wales*. I made full use of them while I was there. One of the differences between Oxford and Cambridge was that at Cambridge you had to wear a gown in the street. Once I forgot this and was 'progged' (stopped by a proctor). Daddy arranged for the piano I had had at Oxford to be moved to my digs. One day Mr. Ben Boulter of Hampstead came to see me. He knew the name of the street but had forgotten the number. He walked up the street and picked out the house because he heard me playing the piano. My course of training involved instruction in the use of a theodolite, and plain-tabling which I did in the Fens. On 2 June 1931 I bought a very old Morris Cowley 4 seater (1923) for £15 from a man named E.W.W. Brown who was also on the course, although he had already been surveying somewhere. I left Cambridge for good on 10 June 1931. Then I was posted to Fort Southwick in Hampshire where I arrived on 1 July 1931. There were five of us on the course. While I was there I lodged with Mrs Barber in Porchester. On 21 Sept my car broke down while reversing on the grass outside Fort Southwick. I sold it to the garage where I kept it in exchange for my debts. On 28 Sept the course took us to Clanfield in Hampshire, 2 miles south of Peterfield, where we stayed for a fortnight. However on 20 Oct 1931 the Colonial Office informed me that the appointment to Nigeria as a surveyor was off owing to the need for economy. (This was during a period of economic depression). But I was allowed to complete the course of training. This was at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton.

I was now out of a job. On 8 Feb. 1932 I received a letter from the Colonial Office offering me an appointment as Assistant Meteorologist in Bermuda subject to selection from a number of possible candidates. On 15 February I returned home to Hampstead and to earn some money. I did some coaching. On 18 March I got a definite offer of appointment as Assistant Meteorologist in Bermuda. I went to Adastral House in Kingsway where I met Commander Garbett. While walking along back streets from Tottenham Court Road Station to Adastral House I noticed a firm which advertised printing by photographic reproduction. I got 50 copies done of my 'Suite in B minor' which I had composed between 11 June 1927 and 23 May 1931. I began a course of training in Meteorology on 18 April. I was sent to Croydon Airport where I learnt the practical business of drawing up weather maps. Later I was sent to Mount Batten, in Plymouth, for practising what I had learnt. The course of instruction in Meteorology ended on 9 July 1932. The printed copies of my 'Suite in B minor' arrived the day I left for Bermuda and I had to leave it to mother to send copies to a number of my friends.

I left for Bermuda on 25 July on the 'Banana Boat', S.S. Patuca. On board was Dudley Spurling who was returning to Bermuda after leaving Rossall School and developing double pneumonia. Arrived at Bermuda on August 4 and was met by Major Jack Bartrum, a first cousin once removed. He was in the Army Pay Corps and retired to Bermuda. The Bermuda government had a small house ready for me in St. George's, just below Fort George, which I called 'Cat Bells'. The official opening of the Meteorological Station took place the next day. The Meteorological Office is to be run by Commander Henry Moorhead, R.N. and the 'Clerk' or assistant is a youth named Jack Mayne. At the opening I met Mr D. R. Bettington, the chief of police, who turned out to be a distant relation, 4th cousin once removed. He later provided me with a whole lot of genealogical information which I have entered in my tables under Parsons and Eykyn.

My salary is £350 a year. On 17 August I was approached by Percy Wright, the local Health Officer, who has only one arm, and is choirmaster at St. Peter's Church in St. George's, to become organist, but had to refuse the offer. For one thing I am no good at the organ and in any case it would interfere with my job. The Meteorological Station has a Dines Pressure Tube Anemometer installed on the parapet of Fort George. It gives a continuous record of wind velocity on a chart, but the chart only goes up to 100 mph. I worked out the theory of its construction with a view to modifying it to deal with hurricane winds (19 August). On 27 September 1932 I acquired a piano which was a great joy. Mr Wheeler the

organist at Paget Parish Church had for some years been producing performances of the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. He had begun doing 'The Pirates of Penzance' and I joined the cast. Among the performers was a young woman named Barbara Spurling. On February 21 1933 Philip Smith and I were watching a rehearsal and he said to me "That's a fine girl". I got to know her and to cut a long story short, I fell in love with her. On March 16 I plucked up courage to ask her to go and see a 'flick'. On Sunday the 26th after taking part in a performance of 'Light of Light' at Pembroke Church I walked with her to her home and met her father and invalid mother. She told Barbara privately that I was 'not the marrying sort'. I saw quite a lot of Barbara after that. On April 19 I got up courage to tell her I loved her. She was very sweet and let me kiss her. She is the first person I have kissed since I kissed my mother.

On April 30 I went to tea with Morley Dobson and Virginia Conyers. We discussed the formation of a Madrigal Society that Philip Smith and I had been thinking of forming. The proposed members were Mrs Trimmingham, Virginia Conyers and Barbara, soprano, Ivy Spurling and Adah Spurling altos, Philip Smith and I, tenors, Morley Dobson and Ainsley Russell, the Director of Agriculture basses. Our first meeting was on May 13 when all were present except Ainsley Russell. Later Morley and Virginia got married and left Bermuda for England. .

On June 17 I arranged with Jack Cade to lodge with me and share expenses. On May 28 Barbara left by ship for Boston to take her Mother for treatment. She returned on July 15th. I saw her off and on. On August 30 Barbara told me about a boy she had met in Boston with whom she had been having correspondence. It gave me a shock and I felt very miserable until the next day when I got a ring from her and she put me out of my misery. On September 2nd I met Eva Bartrum in Hamilton. She tried to make out that Barbara was not good enough for me. I knew better..

On August 24th Miss Hunter gave me a tabby kitten. She thought it was a tom and Barbara called it 'Jimmy' but it turned out to be female.

September 16th was six months since I first took Barbara out. I had decided that I would do nothing for this length of time when I had known her better. I was now sure, and asked her to be my wife, and she said she would. O what happiness! I could do nothing but hold and kiss her.

On October 31, 1933 Jack Cade left to go and work at the Cable Office in Hamilton and on November 4th Alan Skinner, his replacement at the Wireless Station in St George's arrived to be my new lodger. On December 13th I took part in a performance of Princess Ida. Barbara took the part of Melissa and I was Florian. The performance was criticised in the local press and Barbara was the only one to get any praise from the critic. The next day Mr Wheeler the organist who had put on the performances said I was "the surprise of the evening". There was a third matinee performance on the 15th when I sent Barbara a bouquet of Sweet Peas. On 18 January 1934 I gave Barbara an Engagement Ring.

On April 3 I sang in Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Sorcerer" and I took the part of a clergyman, Dr Daly, who sings 'I was a pale young curate then'. I was very nervous at the first performance. The 'Colonist' newspaper of Monday April 2 published an anonymous letter that reported Mr Wheeler as criticising the performance by some of his group of singers. I replied in an anonymous letter criticising Mr Wheeler for expecting too much of his singers who were busy people and did not have time to come to every rehearsal. He asked me if I had written the letter. I lied and said 'No'.

On April 19 'Jimmy' had 4 kittens. On May 7 I drowned a kitten.

On June 21 I bicycled to Hamilton and Barbara and I bicycled to the south side of Spanish Point. We bathed, had tea and sat in the sun. After sunset we bathed again in the light of the half moon. I noted in my diary that it was "a true Midsummer Night's Dream". I think it was on this occasion that Barbara and I bathed in the nude at her suggestion.

On July 20 I had to put 'Jimmy' to sleep. I put her in a large biscuit tin, punched holes in the lid and poured in a dose of chloroform. This was a traumatic experience. She fought a lot at first. I buried her in the garden. I must have given two kittens away. The fourth Barbara called Rumpelstiltskin, Or just Stiltskin whose name comes from Grimm's Fairy Tales ("Rumpelstiltschen is my name"). She was a sweet kitten. Never scratched except once when her tail got caught in the mosquito door.

On August 13 Barbara's mother died. The next day I was one of the bearers at the funeral.

Mother and Daddy arrived from England on September 10 and presumably stayed with me. On September 19th Barbara and I were married at the Methodist Church in Hamilton, by the Rev. Munro. The reception was low-key because Barbara's mother had just died. I made a speech and left out all about Barbara. We left by carriage for Cambridge Beaches in Somerset, a Guest House with nice grounds going down to the sea. We had a little cottage all to ourselves, having our meals at the main house. We stayed till the 23rd. When we got home we found the house beautifully arranged for us and decorated with flowers by Mother and a note on the table saying "Welcome back to your dear little

home". Mother and Daddy stayed at the Snapes, (Mrs Snape was a cousin of Barbara). They left on October 11th for New York to meet the Miss Herfords.

On March 7, 1935 I took the part of Golightly, a midshipman in a play called 'The Midshipmaid' put on by Don Evans. On April 3 Barbara and I left Bermuda on the Orduna and arrived at Plymouth on the 14th. And so to Hampstead and 32 Willoughby Road were we stayed and I introduced Barbara to life there. On April 24 I bought a car, a Morris Minor two-seater with a 'dicky' which could seat one person. I used this to get about, taking Barbara to Broadstairs - St Peters in Thanet where we stayed the night of the 26th with Aunts Florence and Janet in their 'new' house (built 1682). The next day to Ramsgate where one of Barbara's uncles lived, but he was out, and finally Dover to meet another of Barbara's uncles and a cousin and then on to Hastings where we had tea with 'Aunt Pops' (Martha Ellen Licence), Barbara's aunt on her mother's side. We stayed the night in digs. The next day we went back to 32 Willoughby Road. On the 30th Barbara and I went to Holborn where we called on an old lady named Flo Carter She was Barbara's second cousin once removed. She had some interesting information about the Licence family.

On May 1 a lorry backed into my car while we were waiting at traffic lights. Perhaps I was waiting too near it. The damage was only slight. On May 4 the car was repaired and I drove Barbara and Helen to Romford to see Uncle John and family. We sang part songs. On May 13 Barbara and I began a trip - Cambridge, Peterborough, Ripon, Hawes on the 17th where snow fell overnight but soon melted. We then reached Keswick. The next day we went for a round walk over a shoulder of Cat Bells, thinking it was the top. We came down and went round the Derwent Lake, about 13 miles in all. This was the longest distance that Barbara had ever walked. The next day we walked up Skiddaw, an easy climb. On May the 19th we did a tour of the Lake District. We left the Lake District on the 24th and the next day, on the way home stopped at Stratford on Avon where we went to the Memorial Theatre to see a performance of Anthony and Cleopatra. We got home on the 26th. We went to the British Museum and Madam Tussaud's. On June 1 we set out for Wales and got to Capel Curig the next day where we stayed in digs. We slept in a double bed that had been used by single people. The result was that it had a depression in the middle and Barbara and I got too close for me to sleep side by side. When I complained she got out of bed to sleep on the floor. However we patched it up somehow. On the 3rd Snowdon was clear all the afternoon. Hoping that it would be fine the next day we drove to 'Pen y Pass' and went up the PYG track. But it rained frequently. We had lunch at the café at the top in thick cloud and returned via Lliwedd. Barbara did not like the scree on the right. This went down at about 45 degrees. She sat down and said she would not go any further. However I persuaded her that we had gone more than half way and there was no point in going back. She was glad afterwards that she had managed it. On the 5th we visited Pandy Mills (23/ 7963) near the Conway, where Barbara bought some knitting wool spun from the local sheep. On the 9th we left Wales and on the way back next day we called at Clifton and visited Dakyns house where I showed Barbara around. Keigwin, the housemaster was still there. He was very affable and chatty and made us feel at home. Gave us dinner and put us up for the night.

Next day to Taunton and Kingston St. Mary's where we visited Uncle Percy and Aunt Ethel Shattock who were temporarily maidless. Uncle Percy played his flute. We stayed at the Swan Inn. On the 12th to Glastonbury and saw the ruined Abbey. Then we went to see Stonehenge. Back to the Wylies at the Grange in Headington on the 14th. In Oxford we had lunch with Dudley and tea with Ivor Licence, son of Jim Licence, Barbara's uncle. He is at a training college at Culham. I took Barbara to two Gilbert and Sullivan Operas at Sadlers Wells - Ruddigore on the 26th and the Gondoliers on the 29th.

On July 3rd we went to Hastings to see Aunt 'Pops'. We spent a week there in digs. While we were there. Dora, the daughter of Aunt Pops married Graham Pigott, a bank manager. We stayed till the 10th when we drove to Ramsgate and stayed the night with Jim Licence. The next day we returned to London.

On the 18th Barbara and I left for Bermuda on the SS Orbita.. We arrived on the 31st. We found our house all prepared for us by Evie and Don.

On August 30th we had a Madrigal Meeting at the Russels and for the first time sat around a large table. It was so successful that we decided to continue this way when possible.

Some time in late September Mr Purcell the Cathedral organist retired to become a journalist and was succeeded by John Bridge. On October 16th Mr. Bridge held a meeting at the Town Hall to form the Bermuda Choral Society. On the 24th Mr. and Mrs Bridge joined the Madrigal group. Mrs Bridge was dropped as her voice was too shrill and did not blend.

At about this time I was working on Greek Legends, forming Genealogies and a fictitious chronology (Sept.6, 22, Oct.18, 19, 28,31, Nov.10).

In January 1936 I was working on the diurnal variation of atmospheric pressure at St. George's, Bermuda during the years 1933 and 1934, and wrote a paper which was published in the Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society, Vol.62 (April 1936) No.264. (Jan. 14th).

On February 24 Barbara and I had our first cocktail party. On March 9 we had a second party for more important guests. I forgot to put the fruit juice in the cocktails. Somebody remarked that they were unusual.

March 19 Commander Moorhead went away on leave and 'handed over the reins' to me

March 24. Barbara is 'expecting'.

On April 28 I took part in a performance of Longfellow's Poem 'The Song of Hiawatha' - Hiawatha's Wedding Feast, set to music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, singing the part of Chebiabos, 'Onaway! Awake, beloved!' which goes very high, and managed it all right.

On May 11 I went to the Methodist Church to practise the organ as I have been asked to play the organ there while the regular organist is on holiday. I never was much good especially with the pedals. See further the 31st.

The Dines Pressure Tube Anemometer had been set up on the parapet of Fort George with the recording part inside the fort. On May 12 I began studying the theory of its working, again on the 17th. On the 22nd I wrote a letter to Colonel Gold at the Air Ministry on the subject..

On the 31st I played the organ at a service at the Methodist Church. It was the first time in my life that I had played the organ at a service. I was terribly nervous. There was a congregation of only 25, but they sang so lustily that most of my mistakes were drowned. I played again on June 7th and managed a bit better this time. Again on the 21st rather badly and again on the 28th and July 12th and 26th. The organ had to have a blower (see July 20, 23).

Commander Moorhead returned from leave on the 29th of June.

Mr F. John Gould of St. George's put on a pageant on behalf of the St George's Historical Society in the Park. I had two small parts. There were four performances from July 27th to 30th.

August 6th. First mention of Katharine Spurling.

August 25th. Solved a problem about four touching circles sent me by my father.

September 17th. Barbara who is "expecting" on the 19th took a dose of Caster Oil to hasten the event, as our doctor, Dr. Harvey, intended to go away on that day, But it had no effect and a boy was born on the 19th. Dr Tucker, an oldish man supervised the birth, and, according to Barbara mishandled it. We were going to call him David, but another boy to a friend of ours was born on the same day and was called David, so we called him Jonathan. I noted in my diary: "I cannot get over the perfect way in which Barbara has behaved all along. No sickness, no unseasonable pains, no false alarms, no response to castor oil, and finally she performs the job on the exact day forecast!"

Reminiscences part 3

On 24 September 1936 I went up to Hamilton and visited Barbara in hospital. She and Jonathan were both doing well. Meanwhile I prepared the spare room for Jonathan with a crib and a chiffe-robe (whatever that is). Mrs. Moorhead had leant Barbara a Bassinette (August 7). On Sunday October 4 Barbara arrived in an ambulance with Jonathan and Muriel Hemsley, a nurse at the Isolation Hospital. Muriel kindly consented to take her holiday at this time and spend it with Barbara, showing her how to cope. She slept in the spare room with Jonathan, so that Barbara still got some rest at night. She left on the 13th, leaving Jonathan to the tender care of his parents. Of course he cried all day and Barbara was terribly worried. On the 17th I took Jonathan to the district nurse to be weighed. He was 8lb 4½oz. Barbara was now very worried and anxious over whether she was feeding Jonathan properly as he was putting on weight very slowly. She cried a bit. The district nurse came and gave Barbara much useful advice and helped to calm her anxieties. On the 20th we took Jonathan again to the district nurse. He now weighed 8lb 6½oz - not so bad. So Barbara regained confidence in her powers of feeding Jonathan. In the next few days many people looked in to see Jonathan. He generally behaved quite well. On the 6th he was much admired especially by Katharine. It was very difficult taking Jonathan in the pram down the hill to the road (Nov. 11).

On Sunday the 6th Barbara and I stayed the night at the house of Oliver, Barbara's brother, with Jonathan. After the service in the Methodist Church Jonathan was baptised in a very simple ceremony, witnessed by the family and friends. Barbara and Jonathan stayed in Hamilton at Newton Spurling's while I went back to St George's. On the 24th I was back in Hamilton and sang carols from the top of the Cathedral under Mr Bridge. The tower was lit up. On Christmas day, which was a Friday, nothing special happened. On the 28th Jonathan was vaccinated (against smallpox). He was quite complacent about it.

My sister Elizabeth was determined to see Bermuda and in particular to see Jonathan. So on 11 February 1937, because she could not afford otherwise, she came to Bermuda 3rd class on the SS Orduna, and found it quite comfortable. By coincidence Joan (Joanna) Bartrum, the daughter of Edward Bartrum, Rector of St Lawrence near Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, a snobbish lot, came second class to stay with her uncle, Major Jack Bartrum. Elizabeth borrowed a Cello from John Trimmingham (Feb. 27).

A new organ was 'opened' at the Cathedral. John Bridge organised a Musical Festival, lasting for 4 days from 1st to 4th of March. The Madrigal Society sang on the third day.

On March 17th Elizabeth left for New York on the SS Volendam.

Uncle Percy died in 1937. He had a flute, which went to Mother. Mother lent it to Ivy who took lessons and learnt to play it very well. This was all before May 22.

As there was no airfield in Bermuda aircraft flying to Bermuda had to be Flying Boats. On May 25 the "Cavalier", a flying boat flew to New York and the Pan American "Bermuda Clipper" flew to Bermuda. (I have no record of previous history of the "Cavalier"). On June 16 the first commercial flight of the "Cavalier" took place bringing mail and passengers.

On June 21 I began putting posts in for a fence round the level part of the garden, Barbara helping me. This was to make it safe for Jonathan to play there. The fence was finished on July the 18th with three gates.

Stanley Spurling is preparing for a pageant in the Park for Somers Day (28 July). The first rehearsal took place on July 19th and I commented in my diary that "it was cleverly put together but hopelessly lacking in action".

On August 12 Norman Davis and Bill Harper arrived as new forecasters, sent by the Air Ministry. I think they were needed because of the extra work due to the flying. On the 16th a Pan-American Clipper arrived in Bermuda on the first stage of a transatlantic flight via Bermuda and Horta in the Azores to England. It left the next day. On Sept. 3 there were 3 planes in the air: the Cavalier and the Bermuda Clipper on their normal run and the Pan-American clipper on its return via the Azores to New York.

Sept 22 Barbara and I left for England on the SS Orduna. While we were away Bill Harper and Norman Davis, lived in our house. We arrived on October 3 at Liverpool and took the train to Euston. There was no one to meet us as they were not expecting us till the next day. The family was at home and well, Daddy, Mother and Helen. On October 11 I left Barbara at home with Jonathan and went for a while to Hythe, Southampton, to learn about the organisation of a Met. Office at a Flying Boat Station, I stayed at a Hotel that was very modern and comfortable. The man in charge of the station was a Mr Oddie and arrangements were temporarily unorganised. While near Southampton I took the opportunity to visit the MacKeith family. They were nearly all there including 'Wasie' (Irene MacKeith) and Doctor MacKeith. On the 17th I left the Hotel, Wasie came to meet me with her car and drove me to London. On the way we stopped at Worcester Park where Wasie lives with her husband Frank Halliday(?). We continued to Morden Station on the Underground where I got the 'Tube' home.

On the 26th Barbara and I and Auntie Gertrude went to see the King and Queen driving in state to open Parliament. We watched from a hillock near the Admiralty Arch. On Nov. 1st we went by train to Windermere in the Lake District, leaving Jonathan in the care of Mother in Hampstead. We were met by Morley Dobson and Virginia and stayed with them at Portinscale near Keswick. On the 4th we left very late and Morley drove us to Dungeon Ghyll, Langdale, arriving at 2 p.m. with a dog. We had to go up Jack's Rake. It was quite a climb for Barbara and I also had to push the

dog up. There was no time to go to the top of Parey Ark. We got rather lost in cloud and it was getting dark before Morley found the path down. The next day we went up Cat Bells coming down by the steep northern ridge. On the 6th Morley drove us to Kendal where we caught the train to Euston and so to Hampstead.

On Dec. 9th Barbara and I left England for Bermuda with Jonathan. We sailed in the SS Oropesa. It is a first class liner with a nice big cabin having a porthole and plenty of room for a cot. Dudley Spurling was returning at the same time. We arrived at Bermuda on the 21st. Harper and Davis had left our house (Cat Bells) in perfect order. Barbara and I and Jonathan spent Christmas with 'Pop' (Newton Spurling).

On 6th January 1938 I agreed to take over the job of Choir Master at St. Peter's Church in St. George's from Percy Wright who knew little about music. (see 17 August 1932 in Reminiscences part 2). The rector was Canon Tucker. He never interfered with my choice of music. He left it entirely to me.

On February 17th we had a 'Sing Song' with some musical friends and sang some easy part songs. This was the beginning of a Madrigal Group in St. George's. The group consisted of, at various times, Norman Davis (bass and Miss Stanley (soprano) (later husband and wife), Bill Harper (bass), Katherine Morris (alto), (wife of the Wireless Operator at the Met. Station at Fort George), Frank Gurr (tenor) (in business) and his daughter Marian (soprano), Mr Wyatt (bass), (Head master of a boys school in Hamilton) and his wife, Mary (alto), Barbara (soprano) and me (tenor), Katharine Spurling (soprano) and Elaine Williams (alto). See 30 April 1933 in Reminiscences [part 1] for Madrigal Society in Hamilton, Bermuda.

On March 18th Barbara and I decided on a '5 year' plane for the garden which we reviewed on May 5th 1940.

On June 9th the Air Ministry sent me to Baltimore, Maryland in the United States. I cannot remember why. There I met a Mr. Clark of the Meteorological Office. I stayed the night there. The next day I took the train to Jersey City and so to New York where I stayed the night. On the 11th I was driven in a specially supplied limousine to Port Washington, near Baltimore from where I flew back to Bermuda. During my absence Newton Spurling had been staying with Barbara in St. George's.

On January 11th 1939 a Hamond Electric Organ was installed in St. Peter's Church and it was dedicated on the 12th. Stanley Spurling wanted to display the pipes of the old organ on the wall of the church, but I persuaded him against it.

On January 21st 1939 the "Cavalier" Flying Boat was forced down by the weather on her way from Baltimore to Bermuda. Of the 13 passengers 10 survived and were picked up. On the 29th a Seismograph was installed in the ground floor of Fort George. It includes a clock, which marks each minute on a recorder of the movements of the ocean wbed.

I fell in love with Katharine Spurling. On February 12th I composed a minuet dedicated to her. On April 6 I took her to the movies. Barbara quite rightly disapproved. On June 6th after a choir practice I had the nerve to kiss her and again on June 15 while walking her home across the golf course after a singsong at 'Cat Bells'.

On April 7 which was Good Friday and a traditional day for flying kites Barbara, Jonathan and I went out onto the Golf Course to fly a paper kite made for Jonathan by Georgie Moulder, son of George Moulder, the head signalman at Fort George. It went up well and I decided to try and make one myself which I did with Barbara's help. Ours was made of cloth and flew well.

On the evening of July 31st we had a Singsong on Hen Island. We lit a fire and bathed. It was a perfect night and most of us stayed till midnight.

On September 2nd War was declared on Germany. This made a difference to my routine duties.

On October 15th a hurricane was in the vicinity of Bermuda and in the evening I hoisted Hurricane warning no. 5. The next day the hurricane hit Bermuda. A patch of blue sky was seen overhead, a sure sign of the centre of the hurricane. The average wind was 100 mph and a gust of 131 mph was recorded. Electricity and telephones were off for a time. On the 17th I hauled down the hurricane warning. No serious damage had been done but there was an awful mess everywhere.

On October 23rd Dr Macky and his family arrived. He was the new director of the Meteorological Office. On November 9th we gave a cocktail party to meet Dr and Mrs Macky. There were 37 people in all.

Aircraft began flying to Bermuda via Horta in the Azores. A direct flight was too long for them at that time. The first flight was on November 3rd.

On December 3 I was given 3 weeks leave. Barbara and I spent a few days (13th to 17th) at Harrington House, on Harrington Sound. The place was empty of guests and we had good service.

Reminiscences part 4

On February the 12th 1940 I gave a talk to Evie's "Four Square Club" on "Bach" while Ivy and Lois Tietsworth on the flute and piano respectively provided practical illustrations of his music. It was well received.

On the 28th there was a concert at the Opera House patronised by the Governor and directed by Mr Bridge. The main part of the programme was madrigals and partsongs sung by my madrigal society.

On Friday March 22nd, which was Good Friday and was the traditional day for the sport of Kite flying in Bermuda, Barbara and I and Jonathan went out onto the Golf Course to fly a kite which I had made last year. But it broke and we came home to make a new one. This we flew successfully the next day.

Easter Sunday was on March 24th. The choir sang Stanford in B flat and Stainer's 'They have taken away my Lord' in which Katharine sang the solo very sweetly.

On the 28th Barbara scalded her foot. On April 1st it was very sore. She stayed in bed. The district nurse pronounced it septic and ordered poulticing and bathing in hot water three times a day. By April 4th it was more comfortable and Dr Harvey ordered dry heat. So Barbara had her foot in a cage and heated by an electric 75watt light bulb. I took Jonathan to Hamilton to stay with Newton Spurling for a few days so that Barbara can keep quiet. On the 9th Dr Harvey pronounced Barbara much improved and able to dispense with heat application

On April 26th Barbara had a successful operation in hospital [What was this for?]. She was to get up on May 15 and on the 18th I fetched her and took her to her father's to stay a while and brought her home on the 31st.

On June 3rd. Barbara was recruited to work for 'Convoy Control'. This was the Naval Control Service under a naval officer named Baird. A man named Dunch sailed to Bermuda to be part of it.

On July 3rd Norman Davis was sent as forecaster to Jamaica. He went with his wife, Doris. He was replaced as forecaster by Horace Fuller on July 5.

July 4: Inauguration of the Bermuda Defence Corps.

Sunday July 28 was Somers Day. There was a Community Service in Somers Garden got up by the St. George's Historical Society and attended by the Governor. I had charge of the choir, which led the singing unaccompanied. Mrs Moulder resigned as organist and Dr. Hoskings took over for a while.

On Sunday August 18 Barbara and Ivy joined the choir and we sang as anthem "Jesu, joy of man's desiring" by Bach, unaccompanied, Ivy playing the flute.

On September 6 I had a talk with Mrs Herbert Davis, the new organist. She had been organist at Crathie Church in Aberdeenshire where was Balmoral Castle, the highland royal residence.

On September 28 Jonathan built a 3 dimensional model of his own with Tinker Toy. The next day I took a photograph of it.

On December 19 there was a concert at the Bermudiana hotel at which the Governor was present. It was conducted by Norman Parker and consisted of choruses and solos from Handel's 'Messiah'. I sang "Comfort ye, my people".

On December 25, Christmas Day, Barbara and I went to 11a.m. matins at church with Jonathan. After the 'Venite' the electricity failed and the organ was useless. This spoilt much of the music except for the Carols, which were unaccompanied. We had the traditional Bermuda dinner of Cassava Pie. The Carols were repeated on the following Sunday together with an Anthem, 'O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion' sung by Marion Gurr.

On January 16 1941 the Madrigal Society gave a concert at St Andrew's Hall. There were about 100 people in the audience and they were very appreciative.

The war is beginning to have its effect on Bermuda.. On the 20th Dr Macky and I boarded a naval flying boat and flew to Darrell's Island in the Great Sound to discuss arrangements for briefing pilots of flying boats, which are to fly to England. A Naval Control Service was inaugurated. It was in charge of a naval officer named Baird and another man named Dunch sailed out to Bermuda to join it.

On February 1 the first PBY (Catalina) flew to England direct. Catalinas were specially adapted for long flights. They were bombers made in the USA and flown to Bermuda from Elizabeth City near Norfolk, Virginia (The days of jet-propulsion have yet to come). They flew from Darrell's Island in the Great Sound and Dr Macky and I had to take the forecast there for their flight which left at about 0800. This meant starting work early in the morning. They were called "preliminary forecasts" (Apr. 10, 14, 26, 30, June 9) for the captain to decide whether he should undertake the flight. It was not till May 4 that any plane left and then there were four.

On February 2 the Madrigal Society gave a concert at the Bermudiana Hotel at the invitation of the censorship committee. On the 8th Barbara, Mrs Gurr, Mrs Davis (the organist) and other ladies

organised a Market Sale to raise money for the Choir to get books and psalters. It was a great success and raised £16 17s. 1d. On the 10th Bermuda War Loan was up for sale. On the 13th the I.O.D.E. provided a supper to raise money for the War Fund. Barbara, being a member of the I.O.D.E., was there nearly all day.

On March 13 1941 work had begun on Kindley Field, a landing area for landplanes. Its base was dredged in its entirety from the bottom of the sea in Castle Harbour by the USA. It had three long and one short runway. The last runway was completed on 11 August 1943, but the field was in use before then. (Beautiful Bermuda 1947 edition by Frank R. Bell, pp.207, 679).

On April 8 I bought a sailing boat and had it brought to Saint George's where it was tied up. It was named the 'Franca', which I changed to 'Francis', Katharine's first name. I had my first sail in it on the 12th, which was very enjoyable. On the 16th I took Bill and Hettie Harper for a sail and again on the 18th I took Barbara and Jonathan. Barbara was rather fussy and nervous.

On August 19 the Meteorological Office moved to Manor Cottage a house belonging to the Belmont Hotel. I stayed at the Belmont Hotel from the 25th to the 31st. On September 1st we moved into a house belonging to the Belmont Hotel called Belmer but which I preferred to call Belmere. The house is all right but is much too large with very small rooms - 5 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms! I let Cat Bells to a lady named Mrs Connelly and she rented the furniture that I had left there (see Nov 2 in my diary).

On September 16 I sold my boat to Bill and Hetty Harper. It was slightly unstable which had worried Barbara but I had no trouble with it. The Harpers sold it and the man who bought it was drowned, so I heard

On September 22 Barbara took Jonathan to school at Warwick Academy. This was his first day.

October 25 Dr. Macky went to New York, leaving me in charge. He was back on November 8.

October 26 I had a typhoid inoculation. Barbara and Jonathan had had theirs yesterday.. My second injection was on November 4, again a day after Barbara and Jonathan. The third was on Nov. 15 (B and J on the 12th).

October 30 two PBYS (Catalinas) left for Gander, Newfoundland. These were the first of the Season.

November 6 I was very busy exchanging messages on the subject of flights of British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) aircraft

December 19 Barbara went to work for the Colonial Treasurer.(John Trimmingham).every day from 9 to 14. but on the 31st she worked late and stayed the night with Pop.

December 21 Dr.Macky and I met Sir Frederick Bashill, Air Chief Marshall (Ferry Command).

Reminiscences part 5

On the 16th of January 1942 Winton Churchill arrived in Bermuda by air from New York after a high level conference. He visited the House of Assembly and Barbara had the opportunity of seeing him. The next day he left with Lord Beaverbrook and other notabilities on board.

February 10: I went to hear Peter Beavan play on his Cello. He was a professional Cellist and had played in quartets with Helen but was then signed up as a wireless telegraphy operator on board a ship delayed in St George's. He was still in St George's on the 19th when I brought him home to stay the night, and he stayed the night again on March 2nd. Last mentioned in my diary on the 3rd.

February 15: Singapore fell to the Japanese. (The Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbour on December 7 and announced that it was at war with Great Britain and the U.S.A, Both these countries promptly declared war on Japan) Commander Moorhead and Alan Skinner were both there at the time. Moorhead was captured and Skinner was drowned trying to escape. I never heard what happened to Moorhead.

March 7: Norman Davis and his wife returned from Jamaica to work again at the Meteorological Office in Bermuda.

I picked up a kitten by a tree at the Belmont Hotel and brought it home. Barbara called her Twinkleberry and on March 10 I took her over to Pop's to be 'altered'. She became a sweet cat and stayed with us till we left Bermuda. .

March 16, Dr Macky left in Catalina for England. He returned by plane from Montreal on May 29.

July 11, Jonathan can now swim without a belt. On August 7 he was diving.

August 1, about this time Adah and Oliver went to live in Somerset at a house they called Shorelee on Mangrove Bay in Somerset. Their former house had been Verdah Cottage (named after Oli-ver and A-dah). They had built the house with money borrowed from Newton Spurling. He would have sold it, but Barbara did not want the property to go out of the family, so we bought it ourselves and let it to a lady named Mrs Oatham at £8 per month.

August 10, I invented "The Bartrum Humidity Slide rule", which is described in the "Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society" Vol. LXX, No.304, April 1944.

September 12, On instructions from the Air Ministry I flew by "Liberator" aircraft from Kindley Field to Dorval Airport near Montreal. I put up at the Mount Royal Hotel in Montreal, The next day I returned to the airport and spent a while at the Meteorological Office there. Flight Lieutenant Rowe Spurling, Barbara's first cousin, who had some official job there, drove me around Montreal. On the 14th I visited the Redpath Library of McGill University and walked up the "mountain" (Mount Royal) just out side the city. On the 15th I went to the Met Office at the civil airport. After that I visited the Redpath Library several times. On the 17th I met Mrs Glover (née Joan Gorham), a friend of Barbara, who had been abandoned by her husband. I took her out to dinner and to the movies.

On the 18th I made two visits to the Redpath Library..

On the 22nd I left by night train to New York. I had a sleeper and slept fairly well. Arrived next morning at New York Grand Central Station. Then I took my luggage to Pennsylvania Railroad Station. Had an hour to spare and went to New York Public Library The train took me to Richmond, Virginia where I changed for a train to Newport News, then by ferry to Norfolk.

The place was absolutely crammed with sailors on leave and there was no room in any hotel so I got permission to sleep in a chair in the lounge of the Hotel Monticelli. Later a hotel employee made me more comfortable in two chairs in the mezzanine. By this time it was the 24th. I caught a bus to Elizabeth City and stayed the night in a hotel. The next morning I took a bus to the airport and left by Catalina for Bermuda. It was perfect weather but the pilot had go up and down in order to pick out Bermuda on the skyline and this made me airsick. Arrived in the afternoon and found Barbara and Jonathan at home expecting me.

Some contraband, books and music, was landed in Bermuda and put on sale at No 7 shed. On November 18 I went there and bought some music. At the same time I pocketed a tiny book called "A Book of the Saints" by Lawrence H. Dawson. It probably would not have cost much.

The third house west of Belmere where we were living was a beautiful house named "Walden Gate" inhabited by Mr and Mrs Howard whom we knew well. Howard was a Radio Operator and he had a beautiful cedar chest made for him. He was ordered to leave Bermuda but the cedar of the chest was still sticky and he could not take it in that state. So Barbara bought it from him for £10, which was a bargain. After drying out it has been very useful for storage and a fine piece of furniture. He and his wife left Walden Gate on November 21st and we began moving in the same day. We spent much of the next day going backwards and forwards carrying our belongings in a borrowed pram. We still had not

finished when Barbara was taken ill on the 23rd, but Jonathan and I finished the move. Barbara was up again on the 26th.

Waldon gate had a long grass frontage going down to the road and on the other side of the road it owned a jetty into the sea. On each side of the frontage there were a number of tall trees. I discovered that roots of some of the trees were invading the water tank under the house. So I got in touch with Mr Holbrook the owner of the house for permission to have the trees cut down.

February 4, 1943: Barbara had to go to bed. She was up on the 9th, but not fully recovered till the 10th. In bed again March 4 - 8(?).

The Bermuda Broadcasting Station was opened on February 11th.

On May 9th I went by ferry to Hamilton and train to St. George's. While there I visited our old house, Cat Bells, and had a word with the present tenant, Dan Walker, who is renting the furniture. (The house belongs to the government).

May 13th a new forecaster named Duncan arrived to ease our burden.

June 26: Train to St George's and up to Cat Bells to see to removal of furniture. Oliver Spurling came with a truck and took the furniture to his house at Shorelee, Somerset where he stored it. I now have no further connection with Cat Bells.

July 11: Barbara and Ivy flew by Pan-American flying boat (Clipper) to New York. Barbara went for an operation, and was seen there in hospital by Stanley Spurling. (See diary for July 24).

July 13: Jonathan had his first piano lesson with Miss Saville.

July 26: My leave began. Back on August 2.

August 1st I went by ferry and train to St George's and spent the day with the Bairds who were living at Cat Bells.

August 10: A new forecaster named Matthewman arrived. He was a mathematics master.

August 29: Barbara and Ivy returned to Bermuda by clipper. (flying boat).

September 2: Barbara and I were godparents at the baptism of John Christopher Davis the son of Norman and Doris Davis.

September 11: Set out for England. Catalina aircraft to Bourdenville on the St. Laurence river, Dorval on the 13th where I had to see Air Commodore Powell before I could get anything done. (I knew him as a flying boat Captain in former years).

September 14: Went to the Redpath Library. I was able to take books out this time and study at night, because I was in RAF uniform? I took out "The Book of Llandav" and stayed up till 2 a.m. copying parts of it. I returned it the next day.

With the help of Powell I managed to get a flight on the 16th from Dorval on a Douglas Dakota. It turned back owing to bad weather to Mont Joli. The next day I was flown to Goose Bay. On the 18th I was flown on to Blue West One in Greenland. That night there was a fine display of Aurora Borealis. The next day I was flown to Reykjavik in Iceland. On the 20th I got to Prestwick where I slept the night. The next day to Ayr to get Identity Card and Ration Book, train to Kilmarnock, then by special train to Euston in first class sleeper.

On the 22nd I got home by tube and found Mother all alone. Then to the Air Ministry to see various people, presumably for debriefing.

October 2: I heard the first air raid alert and distant guns tonight. There was another alert on the 3rd.

October 11: Back to the Air Ministry to report for duty. I was sent to Prestwick in Ayr, Scotland. I arrived there on the 14th. While there on the 19th I took the train to Glasgow and another to Edinburgh to see Helen and her husband, William Kraemer, a psychoanalyst who had come to England, as a refugee from Germany., and their baby, Sebastian.

November 9: Took the train to Keswick and met Morley Dobson and Virginia at their farm, Moss Side. Back to Prestwick the next day. On the 12th I received a signal from the Meteorological Office to be back in London on the 15th. So on the evening of the 14th I took the train to Glasgow and a night train thence to Euston and Hampstead.

On the 15th I reported at the Air Ministry. I was offered a commission of Flight Lieutenant and accepted it. The commission was Flight Lieutenant in the RAFVR from the 16th. On the 26th I collected my uniform from Moss Brothers and wore it for the first time. Elizabeth and I took photographs of each other in our 'war paint' as she called it. She was an air-raid warden.

December 6th I was sent to Morecombe and was billeted there with six other RAFVR Officers. We left Morecombe on the 13th and arrived at Lancaster where we had to wait on a literally freezing platform overnight. The next day we went by train to Gourock where we boarded the Queen Mary and 'set sail'. We walked round the promenade deck for exercise. We had Lifeboat drill standing on the deck while the ship was pitching considerably. This was fatal to many stomachs including mine until we got used to it. We also had submarine watching from the bridge. We arrived at New York on the 20th and took a ferry over the Hudson River to New Jersey. From there we went by overnight train to

Montreal, where I stayed in the Windsor Hotel. On the 22nd we were taken by station wagon to Dorval. Getting there just in time to catch a liberator aircraft to Bermuda. Home at last to be greeted by Barbara and Jonathan.

Reminiscences part 6

January 1944: Barbara and I and Jonathan are living at Waldon Gate, Warwick; Bermuda. I am a Volunteer Reserve in the Royal Airforce and subject to orders from the Air Ministry.

January 1: We went to Newton Spurling's and had Cassava pie.

January 7: I was inoculated and vaccinated for Typhoid, Typhus, Tetanus, Yellow Fever and Small Pox.

February 11: Jonathan received a prize from the Governor for being top of his class last year.

March 7: Barbara began working at the Colonial Treasury.

March 30: I completed a work on the "Harmony of the Gospels" by cutting up two cheap copies of the New Testament and pasting into a notebook.

April 7: Barbara and I sang Handel's Messiah at the Cathedral. Jonathan came with Miss Saville, his piano teacher, He got very sleepy but seemed to enjoy it.

May 1: 'Liberator' aircraft began flying to Lagens in the Azores, (on the way to North Africa?).

May 4: Warwick Academy had sports. Jonathan now aged 7½ won two races, 25 yards and 50 yards, for ages 6 to 8.

June 30: A Portuguese gardener came to work to cut down trees at Waldon Gate because their roots had penetrated the tank under the house. (See 26 Nov. 1942). I replaced them on July 4th with three Casuarinas, which I got from the Agricultural Station (see January 12, 1945)

August 11: A new Met. Office was opened at Kindley Field. Dr Macky had designed a plotting desk, which had a glass window and a light below for tracing. It was brought out by truck today. I completed the work on it by fixing up the lighting on October 16. After that I did forecasting duty there.

September 11: Did briefing for 6 Captains to Gander, one to Elizabeth City and one to Nassau

September 19: Jonathan's birthday. He is now eight. He had seven boys to tea for his birthday party.

September 20: Four new forecasters arrived. Flight Lieutenant Richard Guy to replace Norman Davis who leaves tomorrow and three 'dependent forecasters' named Patterson, Williams and Small. Davis has been posted to Prestwick. Richard Guy was a mathematics schoolmaster

October 2: Barbara began working as typist for Stanley Spurling at the Electric Light Company office in Hamilton. Verdah Cottage was let to Mrs Oatham.

December 28: A mason came to work on the tank under the veranda at Waldon gate. He continued on the next day. It had a leak. On the 30th I went down into the tank to see the work done. As usual the tank, at a low level, is divided into two so that in case of a leak at least part of the water is saved. I checked the tank on March 15 and there were 22 inches of water.

January 2, 1945: I found Barbara in bed. Evie came and stayed the night. Barbara was still unwell until the 8th when Dr Harvey came to see her

January 12: Cut down a casuarina, which I had planted on June 30 last year. On the 14th I cut down the other two. On February 4 I cut logs from them and used them for a fire in the living room

January 16: Dr Harvey came to see Barbara again. 'Rabbit test negative' whatever this means, - is it for pregnancy?

January 19: I heard that I had been promoted to Acting Squadron Leader and was allowed to wear my extra braid on the 25th.

February 15: My madrigal group sang eight madrigals to the children at Delwood school where Wyatt is head master.

February 21: Dr Macky flew from Kindley Field to Nassau on a Dakota aircraft. While he was away I had the use of the jeep. Macky returned on March 7.

March 28: Went to the Girls High School and heard Jonathan playing the piano among other pupils of Miss Saville.

March 29? Ivy has been complaining of back pain and flew to a hospital in New York.

March 30 (Good Friday): Barbara and I sang in a performance of the Brahms Requiem at the Cathedral under John Bridge.

President Roosevelt died suddenly on April 12 and on Sunday the 15th a memorial service was held at the Cathedral at which Barbara and I sang.

April 16: My madrigal group sang 10 part songs not very well at a concert at the High School for Girls. Nevertheless the audience was most appreciative.

April 21: Newton Spurling, Barbara's father, died suddenly and unexpectedly but peacefully. Barbara and I went to his funeral at Pembroke Church on Sunday the 22nd.

May 8 was VE Day (Victory in Europe day). On Sunday the 12th there was a 'Drumhead' (improvised) service at Prospect and a VE Day parade through Hamilton. The RAF contingent, of which I was one, in blue uniform, got a good reception.

May 16: There was a performance of Mendelssohn's 'Hymn of Praise' in Pembroke Church. I sang the tenor solos.

June 6: Two kittens were left on our doorstep today. They are giving Jonathan much fun and we are keeping them temporarily.

June 8: I decided that I did not want to be prevented from joining up because of varicose veins, so I had an injection in my right leg by Dr Harvey. On my left leg July 3.

June 9: Dr Macky left for Dorval. He was back before July 17.

June 19: Stanley Spurling rang me to say that Ivy had died at the hospital in New York. It turned out that she had fallen from the window while watching some procession.

July 2: Ivy's funeral. The senior girls from the High School took a prominent part

July 18: I went on leave for 14 days. Flew by Liberator Aircraft to Dorval and stayed the night at the Dorval Inn. Then to Montreal (by bus?) on the 19th. where I spent 2 hours at the Redpath Library.. In the evening I left by night train to New York. It was an uncomfortable journey. The next day (20th) I visited the Air Force Club where I was put in touch with Mr and Mrs Peal for digs. Mrs Peal was very nice, and musical. I stayed with the Peals till the 29th. While in New York I used to go to the English Speaking Union for lunch

July 23: By arrangement I met Stanley Spurling and his brother Oliver Spurling at the Commodore Hotel and had lunch there. In the evening I went with Mrs Peal and a friend of hers to the Lewisham Stadium for an open-air concert.

July 25: Met Stanley Spurling at Grand Central Station We caught the bus to Oliver Spurling's house in Montclair town and had dinner with him and his wife Lena. Stayed two nights. On the 27th Stanley Spurling and I returned by bus to New York.

July 29: I left the Peals. Walked across Central Park to the Hayden Planetarium and looked in at the Natural History Museum. Took night train to Montreal. The next morning I went to the Officers Information Bureau at the Mount Royal Hotel where I was told of a room, rent-free.

July 31: I spent 1½ hours at the Redpath Library and then took a bus to Dorcal where I stayed the night at Dorval Inn. On August 1st I flew by Liberator aircraft to Bermuda. Dr Macky was there to bring me home in a jeep. Barbara and Jonathan returned from Somerset and were at home when I arrived.

August 11: I bought another sailing boat (compare 8 April 1941). It was named FRANCA and on Sept 16 I changed it to FRANCES, Katharine Spurling's first name.

August 23: Dr Macky flew to Dorval en route to Lagens in the Azores and U.K. He returned on September 28.

August 24: A lady named Toni Frissell came to Bermuda to take pictures. Jonathan and John Spurling spent the day on the south shore as her guests and she took pictures of them. The pictures appeared in a book entitled The Happy Island - Bermuda, Story by Sally Lee Woodall, Photo-illustrations by Toni Frissall. She left Bermuda on September 3 after taking some final pictures of Jonathan.

August 28: I went to Prospect (Military Headquarters) for a medical examination preparatory to my release from the RAF.

August 31: Barbara and I went with Bill and Hetty Harper to the RAF 'Victory' -dance at the Belmont Hotel.

September 12: End of war in SE Asia by the surrender of Japan.

September 21: The first Pan-American Airways commercial plane landed at Kindley Field.

October 10: I was inoculated against Typhoid A and B and Tetanus.

October 31: Flight Lieutenant Henry Hill came from Nassau to join the forecasters.

December 23: A Sunday. I played tennis with two teachers from Warwick Academy. It was my first game for two years and was very enjoyable. In the evening at Christchurch Warwick my Madrigal Group sang 6 carols unaccompanied. They were well received. At this time the singers were Gladys Tatem, Ruth Martin wife of Joe Martin, Ruth Winter a music teacher at Warwick Academy. (1st Sopranos), Barbara and Sally Hill (2nd Sopranos).. Mary Wyatt and Mary Macky (Altos), Will Talbot, a doctor, and myself (Tenors), T.F.F.(Jimmy) Wyatt, Henry Hill, and Flight Lieutenant Denis Shaw, an American (Basses). (Diary 1945, Cash account p.1)

December 25: Christmas Day. We had a branch of Cedar tree which we had set up in the living room as a Christmas Tree. Summersby came in to Christmas dinner.

January 3, 1946: Pan-American Airways flew their first commercial aircraft to Kindley Field.

The Hamilton Hotel had been partially destroyed by fire. Dr Macky arranged for the Meteorological Office to be moved to a saved room from Darrell's Island.

January 9: The Choral Society performed Mendelssohn's St Paul (part 1) under John Bridge. I had the tenor solos. It went off well on the whole.

January 12: The staff at the Met. Office are listed as Summersby, Souter, Paterson and Williams.. Another was Joe Martin who had a wife with him named Ruth (Diary January 21). Martin was a Cornishman of strong literary bent. What did they do? Draw up the weather map?

January 13: Summersby is being posted.

January 14: I went to Kindley Field with Dr. Macky and we saw the arrival of the first Pan-American Airways "Constellation"

January 18: We received orders from Mr Holbrook, the owner to quit Waldon Gate by March 15. And began looking for a new house. One of the houses suggested to us was Spithead Cottage which Barbara and I went to have a look at on January 31. Barbara nearly had a fit at the musty state of things and decided that we could not go there.

March 16: After much ado we finally moved to a house called Trewedden.

March 3: Mrs Kempe, the organist at Christchurch, Warwick persuaded me to sing some solo work in Stainer's 'Daughter of Jairus', A terrible work.

March 26: Mr and Mrs Holbrook arrived in Bermuda to live in their house, Waldon Gate.

April 4: I received notice to quit Trewedden by June 1.

April 18: 'Winding-Up' of RAF in Bermuda.

May 3: Barbara and I went to look at a house called Ivy Cottage. It was old and rambling. Barbara decided it was too big. We were told of a house on the road to Ferry Point owned by a Mr Packwood. On May 9 we went to see him and I offered him £5500 although he hoped to get £7800. I stuck to my guns. In the end he accepted my offer. I think his wife was anxious to move to Hamilton. They regretted it. The site was very good. In front of the house was a stretch of lawn going down to the top of a disused quarry. There was a steep path going down to the foot of the quarry where there was a nice patch of grass on the edge of ferry reach, directly opposite to the main runway of Kindley Field.. The result was that aircraft taking off or landing at Kindley field flew directly over the house. This did not worry us except when aircraft took off early in the morning and woke us up. The sale was attended to by Dudley Spurling acting as solicitor on May 10.

The house was the last of several houses which we had lived in and because we had bought it we could not be moved. We called it 'Lliwedd' because it was on 'Lliwedd' in Snowdonia that Barbara sat down and would not go any further (but in the end she did). See Reminiscences part 2.

May 15: About this time a cup anemometer was erected on the roof of the Hamilton Hotel by the Board of Works. I did the wiring on May 20.

May 31: We moved from Trewedden to 'Lliwedd'.

Reminiscences part 7

On 23 May 1946 I finished the wiring of the cup anemometer which has been set up on the Hamilton Hotel roof.

May 24. Went for my first sail this year in my boat, the Frances, with Jonathan and Evie.

May 26. Took possession of the house in St George's which I have bought from Mr Packwood and re-arranged the furniture. The house was the last of several houses, which we had been moved into by the Air Ministry, but now, because we have bought it, we cannot be moved. We called it 'Lliwedd' because it was on Lliwedd in Snowdonia that Barbara sat down and would not go any further (but did in the end). See Reminiscences part 2.

May 31. We moved from Trewedden to 'Lliwedd'. Dr Macky went off to Trinidad for a conference to discuss the future use of Kindley Field by commercial aircraft. He left the jeep to me. The same day Barbara and I packed all our remaining belongings into a jeep, closed Trewedden and set out for our house, 'Lliwedd', in St George's with Jonathan, cat and dog. Here we are going to live.

June 1: Set up a new office at the Hamilton Hotel

June 4: We are having to cope with aircraft at Kindley Field and BOAC flying boats taking off from the Great Sound.

June 13: Bill Harper, Henry Hill and I are now the only forecasters as Guy and Paterson will be leaving tomorrow. As senior R.A.F. officer in Bermuda I had to attend the King's Birthday Parade (presumably in my R.A.F. uniform).

June 27: I paid off the balance due for 'Lliwedd', making a total of £5500

July 5: Harper rang up to say that my boat had disappeared from its moorings in front of Waldon Gate. I reported it to the police the next day. Then Harper rang up to say that he had found it at Hinson's Island.

July 6: Dr Macky returned to Bermuda.

July 11: Conference of forecasters at the Hamilton Hotel

July 16: I closed the forecasting office at Kindley Field and opened one at the Hamilton Hotel. At this time there were no flying boats operating and there was no office at Darrell's Island.

July 18: Jonathan and I were taken by Jack Bishop in his motor boat to Warwick to pick up the 'Frances' and tow her back to St George's, and moored her off 'Lliwedd' in Ferry Reach.

July 21: I was distressed to find that Pan-American Airways had been advised to go to the American Army for their forecasts.

July 26: Aurora Borealis was visible in Bermuda for a short time.

August 13: Barbara, Jonathan and I went by jeep to the Mid Ocean Club to meet Mrs Bacon (Toni Frissell) and to see the pictures which she took of Jonathan and others last summer. Later Barbara and Jonathan went to the St George Hotel for Jonathan's first swimming lesson.

August 28: About this date Dr Macky went to England.

September 27: I accepted an invitation to restart the white choir at St. George's. There was a good crowd and I was encouraged.

October 24: Dr Macky returned from England. His trip seems to have been as fruitless as ever

November 23: Barbara and I having sold our double bed, obtained two single beds from Evie's. Sydney Spurling's truck brought down the single beds and took away the double bed.

December 1: Mr Fox, the agent for Vincent Astor's estate, who lives close to us, put in new boundary stones to mark the land which we have bought from Astor..

December 21: Don and Evie moved from Newton Spurling's old house in Woodbourn Avenue to St John's Hill at Spanish Point.

December 22: The Madrigal Society sang eight carols at evensong at Christchurch Warwick.

December 25: Christmas Day Wednesday. The choir sang an anthem and six carols. They did very well and received many congratulations.

December 26: Boxing Day. Don, Evie, Oliver, Adah, Ann and John came to dinner and tea. We had our Christmas dinner of Cassava Pie and Christmas Pudding. Very filling!

Reminiscences part 8

January 16 1947 Barbara and I took part in a performance of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah'. In a choir in the Cathedral, conducted by John Bridge. I had the Tenor solos and Katharine Spurling sang the youth sent out by Elijah to see whether there is any sign of rain. She sang 'No, there is nothing' etc. very sweetly, which Barbara and I remember very well

I received orders to return to U.K. for release from the R.A.F. and left on Jan. 17 flying to Baltimore and then train to Washington. I was held up in Washington and on Saturday the 18th took the opportunity to visit the City Library where I was able to take out some books for the weekend on making a deposit of \$5. On the Sunday I went to St John's 'Episcopal' Church in Lafayette Square opposite the White House. The music and sermon were quite good and the church was crowded. In the evening I studied the books borrowed from the library.

The next day, Monday the 20th, I returned the books and reclaimed the \$5. In the afternoon I caught a train to Montreal. It was full but I had a comfortable Pulman sleeper, upper berth. The next day I waited at the station for a train to Halifax which arrived the next morning, the 22nd, after being held up by a blizzard during the night. The temperature was said to be below 0° F (approximately - 16 C}. I went straight aboard the Aquitania. Arrived at Southampton on the 28th and so by train to London, which was in thick snow and more falling. Taxi to Hampstead and found Mother all alone and rather cold.

On the 30th I went by train to Warton-Kirkham and the next day went through the rigmarole of release from the R.A.F., medical examination, getting new clothes etc. The next day I went to Edinburgh to stay with Helen and William at Fairmilehead. Met their two children Sebastian, aged 4, very talkative, and Nicholas, nearly 2, with the mischievous face. On Sunday February 2 Helen, William and I went to St Cuthbert's Church of Scotland in Edinburgh to hear Dr Reinhold Niebuhr of New York preach. In the evening I caught a train to London and had a 3rd class sleeper.

I got home on the 3rd in time to have breakfast with Mother. Went to Finchley Road to get my Ration Book and Identity card. While in England I visited the British Library, which was then in the British Museum. I visited several times mainly for my work on genealogies. On the 18th I went with Auntie Gertrude to St. Peter's in Thanet near Broadstairs to see Aunties Florence and Janet at The Old Farm House. Florence aged 84 was in bed but quite clear in her mind and Janet was relatively active. I went to the school, formerly called Valetta House but now called Bartrum Gables by the new head mistress, Miss Critall. I spent the night there as a guest. On the 19th I said good bye to the Aunts and came home by train to Hampstead and mother.

I stayed with Mother till March 10th when I went to the Air Ministry to collect my passport, railway warrant and marching orders. Mother came with me to Southampton where we stayed the night with old Mrs Mackeith. On March 11th I got a taxi to the Aquitania