

BY TAKING THOUGHT

A Personal Memoir

Dedicated to former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (1948 – 2020), sometime of New College,
Oxford,

and surely the greatest Thinker of our age,

and to all my other favourite people

including Barbara.

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? (St Matthew 7:27 AV)

PART I: HISTORY

MENTAL CONSTITUTION

From my earliest memories I have enjoyed what I think must be an unusually thin barrier between my two minds (Inner and outer, conscious or self-conscious and unconscious or deep, soul and spirit – the terminology is manifold, but the phenomenon has been recognised through a variety of cultures and ages. It is well explained in Maggie Ross’s exceedingly well researched study, *Silence, A User’s Guide*, Volume 1 (DLT, 2014). I have given my own account of this in BRAINWAVES Report BW/026, ‘Our Two Minds’).

This sensitivity to my unconscious, as Ross explains, can frequently lead to unusual creative impulses, the prerequisite being long periods of time being spent in solitude and silence. These creative impulses have, increasingly since university days around 1971-2 when first I began to make use of silence in this way, been the centre of my being. In earlier days I can remember such ‘lightbulbs’ at school; for instance, some of my best lines of Latin verse came as I was saying my prayers before getting into bed. The earliest one I can remember came when I must have been about five or six years old, walking up the steps with my mother towards the bus stop on the way to school, when I suddenly became aware of how special it was to belong to the Mosse clan, something that has stayed with me ever since. And *clan* was definitely the word used, not family or anything else like that. Being subject to such impulses is simply what defines *me*. Which is why, on being forced out of paid employment in 1996 by the manic depression (MD, now known as bipolar disorder) that originally developed in my late university days (1972)., two years later I chose the name BRAINWAVES for the project of general researches upon which I then embarked.

When I was about eleven years old, I had already begun to accumulate a collection of books which covered as wide a range of a subjects as possible. I can remember challenging my father, when he came to say goodnight once, to name a subject on which none of my books had anything to say. I forget the result, but I was not on bad ground. There was *The Boy’s Companion*, almost certainly the 1961 edition of B Webster Smith’s 1948 volume available on the day I write this for £4 on AbeBooks and £865.42 on Amazon,¹ with chapters on everything that mattered. That on cricket, for instance, had diagrams prescribing clearly such important issues as, “Field set for a slow left-arm bowler” on which the fate of the world revolved. There was another with a title like *The Children’s Guide to Knowledge*, which I had been awarded as a prize at Parkfield, my prep school, which was remarkably

¹ The Reviews describe it as “A great vintage book. A real snapshot of its time” and assure us that “This is a wonderful book detailing all sorts of manly activities for chaps. Girls had not been invented when this book was written!”

comprehensive for its size and which I found absolutely fascinating. And there was the 1959 *Pears' Cyclopedia*, which I had bought reduced at half a crown at W H Smith.

This thirst for knowledge was an accurate pointer to BRAINWAVES of the future. But I wasn't good at remembering plain facts. History and Geography were consistently my worst subjects. History as taught seemed to be just "one damn thing after another", and it wasn't until I was near scholarship age that I began to be able to string these facts together and make an intelligent argument about it. But Geography defeated me totally, and I was glad to be able to give up both when entering Sherborne in favour of Greek. But anything rule-based, like Latin and maths, where there were specifiable ways of achieving what you were after, I revelled in.

The other side of this coin is that I am a thinly disguised Philistine. By contrast with my wife Barbara, who reads plentifully, I have read a pitiful quantity of great English fiction; I have little appreciation of great art, or of classical music, unless I know it well. I have seldom if ever chosen to walk around an art gallery, and only occasionally, to attend a classical music concert.²

FAMILY

David Fanshawe

Such a closeness between one's two minds can also lead to a strong individuality and originality, often verging on eccentricity. This was the case with my first and second cousin David Fanshawe, a world-famous composer and the creator of *African Sanctus*, at one time the most frequently performed choral work anywhere in the world who shared threequarters of my genes. He was similarly unusual, and similarly misunderstood by some members of his own family. But no one could ever question the designation 'genius'; or fail to recognise his utter uniqueness. He was a one-off.

Sir Keith Falkner, Director of the Royal College of Music where David trained, described him in the foreward to David's book *African Sanctus*, which came out in 1974 at the same time as his choral work of the same name, in these terms. After quoting David's ambition, expressed before setting out on the journey which produced the work,

"My vision is *Vast and Simple*. My music will *Communicate* a message of love, peace and faith in the *One God*,"

He continues,

"David is perhaps the most original, independent and self-reliant young man I have known. An Eccentric; yet a good man, positive and full of purpose. A visionary with the character and tenacity to convert his visions into reality. A Pioneer, Composer, Cameraman, Traveller, Recorder, Writer and Performer."³

David himself began the book like this:

Sometimes I stand with my cap on my head,
with endless song and glorious noises
shivering down my spine,

² An exception here occurred when in my twenties I took a highly esteemed friend to the Albert Hall for what may have been a Prom to hear what I think was Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. The performance was excellent and the company a rare and most genuine pleasure; but my principal memory is that it went on longer than anticipated so that we both had to run for a bus afterwards in order not to miss the last train home!

³ David Fanshawe, *African Sanctus*, p.9.

My life is full of praise and my language is music.⁴

David and I were astonishingly close. Our talents were different (I am no composer; he was in a serious sense semi-literate – he found reading a very difficult process) but our hearts beat as one. Like me, he was unusually in touch with his innermost spirit. Like me, he had a difficult relationship with his father my Uncle Dick (who nevertheless willingly carried the expenses of his college education). He was even more eccentric than I am (if possible!). Like me, he had a deep, deep love for the entire world, which led him to behave in ways few else could understand. Every cheque he wrote was signed with his characteristic and hilarious cartoon of himself riding a camel, with the Southern Cross in the background, underwritten with the motto, “*I love the world*”. David was a free man. And even today I find myself irresistibly compelled by the insistent demand of his Hippo Man:

“Go and learn something
Oh my Friend
Mr David –
Go and learn something
HURRY!”⁵

“Go and learn something.” What better advice could one offer anyone?

I remember how, early on in our marriage, David came round to our flat, “The Pad”, to meet Barbara’s parents, Ken and Margaret Corey, my new in-laws.⁶ And when beginning to regale us with some of his hilarious adventures, he slightly sheepishly disclosed to us his personal secret: “I receive *messages*” – such, presumably as the one which inspired him on his epic journey up the Nile which led to his acclaimed *African Sanctus*. And Mum and Dad, two complete innocents in our complex world, with no difficulty took him absolutely at this word.

(This total acceptance of other people was what made them such wonderful parents-in-law to me. The welcome they and their family gave me on our engagement, and the second home they offered me, unjudgementally, when I was recovering from an MD episode later on, was just wonderful.)

When I later sent David a dedicated pre-publication copy of my thesis *The Three Gospels*, even though he was totally unable to comprehend it intellectually, he sent me a three-page appreciation, dated 29.11.05, in typically extravagant terms, including the statement,

“You have gone beyond the boundaries of normality. At this moment in time – I surmise that only a handful of people properly understand you. Your beloved wife Barbara, firstly; your tutors and your mentors....”

Grandfather

Like me also, David was a deeply religious man, but his faith was an unconventional one, whereas I am more of a mainstream contemplative. He shared with me our beloved, gentle, quietly devout, universally loved Grandfather, Captain Harry Tylden Mosse, RN (1878-1974), of whom no ill word

⁴ Ibid., p.11.

⁵ Ibid., p.12.

⁶ Kenneth Norman Corey was a customs officer, stationed mostly at Liverpool Docks, although when Barbara was a child he spent a spell at the new airport at Heathrow, while the family lived on a new estate near Windsor. Investigations have unfortunately failed to confirm that he was the officer involved in the following exchange with an Irish priest attempting to enter Liverpool from Ireland carrying an unlabelled bottle of clear liquid. “Excuse me, Father, may I ask what you have in that bottle?” “Water, holy water.” “May I please take a sample?” “Please go ahead.” “That’s not water, Father, that’s gin.” “Begorra! Another miracle!”

was ever said or heard. I well remember at the age of about five asking him to translate for me our family motto inscribed on a silver salver which I think had been one of his wedding presents,

CRUX CHRISTI NOBIS SALUS,

which he rendered as “The cross of Christ is our salvation”. This has been the story and central focus of my life ever since, reinforcing that mental impression that I received on the way to school in my infancy. According to my father’s step-cousin Robert, when I asked him decades later, the right to choose this motto and associated Arms was granted by Richard Coeur de Lion to a gallant ancestor (Philip Mosse) who was the first to plant the Holy Cross upon the walls of Acre, during the siege which I understand took place in the Third Crusade in 1191. Of all the people in the world whom (after Jesus) I would like to be like, it is (as he was universally known), Grandfather.

An interview with him, aged almost 94, carried out by Uncle Dick during the miners’ strike in 1972, included the following remarkable passage:

“RARF: Grandfather, were you ever presented at court?

“HTM: I took the opportunity while I was at Greenwich, and a lot of the others did, too, of being presented to King Edward VII, and I bowed to him. As I went down he made a most gracious bow to me. I was only just a two-striper Lieutenant, but there he was, the king!”⁷

My fellow-grandson, James Fanshawe, has suggested to me that this may have been in recognition of his descent from The Captain (see below) around the hundredth anniversary celebration of the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801. Nevertheless it testifies to the remarkable sense of priorities among the British Monarchy which abides today.

He described one of his roles in WW1 in the following terms:

"HTM: When I was in the *King Orry* in the days when we were in harbour, it was my job to tow targets to any ships that were firing, but on one particular occasion, I think it was the 2nd Battle Squadron, they were doing their firing at about 20 miles and all of a sudden I felt something had hit me, and the First Lieutenant went down and chased out about it, and we discovered that a 6" 'proj' had come in about a foot off the water and gone straight across and through and out the other side. Fortunately nobody was hurt but I had two holes in my ship, only about a foot above the water, and did not think it good enough, so I hauled down the firing flag and intended to come back. Then I remembered that the 2nd Battle Squadron had just about finished their firing and there was going to be a division of cruisers, when I saw them approaching, and I signalled to the Admiral that I had been hit and I thought it better for me to go back into harbour because we hadn't got watertight doors or anything of that sort and I was put into the dockyard for 5 days and they made good the repairs."

Perhaps in recognition of the extraordinary bravery that such a task must have required, *King Orry*, with HTM still in command, was given the signal honour of being allowed to lead the defeated German Grand Fleet into Scapa Flow in 1918. This is commemorated in a painting still on view in the Isle of Man Museum in Douglas, which later featured on an IoM postage stamp.

I think Grandfather must have had the tidiest mind of anyone I have ever met. By the end of his life he had contracted his entire world into a single room in Bourne Tap, the ever-mirthful smuggler’s cottage where he lived with his daughter Phyllis Fanshawe and her family in Kent. In a single shirt box he kept all his genealogical records, partly inherited, partly the result of his own explorations together with those of his cousin the Revd Charles Mosse (“Uncle Charlie”), the family historian and

⁷ Ibid., pp.9-10.

vicar of Aldwick, and grandfather of my third cousin Kate, the natural pioneer, talented, bestselling novelist, sensitive and “perky” (her word!), and one of the first generation of women to pursue their studies at New College.

But his prize possession was his collection of British, Empire and Commonwealth stamps, including all the Penny Reds except two, each one meticulously inserted in its place. This was the product of a lifetime of patient dedication, which today must be worth a fortune. On every visit we were allowed to admire it; but it was a great sadness to him that none of his grandchildren inherited his love of his creation. I have sometimes surmised that in the grand scheme of things this role had been intended for Richard Fanshawe, who died in infancy in 1949 (see below). But no one can know.

At the start of every term, Grandfather used religiously to send each of his grandchildren a postal order for half a crown, for me at that time a generous 25% increase on my income. Today 12½p would not even buy the postage stamp.

“Is that how you like ‘em, Grandpa?”, my cousin James Fanshawe once asked him when we were watching a troupe of dancing girls on TV, while I was visiting them one time in Kent. “They’re too skinny,” he replied. “I like ‘em *plump!*”

On his annual summer rounds, visiting friends and family in ‘Annie’, his old Austin Seven, he used to stay with us in our first house, Winfrith, near Farnham, for about a week, an invariable feature being the tea parties he gave for Peter and me, together with the Warren girls Veronica, Mary-Rose and Carolyne, our playmates from up the road. He took great pleasure in going down to Farnham and buying all the buns himself. He would also look in on ‘Nanny’ Brazier, the nurse whom David’s parents Phyllis and Dick Fanshawe had engaged to look after his ailing grandson, Richard. When, later on, I used to call on her myself as she lay bed-ridden in her old age, she remembered him with great affection: “So Christ-like,” she called him. A kind-hearted old soul, she once said to me, “I could make excuses for anyone.”

Probably early 1972, I wrote to Grandfather to inform him of a recent decision to offer myself for ordination.

In due course he sent me a charming letter reply, evidently delighted and perhaps even proud at the news. HTM went on to explain that there were a pair of Moss bishops who dropped the ‘e’ after some family dispute. He didn’t say what, and I have never been able to discover the truth. Even Robert in Australia (see below) was unable further to enlighten me, except to say he understood that this was on some question of theology. However in the three volume *Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol II p.2018 I successfully located the bishops.

(1) First, their father, Robert Moss (1666-1729), dean of Ely and chaplain-in-ordinary to William III, Anne and George I.

(2) His nephew Charles Moss (1711-1802), bishop successively of St David’s and of Bath and Wells.

(3) Charles’s son (1763-1811), Bishop of Oxford.

The ambition to get ordained, however, did not survive, and by the time I graduated in 1974 had mutated into a plan to enter the Diplomatic Service which was rapidly thwarted by the Service itself on interview, not least on account of my abysmal performance in the French oral language test.

On one of my last visits, I notice beside his bed his ancient Bible, and a copy of *The Imitation of Christ* that was so well used it had to be held together with an elastic band. Beyond any doubt, *my Grandfather was a saint.*

Granny

Grandfather scarcely had a health problem in his life, still less a psychiatric one. Alas this was not the case with his wife, Violet Pemberton (1882-1958, "Granny" to Peter and me), of whom my father wrote in his memoirs,

"One day [after the Armistice in November 1918 when he was eight] my parents were walking in the Anthony Estate my mother collapsed. The cause was a complete mystery at the time, but today might have been recognised as post-natal depression. Whatever it was, it recurred many times throughout her life, and there is little doubt that it would have responded to modern treatment." (*Half A Lifetime*, Vol I:5).

Granny had on 27 June 1915 given birth to my Aunt Phyllis ("Mouse" to all the world, and later mother of David Fanshawe above). My only recollection of her was of having tea with her and Grandfather in their flat in The Fairfield, Farnham, during my very earliest schooldays at St Christopher's. Her grandson David Fanshawe gave his own recollection of her in his book:

"Granny Mosse (Grandpa's wife) ... used to imagine all sorts of things but never really did them. Granny Mosse and I had a great affinity with each other and I've often felt that 'her kind of spirit' is leaning over my left shoulder. The Mouse says it's sometimes Granny Mosse's spirit and sometimes it's Elgar's. These days I don't think it's either!"⁸

Uncle Shorland and Robert

Grandfather had a half-brother called Shorland, who emigrated to South Africa after WW1, where he created an orange farm in Tzaneen in the Transvaal. I do not recall ever meeting him, but he was the source of the delicious box of crystallized fruit that used to arrive at our house year after year at Christmas time.

Shorland had a son called Robert, a man of many talents ("Robert can do anything" was the very strong impression with which I grew up, probably received from my mother, of which I was never disabused), who trained and worked as a lawyer, but also helped to found Peterhouse, a leading South African public school, where he taught for a while. He also learned to fly and for some time did three months a year's national service with the South African Air Force, when he contributed to the Cold War by monitoring Russian shipping as it rounded the Cape. Though almost a quarter-century younger than my father, they were very close (the term "buddies" has come into use, although it is a little unclear now which of them first used it of the other), and in my father's later crises Robert became a valued confidant and counsellor.

In 1959 Robert married Merle, who combined stunning good looks with charm, intelligence and total dedication to his family history and concerns. In 1980 they emigrated to Australia (as Robert had said to me on our first meeting when he came to visit me in hospital with a broken leg in 1973, "There comes a time when you can no longer defend the indefensible." Since at that time all students everywhere were firmly opposed to the apartheid regime, he did well to explain to me then that the English in South Africa, being in fact "more English than the English," were equally opposed to it, referring to the disliked Afrikaners as "hairy-backs".) There they built themselves a macadamia

⁸ David Fanshawe, *African Sanctus*, p.57.

farm, and in the course of time the unstoppable Robert became President of the Australia Macadamia Farmers' Federation, or similar.

Like myself, Robert and Merle are both strong believers in the power of prayer. And Robert, at least, is capable of highly intelligent reflection on the nature of his faith, and is not ashamed to discuss it with others. He once shared with me the following pearl:

"If there is no God, nothing matters. If there is a God, *nothing else matters.*"

I rather agree.

I remember how, visiting us in September 1983 at Willowbank, to which we had moved in July 1964, he asked me to describe my administrative post on the computer project WAVELL with Plessey Defence Systems, near Woking. It was hardly glamorous, but I explained a bit hesitatingly my low level, centralised job of keeping records and keeping the wheels oiled.

"I'll tell you what you are in your own language," he interjected with characteristic forthrightness. "You're an *interface!*"

"Got it!" I replied, and thus was sown the seed of a deep and treasured friendship which blossomed by correspondence some time after my father died. A fount of knowledge about family history, he once gave me this little pen picture of Shorland:

My father who went to a famous prep School (the name of which unfortunately I can not recall) and then to Felsted experienced the sort of treatment that is depicted in Tom Brown's School days. An ex army sergeant-major who was the gym instructor at Felsted took pity on him and taught him to box and that changed his life. Both in Canada and in South Africa where times were tough for an Englishman, he was never picked on more than once! An appalling indictment really on man's progress or lack of it. My father was a very gentle and understanding man all his life and a true believer in God. He told me that war in the trenches had made him a firm believer.⁹

My Father's Granny Pemberton

In further researches I later discovered that among the descendants of her mother, Emily Marion Lane (1857-1942; "Granny Pemberton" to my father and Mouse), were no less than four sufferers of some variant of mood disorder who all for at least a period merited treatment with lithium. So I wrote to Dr Peter C. Whybrow, MD, Director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at the University of California in Los Angeles and a world expert in mood disorder. His book *A Mood Apart* had suggested the possibility of genetic origins to my condition. I drew up a suitably anonymised tree of my immediate family indicating those who had suffered from such conditions and those who had not. So for instance, of Grandfather's four surviving grandchildren my brother Peter (Cdr Peter John Mosse, RN) had not; nor had my cousin James (Cdre James Rupert Fanshawe, CBE, RN); David and I had.¹⁰ Whybrow wrote back most kindly, and having considered carefully all I had written, explained that while there was no known single gene responsible for mood disorder, a number of genes were thought to be associated with it, concluding that my father's maternal grandmother, whether or not she had been a sufferer herself, may well have been a carrier.

⁹ Email 22 March 2017.

¹⁰ This is to omit Richard Lionel Fanshawe, Mouse's middle son, who tragically died aged four in 1949.

Mouse

Mouse, who was a highly skilled artist, spent her later years in a quaint old pebbledash cottage in Westbourne, where she contributed masses to the community, like her father dearly loved by all and sundry. She was a natural healer of broken people and broken relationships. An amazingly wise old bird, she was the only person in all the world who understood at enormous depth the highs and lows, the struggles and successes of both David her son and of myself her nephew. When I went with Barbara to collect my OU mathematics degree from the greatly revered Dame Betty Boothroyd, Speaker of the house of Commons, in Portsmouth Guildhall in 1996, after both my parents were departed, with characteristic thoughtfulness she invited herself *in loco parentis* and bought me two coasters to mark the occasion. Deeply religious, every week she was visited by then local vicar to bring her Holy Communion, who then stayed for tea. But there was never any doubt that it was the vicar who benefited most.

Uncle Dick

Mouse had married her own first cousin Lt.-Col. R.A.R. (Dick) Fanshawe, R.A., (1910-1977), whose mother Eva Pemberton had been sister to Grandfather's wife Violet (there was also a third sister, Ethel, and a brother, Sholto). Phyllis, Dick and my father had grown up together and were always very close. They holidayed together and the two boys used to put on magic shows to amuse the family at Christmas time. Dick was a giant personality, afraid of nothing and no one. He reminded me of Prince Philip in his forthrightness. I can still hear his booming voice, when pleased, "Well, PRAISE THE LORD!" I remember also his way of quietly humming Ancient & Modern hymn tunes to himself. He was an extravert who loved parties. He had a great sense of humour and a good musical ear. I am sure he must have played some instrument but don't know what. He loved the jazz and popular music of the war years.

During the war he spent three years in total secrecy – not even Mouse was allowed a clue as to what he was up to – planning the Allied invasion that was to become the Normandy landings on D-Day. That it was indeed Normandy and not, say, Calais, as Monty and Eisenhower had originally intended, and where they were expected even right up to the last moment, is entirely down to the work of himself and his little unpublicised team. I still have a copy of his 16-page MOST SECRET report, with its five hand-drawn maps, which decided the course of the war. If we are to be judged by our fruits, then the success of D-Day suggests to me that Uncle Dick was one of the greatest detailed military planners of all time; albeit quite unrecognised in his age. It makes me extremely proud to have been his nephew.

It is to me significant that the motto of the Fanshawe family, **IN CRUCE VICTORIA** ("Victory through the Cross"), is not dissimilar to our own; though I prefer ours.

His son David, in his imaginative and quirky autobiography *African Sanctus*, attributes to him the following Churchillian sentiment:

A battle is won by pockets of men who occupy little pockets of isolated territory they care nothing about. When, in the face of the enemy, every instinct tells them to run, to get the hell out of it, a battle is won by the man in the pocket who can hold out that little bit longer against every instinct he's got.¹¹

¹¹ David Fanshawe, *African Sanctus*, p.202.

That sounds to me pretty authentic as well as true. I remember also his account of the young man who at eighteen years was convinced that his father knew nothing. Then at twenty-one he was amazed to discover how much he had learned in three years!

Captain James Robert Mosse, RN, of Copenhagen

All Mosses in our cognizance look back to and revere our ancestor Captain JRM, who lost his life while commanding HMS *Monarch* after a feat of seamanship at the battle of Copenhagen on 2 April 1801. He was commemorated at public expense alongside Captain Edward Riou, of *Amazon*, in the Two Captains' Memorial in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. This was accompanied by an outpouring of national mourning, which occasioned what must surely be some of the worst lines of verse ever penned in the English language:¹²

Britannia wept, Britannia sighed,
When Mosse was slain and Riou died,
Well skilled to conquer on the main
Th' insulting Gaul and haughty Dane,
Nor yet their dying efforts vain.
Around their tomb shall laurels grow,
Their kindred shades shall meet below,
A deathless mead the Muses bring
Their valour and their worth to sing,
And other Heroes passing by
Shall drop a tear, or heave a sigh.

At the same time, a popular song, issued in sheet music, ended with the verse (not improved by erroneous spelling):

To brave RIOU and MOSS and each Victim of Fate,
A grand Pile to their manes quick erected shall be,
May our foes find example before it's too late,
And sweet Peace crown the fruits of this great Victory.¹³

Many of his possessions, such as his sword, dirk, telescope and sea chest, along with a number of letters and other documents, are still preserved by the family in this country and by Robert and Merle in Australia.

His last letter to his wife, just before the battle, ended:

Tomorrow it is likely, We shall approach nearer, in readiness for the most serious Battle; - which induces me to Write while I can Write – confirming all my affections on You & the dear Children, hoping they will resolutely fix to live after God's Commandments, which will ensure earn His Grace at the last. – So God bless you, should it be my Lot to fall – “God's Will must be done”!!!

¹² A possible exception whose origin I have not been able to trace, reads:

“Along the wire the electric message came:
'He is no better; he is much the same.'”

¹³ *A New Song On the Glorious Defeat of the Danish Fleet off Copenhagen by the British Fleet under Sir Hyde Parker & Admiral Nelson On the 2nd of April 1801 Written and Compos'd by an Officer of Distinguished Rank in His Majesty's Navy*, Published at Thompson's Warehouse in St Paul's Church Yard for 1s.

It seems that many of Nelson's captains were similarly 'born-again' evangelicals, like our local Admiral Sir George Murray, currently being lionised by his supporters in Chichester ("Murray or none!" as Nelson once demanded).

The current Wikipedia entry on JRM, revised in May 2021, which makes considerable use of my own memorandum about him, is very factual and now in quite good shape.

Charles Simeon of Cambridge

On my mother's side I am a Simeon, descended from an ancient English family¹⁴ which included the venerable Revd Charles Simeon (1759-1836), a prominent evangelical preacher in the generation after Wesley, and near contemporary of JRM. In the days before theological colleges, he spearheaded the evangelical revival and may fairly be described as "the man who taught the Church of England how to preach." After his death, Lord Macaulay wrote of him in 1844 that

"As to Simeon, if you knew what his authority and influence were, and how they extended from Cambridge to the most remote corners of England, you would allow that his real sway in the church was far greater than any primate."¹⁵

He was well known for his way of resolving theological conflict, as between the Calvinists and Arminians of his day, by insisting "that the truth lies *not in the middle*, and *not in one extreme: but in both extremes*."¹⁶ This pearl of theological wisdom is to be found in the writings of many great divines, but has seldom been better expressed than by Simeon. My wife Barbara has long held that the ability to handle paradox is a sure test of authentic religion.

I still have Simeon's *Rule of Life*, written and signed in his own hand:

1. To hear as little as possible, what is to the prejudice of others.
2. To believe nothing of the kind, unless I am absolutely forced to do so.
3. Never to drink in the spirit of one who circulates an ill report.
4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness expressed towards others.
5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard – a different account would be given of the matter.

It is from Charles Simeon in particular that I inherited the strong evangelical leanings which became particularly prominent on my arrival at New College, Oxford in September 1969, but mollified as time went on, when Barbara arrived on the scene.

Besides being a leading light behind the eighteenth century missionary movement, and as such being closely involved in the founding of the Church Missionary Society, Simeon - a lifelong fellow of King's College, Cambridge - was noted for his fifty year ministry in Holy Trinity Church among the students of Cambridge University. From this ministry grew the strongly evangelical Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) which still survives today, and its sister movement OICCU at Oxford, which was to become my spiritual home during my sojourn in Oxford.

13th November, the date of his death in 1836, was chosen later by Archbishop John Coggan to be the date of his place in the Church of England calendar. It is also the date of Barbara's birthday.

¹⁴ See *The Simeon Saga: Saints and Sinners* by June E. Roughley, 2001.

¹⁵ G. O. Trevelyan, *The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay* (1876), i, 68n.

¹⁶ Carus, *Memoirs*, 600.

Grandfather Simeon

My maternal grandfather, Geoffrey Nelthorpe Simeon, was born on 28 April 1888 and attended the Dragon Preparatory School in Oxford, where in December 1901, aged 13, he won a green leatherbound translation of Homer's *Odyssey* as the School Prize for Good Conduct and Work, before entering Marlborough College, where at 19 he was in April 1907 awarded as the Laboratory Prize a matching edition of *The Iliad*. The second is a strange selection for a science prize, which tells me that he personally chose it to match the first, indicating something about his breadth of interests. My grandmother also told me once that he had a love of Josephus, ignorance of whom was a singular deficiency in my PhD thesis on New Testament history 100 years later.

In the same year, 1907, he went up to Oriel College, Oxford at the age of 19, where he rowed for his college (a photograph shows him with the VIII as "Spare Man" at Henley, where they had just been defeated in the final of the Thames Cup). Commissioned into the Indian Army Reserve of Officers on 28 October 1915, he entered the 3rd Battalion of the 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles, serving in Egypt and Palestine from January 1917. In due course he was appointed an Instructor at the Zeitoun camp near Cairo in Egypt, where he apparently went on to command the Lewis Gun and Hotchkiss School as acting Captain¹⁷ until he was demobbed on 16 December 1918, without returning to the Battalion. On coming home, he met my grandmother Henrietta ("Etta") Collingwood Carter and married her in 1919, following what must have been a whirlwind romance involving an engagement of just one week. This was necessary because he was due to sail to India to take up a post in the Imperial Forest Service in Assam, and would not have been permitted to have been accompanied by any lady who was not his wife. Etta must have been a very exciting prize!

He died on 27 December 1923 at the Presidency General Hospital in Calcutta, following a road accident, leaving her with my three-year-old mother and her son, my uncle Geoffrey, still a babe in arms. The exact nature of the accident is variously described. It seems that Etta sought to shelter her children by telling them as little as possible, which is why my mother was never very clear. Peter and I grew up believing it involved a motorcycle (coming off a bridge?) On the other hand, my cousin Robert Mosse remembers being told by my mother (below) that he was killed when his car plunged into a ravine. Geoffrey's children Richenda, Charles and Elizabeth ("Biffy"), on the other hand, report that it was either a tramway accident (Richenda) or (Charles) that his back was broken by a lorry overturning and falling on him, presumably at the logging site. (There was apparently a newspaper cutting and a local(?) obituary, which can no longer be found.)

But the definitive account must surely be what I have received from my second cousin Roderick Staples, whose mother Susan is the daughter of Etta's brother William Langston Collingwood Carter ("Uncle Collin", see below), to whom she may well have spoken far more freely:

"He was apparently at a remote tree felling site, and wanted to get home in good time for Christmas, which would not have been possible given his location, so he decided (with a colleague) to take a short cut by using a trolley-way for getting timber downhill -

¹⁷ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022902> gives some idea of what such training will have involved.

unfortunately it was not designed to carry people safely, and came off the rails, crushing and fatally injuring him.”¹⁸

Grandmatoo

Etta Simeon, his wife, my maternal grandmother “Grandmatoo”, (“Ma-too” to my father, often “GMT” to us), was one of the happiest experiences of my life. Born Henrietta Mary Collingwood Carter on 8 August 1893, her father, the Revd William Collingwood Carter had been vicar of Shipton-under-Wychwood. She absolutely doted on her five grandchildren and was enormously proud of us all, and we loved her in return. I loved going to stay with her from my earliest years, spinning tops (including my favourite, the big “red tomato”) on the floor and making butter balls with her wooden rollers in the kitchen. She was a most generous giver of presents. In the holidays she would give us £6 for riding lessons at £1 a time. By means of the “covenant” scheme (predecessor of the modern Gift Aid) she for many years made a valuable contribution to the cost of our private education which otherwise we might not have been able to afford.

Bringing up her children in the absence of a father she made frequent use of a battery of unanswerable proverbs so as to help inculcate traditional conduct considered appropriate among “People Like Us” (to be carefully distinguished from another breed of human – “not quite like us, my dear” – who apparently also populate the planet). For instance, you should never take back any item you have previously given to another:

“Give a thing and take a thing: a naughty man’s plaything!”

Later in life, in 1980-83, when I was weekly commuting to the Woodheads’ house Nether Green in Woking and she had retired to The Lawn in Holybourne, GMT and I enjoyed wonderfully happy tea times on Sunday evenings en route, to which one of us, I think myself, contributed a malt loaf and the other a box of chocolate finger biscuits. We would then read from her two volumes of Robert Browning, which I had had smartly rebound by my friend Lee Prior,¹⁹ some of our favourite poems. I had come to love him under headmaster Robert Powell in the sixth form at Sherborne in 1967-8 – especially The Grammarian’s Funeral, where I first encountered the academic ethos and aspirations which were new to my family but lasted all my life.

She had served, she told me, as a VAD nurse WW1. Strictly speaking, it stood for Voluntary Aid Detachment; but sometimes the soldiers referred to them as “Very Anxious Dears,” or (with a wicked glint in her eye), “Virgins, Almost Desperate!”

She loved to speak of life in Assam with “her Geoff”; how she stayed up in a tree one night as he waited to despatch a rogue tiger that had been attacking the villagers; and how he was known as The Peacemaker for the way he handled local disputes between tribespeople; I was glad to hear that. Peacemaking seems to be a Simeon thing.

¹⁸ Email from Roderick Staples, 12 September 2021. “Trolley way” seems to be the origin of Richenda’s echo, “tramway”.

¹⁹ Lee Prior had learned his trade as a bookbinder from the Benedictine monks of St Michael’s Abbey, Farnborough, whom I first encountered while working at EASAMS in 1977-8. At that time, he and they produced some marvellously skilled work for me of various kinds, including some first rate leatherwork. I later resumed contact with him after he had set up on his own not far away from there, I think when I wanted to get my PhD thesis bound in 2005. By this time his work was recognised as being of the highest quality. He produced the leather bound missal given to Pope John Paul II during his visit to the UK in 1982; and in 1987 was asked to bind the leather Book of Condolences for Princess Diana in 1987. After that, like the late John Cozens who managed our computers, he became and remains a major resource for BRAINWAVES.

Peter relates her alarmed comment when she saw Sarah on top of a horse when expecting her first child, Patrick: "When I was expecting your mother, I had to stop riding elephants!" She belonged to a different age.

She died in a nursing home in Woking on 13 February 1989, just a month after our wedding. "We were not meant to be alone", she had put in her letter of congratulations to me on my engagement a year before. I did wonder then if I was supposed to read in a little regret that she herself had never remarried.

Uncle Collin and his family

Uncle Collin (Lt-Comdr William Langstone Collingwood Carter, RN) was born on 15 September 1874, a year younger than his sister, Grandmatoo. And though both his father, Revd William Collingwood Carter, and Grandfather, Revd William Edward Dickson Carter, who preceded me in going to New College, had been to Oxford University and become clergymen, he apparently had a pronounced stammer which precluded a similar academic path. He instead joined the Royal Navy in 1912 as a Midshipman. In this he was following in the footsteps of his great grandfather, Thomas Wren Carter, whose extraordinary career lasted from the Napoleonic Wars to the Crimean War. By 1914 he was serving on HMS Shannon, part of the Second Cruiser Squadron.

All the above information has been lifted from a fascinating document sent me on 12 September 2021 by his grandson Roderick Staples, who had unearthed in his family archives the original manuscript of a letter that "Collin", as he signs himself, had written to his sister, beginning on Wednesday 5th August 1914, just three days before her 21st birthday, for which he included, a trifle apologetically, the sum of £1. This letter detailed with some precision the Naval dispositions as they set out from Rosyth for Scapa Flow to coal at the very start of WW1. Roderick, in his most learned annotations, comments:

"The letter reproduced below covers the period right at the start of the Great War. It seems to have been written as a conscious attempt to record the events that were occurring, and provides a fascinating (if restricted) view of the opening days of a global conflict.

A number of inter-related themes are clearly evident:

- The apparent unreality of being at war – and frustration that not much seems to be happening
- A lack of hard news of events elsewhere
- Belief that France and Russia would quickly have an impact on the war on land – a common misconception at the time

The letter was probably never posted (it almost certainly would not have made it past any official censor, given the operational details included), but was retained for posterity."

He was a most gentle, charming, man who was especially dear to my mother, and like Grandmatoo was tremendously strong in prayer, on which score I am sure I owe them both a huge amount. This was especially the case when aged eight I contracted acute nephritis and nearly died before being rescued by Professor (later Sir) Alan Moncrieff in Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children.

I got to know him a little in the late 1960s and especially 1970 onwards, when he joined GMT as residents of the very attractive old people's home The Lawn, Holybourne, near Alton, some ten miles or so from Farnham. By then one of his knees had locked, so my mother had one of the front seats of her red Mini removed so that he could sit on the rear seat with his leg fully stretched out.

I was to have further contact with him through his family. His daughter Susan had in 1962 married a rising diplomat called Justin Staples. In 1972, when still at Oxford, I was contemplating a career in the Foreign Office, they very kindly invited me to stay with them for part of the long vac in Brussels, where Justin had been posted to the British Embassy to NATO. This included an interview with our Ambassador to NATO, which was an enormous kindness on the part of all concerned. I remember also a visit to the circular Waterloo exhibition. At that time Roderick and his younger sister Antonia were still accorded “KiddlyWink” status. I recall reading to her, to my own great edification, from Enid Blyton’s *Mallory Towers* series, when she was unwell; also a drawing she made (or was it an image plotted out on a peg board?) of my supposed present or future girlfriend, distinguished by a yellow pyramid of blonde hair extending well beyond her ears. Two further such visits followed in the succeeding summers, but without the ambassadorial interview. This was kindness indeed. On one such occasion I disgraced myself after a visit to the beach by not wiping the tar off my desert boots before re-entering the house, and so leaving a trail of black spots on the carpet wherever I went. By a remarkable act of self-restraint Susan managed not to tell me in round terms just what she must have thought of my careless sloppiness, thereby demonstrating one of several qualities which made her a first class diplomatic wife (others being her adaptability to unfamiliar cultures, her facility with local languages and her pastoral support for the wives of lower ranking diplomats).

Then in August 1986 came an invitation from Susan to join them for three weeks with a friend in Helsinki, where Justin was now himself the Ambassador to Finland. The friend selected was “Tigger” (on account of her irrepressible bounce!), truly defined as a “longstanding nongirlfriend”, who is deserving of more space than I can offer today. What I must record now is the deep impression made upon me by the observation that the requirement for all our ambassadorial crockery to be deposited by the local staff at each meal so that the single gold crown on the rim was properly situated at 12 o’clock was extended to the china bowl on which Billie the Jack Russell also received his meals.

Uncle Collin died in February 1976.

My Mother

There is so much to say about my beloved mother, born Janetta Mary Barrington Simeon,²⁰ the magical childhood that both my parents gave me, and the extraordinary depths of her love for me that preserved me through all my maladies including the foulest imaginable depressive experience I was to go through, and its aftermath, that I have not yet found the words to do her justice. What follows is just a start.

Born in Assam in 1920, and losing her father at the age of three as described above, she had a very unhappy time at a variety of schools before being sent to a finishing school in Switzerland around 1937, where she learned to ‘keep house’ – and very well, too.

She took great pride in having volunteered for the WAAFs (1939) before being conscripted, and had spent at least part of her time moving tokens around on a map plot indicating the state of air battles, although Peter and I have not yet established where in the south (?) she was stationed.

But it is plain to me from very memory that she was born to motherhood. She adored children, and once told me that from an early age she had determined that she was going to have all of hers by the time she was 30. My arrival on 15.05.50 as the second of her brood of two completed this

²⁰ Named after her grandmother, Janetta Nina Simeon (née Sutton, 1856 - 1931).

ambition with two months and one week to go. And since she had a definite love of the number 5, this choice of timing made my birth for her a particularly happy 'outcome'.

For me her most singular characteristic was the delight she took in the world which was being created by the generation to which she and her contemporaries gave birth. She was fascinated by our likes and dislikes, the music we played, the books we read, the friends we made, and so on. She liked nothing more than to be a 'fly on the wall' as we grew up and spread our wings.

While taking us across London on our way back to Parkfield preparatory school (a journey always broken for lunch near my father's place of post-naval employment in Lloyd's of London and his offer of smoked salmon sandwiches), she made a point of teaching us at this early age how to negotiate the London Underground. This conscious effort at assisting our independence came into its own when at the end of Sherborne summer terms I diverted my homeward journey, with her full encouragement, to spend the day watching Surrey play at The Oval.²¹

Like my father, she was a great believer in fantasy as a necessary ingredient in any child's upbringing, but was more skilled in entering into our own and readily indulged in my private world of fantasy creatures and games. A favourite game, lifted directly from Winnie-the-Pooh, was setting harmless 'woozle-traps' for each other, which always resulted in great jubilation at each wozzle caught.

At one point in my early adulthood, it happened that she and I frequently found ourselves on the opposite sides of an argument. There was nothing to it, and we took it lightly. Then one day when she entered my room I greeted her with, "I suppose you have come to contradict me again," producing the instant indignant reply, "*I haven't!*", at which we both collapsed in laughter. She had fallen "all four feet" into the wozzle-trap I had dug for her!

In a maternal masterstroke, she assigned to each of us at a very early age our own personal drawer in which to keep our own special possessions, and into which no one else would be allowed. In this way she contributed to our sense of identity, of being a someone in our own right, to be respected, with value, space and privileges of our own.

I remember her relaxed, open approach to life, exemplified by the day when we spontaneously decided to break a car journey along the A325 beside the army playing fields near Aldershot just to watch a game of rugby that was going on, even when we had no particular interest in it. I remember her glee when she talent-spotted the Beatles before they came to their later prominence; and later the cricketer Ian Botham.

She enjoyed cooking and experimenting with new recipes for dinner parties, reckoning herself to be doing well if she found one sustainable new discovery in any of the new recipe books she bought. But most often she returned to the postwar classics from Good Housekeeping, with their black and white photographs, supplemented by Fanny Cradock. Hardest for her, as for many a mum, was the business of choosing the daily round of meals, which I helped to solve by creating lists of regular favourite main courses and puddings, which when actually written down turned out to be surprisingly longer than expected.

She had a strong sense of the importance of dress, and took great care to dress herself well, complete with fitting hat, when appearing on duty as parent at school functions. A skilled

²¹ Surrey were by then a little past their heyday of 1952-58 when they won the County Championship seven times in succession, being largely dominated by the great Peter May. But I was inevitably a fan of Ken Barrington (with a grand name like that!) and John Edrich, both also mainstays of the England team in an era before England batting collapses became a regular feature of the international game.

seamstress, she made many of her own dresses and several items for us boys, including four of the five dressing gowns I have owned. Financial exigency forced us to obtain our school clothing from the family budget as cheaply as possible, often secondhand from The White Elephant in Godalming, or the Bargain Basement in Farnham, but she knew when to make exceptions. When I became head boy at Parkfield, she marked the occasion by buying me a smart suit of grey flannels, I think from her own purse. When I reached sufficient status at Sherborne to merit the symbolic umbrella, she made sure I was so equipped. It was not new, so we spent some time and a little money refurbishing it. In my final term, she ensured that my status as a school prefect was properly recognised with a bright yellow waistcoat.²²

When I then entered New College, she paid for a made-to-measure lounge suit that lasted me many years. And again, on starting my first job, with Shell-Mex and BP in The Strand in 1974, she paid for another, this time of a smart blue I had chosen myself, tailor made by Montague Burton in Aldershot.

We were not the only ones to benefit. My younger cousin, Richenda Simeon, spent much of her schooling at the Royal Naval School in Haslemere, just up the road, while her parents lived in Fiji (see below). For a while, when she was about sixteen, she was billeted with us, and my mother was horrified that many of her clothes were in a dreadful state, besides being far too small, after not being replaced in three years. So she marched her niece around all the local shops, re-equipping her from scratch and making her feel good about herself again, thereby winning her love for life. My father duly sent the bill out to Fiji.

I can remember a wide variety of activities she embarked upon as time went on. In the sixties she answered the Cold War threat by undergoing training in Civil Defence, where she took great pride in learning to dig latrines. Then she took on the running of the local Cycling Proficiency scheme, something I was also to engage in as a senior boy at Sherborne. She greatly enjoyed her pottery classes, coming back with a collection of mugs and soup bowls, one of many creative hobbies that were to include photography, flower arranging, china mending, in which she became exceedingly proficient, upholstery and still life painting. In the early 1970s she gave a great deal of her time to the Samaritans, and quite evidently had a huge talent for 'befriending' and lifting up the downhearted, as I was to find for myself.

One of her last and lasting gifts to me was *One Man's Advent*, by Antony Bridge, then Dean of Guildford Cathedral, who was one of her Samaritan colleagues – a testimony of how an atheist unexpectedly and quite against his will found himself confronted with the Reality of God in a world in which he thought He had no place. I still find it very compelling.

Another thing that stands out for me about her was the instinctive sensitivity with which she set about our sex education. Once we had got beyond the basic biology of what-goes-where, which I had inevitably discovered in advance at prep school, she managed to keep the whole business on a thoroughly low-key, unhyped, level that contrasts well with today's culture in which sex is thrust upon us from all directions at all times. Every now and then, as I was growing up, she would drop into the conversation brief explanations of what might be adultery, lesbianism or pornography. No

²² This was rewarded by stardom. That summer, 1968, MGM chose to film the remake of *Goodbye, Mr Chips*, at Sherborne School, with Peter O'Toole and Petula Clark in the lead roles. I was among many who stayed on in the holidays to serve as extras, earning £55 for four weeks. But when the film came out, every single scene I which I had taken part was cut. Except one, a distance shot taken when MGM had returned in the autumn. And there, as the final credits rolled up, there is to be seen a tiny yellow dot moving slowly across the centre of the screen. And so I achieved fame!

big deal, just matters of everyday life. Or she might ask at lunchtime, “Did you know that your testicles, and my ovaries, both started off life much higher in our bodies?”, or, “Did you realise that human beings are the only animals that mate face to face?” This matter-of-fact approach enabled her, and us as we grew up, to enjoy the lighter side of adult life in a thoroughly healthy way.

She herself had a vibrant social life in the war, joining in lustily in the noisy songs of the WAAF mess, while in her tender early twenties still a little unclear as to what some of them meant. She once told me that it was mainly the terror of getting pregnant that kept them on the conventional side of morality. She also sometimes mentioned a very close boyfriend, Johnny Briggs, a Marine, who had been killed in action, but said little about him. I learned only recently from Richenda that they had almost been engaged.

Not long ago I considered, as a non-parent, what might be the role of sex education in the smartphone age? Does it have one, now that any child can readily see on its own, or its friend’s, phone or tablet, far more than we ever dreamed of, and at a far younger age? For instance, what is the difference between nudity in art, and nakedness on the screen? Why are some things considered “age-appropriate”, and some not, and how do we tell the difference? Is the buttoned-up, reticent, British approach to be preferred to the open, let-it-all-hang-out Scandinavian one, or not? And why? These are really tough questions for parents today, and I toyed with the idea of enlisting the opinions of Christian parents who had already faced them. The project never got off the ground, but I think that my mother’s wise, drip-drip-drip, matter-of-fact approach would have been a valuable starting point.

I recall her wise advice:

“Don’t just marry a girl you can live with. Marry the girl you can’t live without.”

She once promised to look after me until it was time to hand me over to someone else. She kept her promise. She died in 1986. In 1987 I met Barbara. And took my mother’s advice.

Uncle Geoffrey and Aunt Elizabeth

My mother’s brother, Lt-Comdr Geoffrey John Barrington Simeon, RN, was also born in Assam, three years after her, and so was just four months old when his father died. After distinguishing himself as a Naval officer in WW2, he trained as a hydrographer, and served in HMS *Challenger* during its retracing in 1950-2 of its famous namesake’s voyage of a century before which had discovered the Challenger Deep. In 1954 he married Elizabeth Rham, a direct descendant of the Quaker prison reformer Elizabeth Fry, whose family (at least as importantly to me) made bars of chocolate. Of their three children, Richenda (“Chenda”), Charles and Elizabeth, it is Chenda that I have known best. During 1966-75 my aunt and uncle lived in Fiji, where Geoffrey worked as a hydrographer for the United Nations. He was a most practical man, who could fix anything, and had a reputation for being uncommonly ‘laid back’.

In 1963, just before I was to sit the Entrance Scholarship exam to Sherborne, he very thoughtfully sent me by way of encouragement, as he had done to my brother before me, a carefully inscribed card, bearing the legend,

“Examinations are formidable even to the best prepared, for the greatest fool may ask more than the wisest man can answer. — Charles C. Colton”

I used to enjoy receiving Uncle Geoffrey’s letters, particularly when at birthdays they contained a naked £5 note.

My father

My father, Cdr John Pemberton Mosse, DSC, RN, was a war hero who had spent WW2 teaching the Royal Navy to defend itself against U-boats, and won his decoration for his part in sinking two of them himself. The context of this episode is given by Robert Tombs in his stout and excellent *The English and Their History*:

“Churchill was keen for a time on sending British troops to Russia, and he insisted on despatching precious weapons and supplies – a total of some 4 million tons, a quarter of all the foreign supplies the Soviets received. This meant nearly 700 shiploads, sailing round the north of Norway in appalling weather to Archangel and Murmansk, exposed to sea and air attack, and requiring the protection of nearly 900 warships and 260,000 men in all. Most cargoes arrived safely, and the Germans suffered serious naval losses – a striking demonstration of British seapower.”²³

I have sometimes wondered whether any other pair of cousins ever together contributed so much to the war effort as did he and Dick.

As is evident from his memoirs, *Half A Lifetime* (see below), he was an extraordinarily gifted narrative writer. He had been getting articles about his travels published, under the name ‘Midge,’ while still quite a junior officer in the Navy.

He had a deep love for both horses and cats. One of my earliest memories of him is of the bedtime stories he used to tell us of Luke the milkman and his horse Antrobus, still credible in the days when milk floats really were horse-drawn. He enjoyed betting on horse races. The regular telephone call to “Duggie” on a Saturday meant only one thing. Point-to-points likewise were a regular event when we were young, but never ever to any kind of dangerous extreme.²⁴ When he won, he once told me, that meant that more got put into the collection bag the next Sunday. When I was in Pilgrims’ Way ward, Farnham Hospital, aged eight with acute nephritis, he sent me a series of postcards of Misty, the Grey Pony, who, starting from the training ring and gymkhanas, went on, in my father’s later reconstruction, to win the Derby! I still have this touching treasure somewhere.

As a father, he was a great believer in rites of passage, and for setting and rewarding goals. As I was about to set out on the train to Sherborne for the 1963 Scholarship exam, he duly equipped me with a copy of Ian Fleming’s *Moonraker*, judged the least unsuitable James Bond novel for a boy of 13. It was understood between us that if I achieved an award worth £150 pa or more, he would buy the family our first black-and-white television. When I succeeded, he sent me a greetings telegram:

CONGRATULATIONS WHAT BRIBERY WILL DO

He had been unaware the educational inflation had set in that year, and all awards had been increased by £50. But he kept his promise. And with his characteristic sense of appropriate generosity, he presented headmaster Halstead with a magnum of champagne, which was duly

²³ Robert Tombs, *The English and Their History*, p.733, citing Dear and Foot, *World War II*, p.35; *What Britain Has Done*, p.34.

²⁴ To arouse our interest, we were invited to predict the winner of each race. If correct, we won 6d. If wrong we lost nothing. I think it was on Easter Monday 1961 at Cowdray Park, very much a favourites’ day, that I was right on all six races. We always enjoyed the familiar self-promoting patter of “Gully-Gully” in his white coat (“I know these horses!”), promising that half a crown spent on “Gully’s card” – a tip for each race – would guarantee a positive outcome for the afternoon on the tote. It often did. One certainty was that Mrs. E. Savage always won the Ladies’ Race. On other occasions, especially at Tweseldown, we children would disappear off for half the afternoon to play in the rhododendron bushes.

shared around the staff Common Room, I myself being granted a sip, and when empty, mounted as a trophy high up on a wall near the door, presumably as an example to future parents of successful scholars!

Generosity was in fact one of his most prominent virtues, although one might never have known it because, of all the gospel commands he must have learned in his schooldays, the one he treated as sacrosanct above all else was not to do one's good works in public. When he gave to charity, he made as sure as he could that nobody else ever got to know about it. So we never had any idea of how much he gave, but I strongly suspect that – given that in our early days we never had much of a surplus – it was quite substantial. Even today I am still hearing anecdotes of his untrumpeted generosity. I believe his favourite charity was Riding for the Disabled.

(In 1964, being still under 14 by the critical date, I was allowed to sit the exam again from within, after three terms at Sherborne, and this time obtained the top award of £300 pa. This time I was rewarded with a promised BSA Meteor .22 air rifle, with crosshair sights, ideal for practising in the large and beautiful garden of our new house, Willowbank.) On another occasion, while skiing in Andermatt, Switzerland, I was promised a slurp of brandy in the hot chocolate drink that ritually followed the afternoon run if I successfully negotiated one of the taller peaks without a fall. There was never a question that my word for this would be taken at face value.

He was an extremely talented carpenter, filling spare corners in both our houses with cupboards and shelves. He was also skilled on the banjo and already a very competent bridge player in the Navy, as his memoirs reveal;²⁵ a hobby he resumed in retirement after a long gap. In the kitchen of Willowbank he used to make his own home-made beer in a large blue plastic dustbin. By the addition of (also home-made?) ginger beer I in my teens was progressively weaned on to the taste of beer, as useful asset with which, unusually for a Mosse, I was not born.

Like so many of his generation who had fought the war, he was motivated by an extremely deep sense of patriotism. This I think is what led to the saddest thing I ever heard him say, under government which he abhorred in the late 1960s: "It's not the country I fought for."

On the negative side, he did not handle differences easily. In the Navy, for very practical reasons, discussion of both religion and politics was taboo. Faith in particular was not something to be reasoned about, still less a journey to be travelled. In his experience religious discussions only ever ended in stalemates, strong words and hostility between the participants, which in a fighting unit was intolerable. And he had no concept at all of faith as a journey to be shared with your fellow-beings. So give-and-take in such matters was not his skill. Once he had expressed himself on a contentious issue, there was no more to be said.

He had been taught at Dartmouth all the religion he would need to carry out his career as an officer in the Royal Navy. As a ship's captain he would need to be able to conduct Divisions on Sundays in the absence of a padre; to officiate as required in matters of life and death; and, like captains everywhere, to conduct marriages at sea as occasion demanded. I'm not sure he ever had to do that. He was taught the creeds and believed them wholeheartedly. But you could have written the amount of Christian theology he understood on the back of a postage stamp.

I remember how in a family discussion in St Moritz when I was 16 he ridiculed the view that Adam and Eve had got into trouble for eating an apple. What could possibly be wrong with that? Everybody knew what their sin was – they *copulated!* In retrospect, the implications of this still seem

²⁵ *Half A Lifetime*, pp.1:37-9.

to me quite horrendous. If God is really such an unutterable spoilsport, small wonder that today He is so unpopular in the West. It is enough to turn one into a Buddhist! But no more could be said.

This reluctance to wrestle with difficult issues later proved not easy for a young Oxford undergraduate immersed in an environment in which one was free, nay, encouraged, to express any opinion whatever provided only that

(1) It was not anti-social (so no one ever defended apartheid), and

(2) You could defend your view against all possible attack.

I remember my mother coming into the room once when my father and I were having a difference of opinion, and saying, "You must remember, John, that there are other opinions in the world different from your own," to which he replied, "Yes, but I have never found any that are as good."

My father can have had little comprehension of what might drive anyone intelligent student to want to spend four years in an ancient university studying the writings of an ancient civilisation in languages that nobody today even speaks.²⁶ He would probably have been far happier if I had followed my alternative choice of reading accountancy at somewhere like Bristol. And yet, for reasons which still defeat me but for which I am eternally grateful, and in spite of the considerable expense involved, *he backed me*. It may be he was advised by friends, or took the recommendation of my schoolmasters and their assurance that I would do well. I do not know. But whatever it was, it was a massive vote of support for a son of whom he was already very proud. I appreciated it, and determined not to let him down.

His total innocence of all things academic came out touchingly when, around 1992, long since independent of the parental purse, I announced my intention of starting a course in mathematics at the Open University. "But you've already got a degree!" he spluttered, as though a degree were no more than a stepping stone towards higher status, or a better or more lucrative job. The thought that one might want to study mathematics simply for the love of mathematics was totally beyond him. We lived in different worlds.

But it is the following passage from *Half A Lifetime* II:32, describing his response to the lack of anti/submarine preparedness that he encountered on being transferred from the Western Approaches to the Mediterranean in 1941 that tells us all we really need to know about the man:

"In an effort to stimulate some interest in A/S matters I gave two lectures on The Battle of The Atlantic which were well attended by the Destroyer Command including two Captains (D), by officers from the local flotilla, and by RAL's staff. I was also asked to give the lecture to the Joint Intelligence Centre in Cairo.

"Another source of weakness was a complete lack of emergency plans like those in the Western Approaches Convoy Instructions, which were being used with such success in the Atlantic. Thus, for example, if a ship in the convoy were torpedoed the Escort Group CO would give a brief coded order such as RASPBERRY STARBOARD and everyone would know exactly what to do.

"I adapted some of these operational plans to suit the very different conditions of the North African coast, and we soon had our first success.

²⁶ Though, strictly speaking, of course, modern Greek is direct descendant of ancient Greek.

"A German U-boat attacked a Tobruk convoy and was sunk by an escorting destroyer which picked up the crew and brought them back to Alexandria. I went onboard to congratulate the CO and he was generous enough to say 'I followed your convoy instructions and they worked!'"

History does not record how many times that accolade might justly have been repeated.

I used to think that my father was quite good at winning world wars but never really achieved anything of any great significance with his life.

Peter

From earliest childhood Peter (now Cdr P.J. Mosse, RN) has always been instinctively solicitous of the welfare of his younger brother. Among our earliest photographs are some of us playing games in the garden. There's one of him trying to teach me to catch – without much success, as history suggests, although I do recall two catches from my cricketing career. (My batting wasn't much good, either. My highest score at Sherborne was 14, mainly due from a four scored with a pull shot I had been taught by my boyhood friend Peter Garforth-Bles the previous holidays. Peter G-B was a more natural sportsman, and I remember watching him playing rugby years later for the Sherborne 1st XV.²⁷)

At other times rules had to be invented to overcome the three year difference between us. Such was 'ragger', when Peter at Parkfield had started playing rigger. There was also tenniquoit, played as on the deck of a ship by throwing over a string a quoit made of rope spliced together by my father.

I remember also a treasure hunt he set me around Winfrith, with clues like "DON'T GET INTO A FLAP – GO AND HAVE A BATH!" which led me to the birdbath. One about "THE OLD REMAINDER'S NUMBER" referred to the surviving spare number plate JKO 102 of our previous car, a black Vauxhall 10, in the garage. And one about "LE BLOW" led me to the bellows by the sitting room fire.

Before that, when Peter started Latin in his first term at Parkfield, he began teaching me at home after lights out the present tense of *amo*, thus giving me a head's start which proved useful when three years later I turned up there halfway through my first term, delayed while convalescing from nephritis. He never explained what a tense was, and I was a little bewildered at the age of five as to why a Latin verb should need tenses anyway.

But the precedent was good. Another two years later I turned to him very profitably for help when completely mystified at the age of ten by the varieties of third declension Greek nouns. These Peter duly explained, declining *phulax*, a guard, as a model example. At the same time he enlightened me on the use of the Latin present infinitive as in the phrase *videre est credere*, "seeing is believing".

A while before I went to Parkfield, Peter – I think it was – taught me to play chess. Later on I acquired and read a number of books on the subject and sought tuition from a close friend, Walter Moberly, who when we met at New College in 1970 had recently been runner-up in the European Junior Championship with a defeat of Tony Miles to his credit.²⁸ Walter taught me the King's Gambit, for a long time afterwards my strongest opening, and introduced me to fundamental concepts like *tempo*, which I had not found in the self-tutoring books I had indulged in before. But even so, I seldom managed to worst (or do I mean best?) untutored Peter at the game. The best I ever

²⁷ I do wonder, Was cricket the original context of the phrase, "pulling a fast one"?

²⁸ Tony Miles was to become in 1976 the first UK-born, over-the-board chess grandmaster.

achieved was to once induce Walter, in a moment of extreme generosity or perhaps rare weakness, to offer me a draw, playing on the beautiful set Peter had given me for my 21st birthday.

In 1967, when Peter had moved on to Dartmouth, where he was to win the mathematics prize (I always believed him a better mathematician than myself, being far more tenacious over difficult problems than I ever was), I wrote to him from Sherborne asking about the solution of cubic equations, on which I could find no help in our school textbooks. I still have his lucid exposition of Tartaglia's solution, written out clearly on foolscap and posted on 20 November 1967, which I duly and with profit consulted when writing '*e, i & π*' around 45 years later.

Peter had already made his mark in maths at Sherborne when I went for the scholarship interview in May 1963. I was walking across the courts then when I was accosted by a rather rotund, bald-headed, master of senior years, who addressed me excitedly, "I know who you are! I know just who you are! You're Mosse's brother, aren't you?" Such was my introduction to Colonel 'Doughie' Randolph, who taught me mathematics up to 'O' level when I arrived, and had also taught Peter at the same age. Another privilege which had been his had been to teach the young Alan Turing on his arrival at the school in 1926. It is understood that he wrote on Turing's first school report, "A mathematician, I think." However, 'Doughie' never pronounced upon which of the three of us he considered to be the finest mathematician, and I have since concluded that the only possible reason for this can have been that he was quite unable to make up his mind.

Peter was most unfortunate to be caught between two stools in his maths career, at the time when Sherborne was pioneering the adoption of the SMP "New Maths". The result was an 'A' level result that in no way did justice to his undoubtedly considerable talent in this field. But he did go on to win the mathematics prize at Dartmouth.

The visual similarity between my brother and myself has been remarked on many times. A few years ago, Peter was called upon to give the address at a funeral – I think it was of our Uncle Geoffrey Simeon – and someone came up to me afterwards and congratulated me on how well I had spoken.

Peter's main talents, however, were musical. As a boy treble he excelled, and though following as usual in his footsteps, I never even approached his class. In the Parkfield production of Hansel and Gretel he was outstanding as Gretel, while I served as one of the angels, and also (a little more fittingly) as a gingerbread boy. He continued singing enthusiastically to this day, and in later life ran his own West Meon choir.

At the piano he was similarly gifted, owing much to Dorothy Stoner at Parkfield. I recall how in his teens he could play almost anything by ear, and in 1963 for a while he, my father (on his banjo) and I (rather ham-fistedly on the mouth organ) used to make music together after supper at home in Winfrith. He went on to win the piano prize both at Sherborne and Dartmouth.

He is also very artistic. Where he got that from, I do not know: it is something that never came my way. But he managed to pass on an astonishing range of artistic skills to his family.

Another talent of his was picking up the scattered pieces of his disintegrated younger brother. He did so early in 1973, when he went to retrieve my belongings from my lodgings in the North Oxford Overseas Centre in Banbury Road, when depression struck. He came to my rescue again in the autumn of the same year, when I broke my left thigh coming off my 175 cc BSA Bantam in Haslemere, and ended up in the Royal Surrey County Hospital in Guildford for 19 ½ weeks. One that occasion he managed to get the bike collected, repaired and sold and I think even made a profit on the proceeds. Fortunately he has not had to exercise this talent too often!

But, looking back, the recurring feature of him in my memory is the astonishing number of generous birthday and Christmas presents he has given me over the years which have again and again hit the mark. I still have *My Best Puzzles in Logic and Reasoning*, by Hubert Phillips (“Caliban”) which kept me well occupied during our Christmas skiing holiday in St Moritz, the first week of which I spent in bed with some kind of flu. For my 21st birthday he gave me a beautiful chess set with ivory pieces in their own inlaid case which I still treasure today, even if I play less than I used to.

But with the exceptions of a fascinating OUP compendium called *The Turing Guide*, my birthday present in 2017, and *The Battle of Copenhagen 1801*, inscribed by the author Ole Feldbæk, which described the part played in it by our revered ancestor, he didn’t really go in for books. Technology was his prime choice, and all kinds of new wizardry came my way, especially when the Navy took him to the Far East where such things were both good and relatively affordable. Prominent in my memory are still the Sony mono cassette recorder he presented me in my Oxford days, which gave me countless hours of pleasure for decades; and the little basic Casio calculator that followed not long after, again at the cutting edge of technology. (The net result of this was that my mental arithmetic, which had been quite acute, took a nosedive. I haven’t been able to add up since! And I have been a poor second in this respect to Barbara ever since we met in 1987.) In 2009 he gave us the horrendously expensive gift of a Tom-Tom satnav, which besides making much easier our regular trips up north to Barbara’s family, instantly justified its existence by making possible our holiday that summer in Ireland. This year he gave me a special gizmo for creating electronic PDF files of old album photos, which I had specially requested by way of illustrating this present work, though whether it ever gets to fulfil this goal remains to be seen.

By contrast I am frequently ashamed at the consistently poor targeting of many of the presents I have given him over the years. My only excuse is that on his own admission he reads very few books, and books are one of the few things I am good at choosing.

Peter has shared our father’s love of both tennis and skiing, and right into his seventies has kept himself fit with a weekly game of tennis, which for reasons I have never understood he prefers to the delights of immersing himself in mathematics.

As brothers do, we have had our fair share of arguments and disagreements over the years, characteristically marked by dogged determination on my part, and sheer, pig-headed obstinacy on his! But by far his greatest achievement has been – with a little help from Sarah – to spawn and bring up a Tribe – Paddy, Andy, Simon and Gina, or as I now see it, a Dynasty – of splendid offspring to carry the line forward, absolute winners all in their respective fields, for which I am most grateful as it has relieved me of the obligation to do the same.

ST CHRISTOPHER’S SCHOOL

ACUTE NEPHRITIS

Early in 1958 I was smitten with acute nephritis – swollen kidney to the uninitiated – and admitted to Pilgrim’s Way Ward in Farnham Hospital. There was much fun to be had here. I recall regular assaults upon the nursing staff by flicking pellets with rubber bands; Also an episode when screaming young nurses were chased out of the ward by equally young doctors wielding large syringes full of water which they were squirting at them.

There was a retired Farnham solicitor, aged 80, called Alfred Julius Stevens, in whose pine wood, near Winfrith, Peter, myself and our friends the aforementioned Warren girls, were allowed to play. Peter and I also enjoyed a generous standing invitation to watch BBC children’s television on his

black-and-white TV. When he heard I was in hospital he began as 'King of the Forest' a delightful correspondence with me, the "Baron de Rosbefe", about life in the Forest under "Minnehaha – Laughing Water" and her two sisters, and the current state of its defences against the depredations of Red Indians under their wily chieftain Tearing Owl. This brought enormous delight to me and total bemusement to the nursing staff to whom I showed it ("He must be out of his mind!"). Naturally, the Baron, aged 7, with his own characteristic spelling, replied in kind. And thus was born the brief volume of correspondence *Extremes Meet*, published soon after by the senior contributor, complete with full heraldic coat of arms of the Baron as its centrepiece, expertly created by 'Professor Knockemoff' (Dick Dufty).

Great Ormond Street

I was released from Farnham Hospital in time for Easter 1958, and I can remember being taken for a treat to watch polo at Cowdrey Park along with Geoffrey Kime, who had stood nobly with me at St Christopher's, flying the flag for all things good, true and worthy as the sole other boy in a class full of girls – a valuable moral support in an otherwise desperate situation. But after a month's liberty, I was recalled back to Pilgrim's Way Ward, and my mother as ever did her best to maintain my tearful morale by giving me a tube of orange Spangles to hide under my pillow. Peter likewise did his bit from Parkfield by including a much-prized Barker and Dobson mint with a letter. The weeks went by, spent mainly reading comics (*Cowboy Picture Library* especially), playing patience and thrashing all the nurses at draughts, with no improvement. Then on Peter's birthday came a special treat: I was allowed out, carefully wrapped in my dressing gown, to go and see the Royal Tournament at Earls Court, Olympia, a most splendid annual display of the present and historic capabilities of the British armed forces, which has sadly gone the way of the times, centring on the spectacular Field Gun Race. Careful record had to be taken of my liquid input and output. My father marked the occasion by giving me a special Lone Star water pistol which also fired potato pellets, to fire at other cars on the way up – adding a strict instruction that police cars were to be regarded as under no circumstances to be regarded as targets. I have wondered since if this most irregular excursion was permitted solely because my expectation of survival was already rated as very low.

However, not long afterwards, the prodigious Scottish paediatrician Professor (later Sir) Alan Moncrieff, of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, in London,²⁹ devised a possible new programme of treatment for acute nephritis and asked for the next few patients to be sent to him there. I was one of these, and it worked.

HSC was a lovely place with a most friendly and welcoming atmosphere. My father visited me every evening after work, bringing edifying supplies of reading matter such as *Beano*, *Topper*, *Beezer* and similar material, in which I periodically encountered a strange breed of men called "Nazis" I had not heard of before. They seemed to be a Bad Thing, who fortunately always lost whatever engagements they found themselves in. Often the poor man, starving after a day in the office, had to watch as I had to leave on my plate piles of specially requested chicken salad I was unable to get down. My mother would come up twice a week by train with bags of eating apples from the garden of Winfrith – quite the most delicious I have tasted any time in my life, which we sadly failed to reproduce, small sweet and with a totally unique flavour. - "Prof Monkey" (as Peter referred to him) quite obviously adored children. His daily rounds were attended like a comet by a train of junior doctors. On seeing beside my bed the basket full of these delicious apples, he quipped, "You will have to eat a dozen of those a day to keep all of us away!"

²⁹ Where the infant Richard Fanshawe had been treated many years before.

As time went on, I was allowed out of bed, given a wheelchair in which to propel myself around the ward, engaged in fun physiotherapy exercises and games such as Grandmother's Footsteps in the corridors, given lessons to help me catch up with my education (I remember among them being told the meaning of the word "tact" – a lesson I would clearly have done well to take closer to heart than I did!), allowed to join the local Wolf Cub pack (more below) and on at least one occasion being wheeled by a sympathetic nurse to attend the adjoining chapel. By the autumn I was allowed to return home on a salt-free diet on an assortment of tablets including gantrisin, in time to arrive half way through my first term at my prep school.

I was finally discharged in 1962 at the age of 12.

After that, every now and then the friendship with my Professor was renewed by correspondence. In 1964 I evidently wrote to him to confirm whether a radio broadcast on which I thought I had identified his voice was indeed his. Director and Nuffield Professor of Child Health Alan Moncrieff, C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.O.G, J.P., replied on 20th May:

Dear Martin,

I must not let you into trade secrets but I expect the talk you heard was about lead poisoning in children and I thought at the time that my disguise was not really very good!

It is a far too long and complicated story to write about but I expect there will be things in the Press from time to time.

It was very nice of you to write. Actually, you have been quite a model patient and I wish every child here could do so well.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely

Professor Alan Moncrieff.

A knighthood had followed at some time. He also served as a JP in juvenile courts and died in 1971 aged 69. I had been his successful guinea pig, making medical history – doubtless one of many.

PARKFIELD

And so it was that around the start of November 1958 I arrived half a term late, salt-free, overweight and off games, at my preparatory school, The Wick and Parkfield, in Haywards Heath, Sussex, preceded by Peter, and by my father in the previous generation,³⁰ and currently headed by William Halstead, M.A. (in English, from Baliol college, Oxford), with his wife Pat.

Peter's early success in teaching me the present tense of *amo* paid dividends. But I soon found myself faced, as Churchill had been before me, with the Latin First Declension noun, carefully spelled out before me in the shorter edition of Kennedy's *Latin Grammar*, commonly disguised and known as *The Shortbread Eating Primer*. My response was a little less contentious than his had been, as he tells us about his query to his Latin master:

"What does it mean, sir"

³⁰ See his *Half A Lifetime*, p.1;6.

“Mensa means a table,” he answered.

“Then why does mensa also mean O table,” I enquired, “and what does O table mean?”

“Mensa, O table, is the vocative case,” he replied.

“But why O table?” I persisted in genuine curiosity.

“O table – you would use that in addressing a table, in invoking a table.” And then, seeing he was not carrying me with him, “You would use it in speaking to a table.”+

“But I never do,” I blurted out in honest amazement.

“If you are impertinent, you will be severely punished, and punished, let me tell you, very severely,” was his conclusive rejoinder.

Such was my first introduction to the classics, from which, I have been told, many of our cleverest men have derived so much solace and profit.³¹

I think this must be where Churchill’s path and mine finally diverged. After that, nobody ever seriously proposed me as a possible future Prime Minister.

In subsequent terms, as we worked through Kennedy, I was spared the ingenious gender rhymes with which it ended, which were no longer *de rigueur*, but could still not avoid a little of their fascination:

Many Nouns in *is* we find
to the Masculine assigned:

amnis, axis, caulis, collis,
clunis, crinis, fascis, follis,
fustis, ignis, orbis, ensis,
panis, piscis, postis, mensis,
torris, ignis, and canalis,
vectis, vermis and natalis,
sanguis, pulvis, cucumis,
lapis, cases, Manes, glis.

river, axle, stalk, hill
hind-leg, hair, bundle, bellows
bludgeon, fire, orb, sword
bread, fish, post, month
stake, nail, canal
lever, worm, birthday
blood, dust, cucumber
*stone, nets, ghosts, dormouse.*³²

Upon such things, after all, the British Empire had been built. And I distinctly remember, during my second or third term, Bill Halstead taking us carefully down a table of third declension nouns and indicating those that we would, and would not, need to memorise, how he very clearly stated that we would not have to learn

strix, strigis, feminine, screech owl

and have not forgotten it since!

But even in my first term, Miss Ripley, well able to quell a riot in the big schoolroom with a yell of, “It’s just like Crewe station!”, managed to instil in us the proper use of the English apostrophe, an art which today seems to elude the greater majority of the population including politicians, civil servants and grocers (grocer’s? – noting the irregular plurals men’s, women’s, children’s), and the rules for divisibility by 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 (there is one for 7, but it is so complicated that it is not worth

³¹ Churchill, *My Early Life*, p.19.

³² *Kennedy’s Revised Latin Primer*, 507, Rule 2, Exc. (a), p.223.

learning). I disappointed the expectations Peter had apparently raised of me in advance by fluffing my first recital of the two times table I had already learned at St Christopher's, and managed to lose from my locker the copy of *Wide World* magazine that he had borrowed for me from one of his friends. It was a start.

Every week would arrive on Lloyds of London notepaper, in an envelope with the City of London crest in relief on the back a letter from my father in his spikey handwriting, and usually two in my mother's flowing script, always containing a selection of comic strips from the *Daily Mail* (Flook and Fred Bassett) and the *Evening Standard* (Billy the Bee (and his mate Bumble), Little Eve and Tom the Traveller), which also helped to amuse the rest of the dormitory in the break after lunch. And we in return would write home in the period immediately after chapel on Sunday, reporting the score in the previous day's first XI match and anything noteworthy in class.

[What follows comes from my contribution to the blog *Who is George Mills?* Which contains abundance of horror stories about Parkfield school and its headmaster.]

"I was at Parkfield 1958-1963. My own memories of WH are coloured by the fact that he and his wife Pat treated me with much kindness. I once got two, perhaps four, strokes of the slipper for bopping the boy in the next bed with a pillow after lights out in Plan Near, just as a prefect was passing outside. But that was all.

The school was strong academically with an excellent record of success in the Common Entrance Examination and a reasonable one for public school scholarships. When it became apparent that I was myself scholarship material I benefited from five star treatment by the teaching staff, as did others similarly placed. For academically weaker pupils, attempts were made to help them shine elsewhere, such as in the choir: singing was another Parkfield strength. I recall choir outings to hear the Vienna Boys' Choir in the Albert Hall, and to the seaside. The school enjoyed occasional film shows and external lecturers, one on the theremin (weird musical instrument which now plays the theme on *Midsomer Murders*) and others on natural history. The First XI sometimes went to see the test match at Lords'. At sports I was beyond hopeless, but nobody seemed to mind.

I can confirm all that has been said about WH's extraordinary fierce, unpredictable, volatile and terrifying temper; also that he drank a very great deal. But I cannot confirm that he was an alcoholic as I never saw any signs of addiction. As to the large collection of bottles one could see in the shed below Hanover dormitory window, I have no knowledge of how long it took for this to accumulate, nor of how much of it he had consumed himself rather than the parents he entertained. But that he smoked *Passing Clouds*, frequently, is correct.

He also had a considerable if bizarre sense of humour and was well able to laugh at himself. Form 3 maintained a diary on the notice board in the BSR recording his mood during the daily Latin lesson which WH found hilarious to read out after evening chapel: "Hally in medioca mood", "Hally in foul bait" and so forth.

He certainly did beat often and habitually used fear of the cane to induce terror. But this was in an age, so remote from our own, when corporal punishment was routine even in state schools. For us then it was a fact of life. You lived with it. I assumed that this is just how headmasters were. Most of the staff—army officers who had survived and won the war—presented a disciplinarian exterior to a degree that would raise eyebrows today. I believe that this generally marked a greater kindness within. Matron—Miss Goodwin—could terrify us all at times but actually had a heart of gold. Kind Mrs Stoner who taught the piano was a

dear, even if in my case she had very little success. I doubt if Col Sanders, an RM war hero, ever terrified any boy, though quite accurate with the blackboard chalk. I am deeply grateful to him for having awakened in me a love of mathematics that has shaped the course of my life. He later fell out with WH for reasons I don't know and left.

Drama was another positive feature of the school, especially Shakespeare. In my time we tackled Twelfth Night, Julius Caesar and Henry V, in which I recall my friend Christopher Richardson playing the title role to perfection. Hansel and Gretel by the choir was another great success.

I owe an enormous debt to The Wick and Parkfield School for the superb education I received there which encouraged me to aim high and develop to the full whatever gifts I had. For all the manifest faults of its complex headmaster, it gave me a tremendous start in life and for that I shall be eternally grateful. It is sad that the experience of many others was so very different."

I never discovered who actually was George Mills, but have of late begun to wonder if he did not have as middle names Dark Satanic.

The very diversity of recollections about Parkfield on this blog suggests to me that in what we recall about the past we are not mere passive participants. The things in our inner archives that we choose to dwell on and periodically recall represent facts not only about the past but about ourselves, both now and at the time in question. According to the commonplace,

"Two men looked out from prison bars;
One saw mud, the other stars."

Although I never approached Peter's calibre as a boy treble, I still managed to follow in his footsteps as head of the choir – quite a prestigious post in a school that paid such attention to singing (Mrs H had trained as an opera singer and definitely knew her onions) – and as such sang the 'Once in Royal' solo at two successive carol services. At the second I chose as my additional solo the following verse from *'Twas in the winter cold'* by James Black and James Barnby (1871):

Grant me Thyself, O Saviour kind,
The Spirit undefiled,
That I may be in heart and mind
As gentle as a child;
That I may tread life's arduous ways
As Thou Thyself hast trod,
And in the might of prayer and praise
Keep ever close to God.

It meant a lot to me even at that tender age. It's a shame it is so little known, today as then.

One amusing episode from my last term, concerns Peter Ady, a remarkable musician who as I recall scored a string of Distinctions, one per term, in his piano grades, right up to eight, and then I think went on to play clarinet in the National Youth Orchestra. Come Sports Day 1963, our last term, the pair of us had both won scholarships to our respective public schools, and so were rather on parade before the parents as Parkfield's triumphant shop window that year. Since he was no more of an athlete than I was, we made a pact together for the 440^x: we would on no account exert ourselves, but would simply trot round very gently for both laps. Halfway round, we were of course lagging the entire field. Hally, in jocular mode, couldn't resist this. "Come on, the scholars!", roared out the

megaphone, to everyone's amusement. Then our strategy paid off. In the second lap, sheer age and experience carried. We trotted on gaily, on our longer legs, while the younger boys ("upper middles") on their first attempt, flagged and fell behind us, leaving us in the middle of a respectable bunch as we crossed the line. Dignity was satisfied!

That day it fell to my mother, as parent of the head of school, to give out the prizes, immaculately turned out as ever, something she had done at St Christopher's in 1958, when I was absent in Farnham Hospital.

Meanwhile my correspondence with The King of the Forest continued. I reproduce below the latest of his letters, sent to me at Parkfield on 28 February 1961, which was too late to make it into *Extremes Meet* but has kindly been retyped by Richenda with a view to inclusion in an addendum to be called *Extremes Meet Again*. I dread to think what kind of wheedling Bunterism can have occasioned it!

Dear Baron,

I am glad to hear that your bronchitis has left you, and so trust that you are in your usual vigorous health. I appreciate your letter and am pleased that, like a real Governor, you waste no words but get straight to the point. It is naturally a matter of great concern that you should find that your Treasury is pretty well out of funds. It is not the first time that Barons of mine have been in the same predicament. Having studied the works of Solomon, Methuselah, Plato and J.S. Mill in particular, I have found it wise not to allow the Governors to draw too heavily upon my own Treasury, for I find that if they are too well supplied with funds they don't trouble to do as much work as they ought to do. It would seem, however, that in your case you are following up a good many activities. I particularly admire your form of Scotland Yard. I would say, however, that in the case reported to me via your journal, raises rather a question in my mind, viz. why was it necessary for the burglars to take steps to burgle the safe when in fact they apparently effected their robbery when the ingots were in transit from one Bank to another. In any case, after deep cogitation, I should not advise you to breed bats in the hope that you may make good use of them in picking the locks of your enemies' safes, or in rusting away their arsenals full of arms.

I have swept around my Treasury this morning, and find I can spare five talents, expressed in a small piece of paper, which I trust will meet your immediate requirements.

May fortune smile on your activities.

I greet you.

K.O.F.

The journal in question was the *Moose Magazine*, handwritten by myself at Parkfield and reproduced three or four times on a kind rubbery pad Peter and I had made from a design found in some book. The baffling reference to bats was explained to me recently by Peter in terms of a story he had written apparently involving burglars who used bats to pick locks, or something.

SHERBORNE

Robert Glen; Quentin Hogg; the cane; fagging

I entered Sherborne public school in the Michaelmas term of 1963. The first two terms I spent in the relatively gentle overflow house, Elmdene, whose housemaster, the eminently mimicable Revd Timothy Cyril Percival Brooke, was universally known as ‘TCP’. Then I was promoted to School House, under Lionel (L.E.C.) Bruce – “Bubbles”, as he was known by the more respectful behind his back – and life became much tougher. This was not primarily Bruce’s fault. He himself was a good, fair, upright Christian man of liberal inclinations who banned the mandatory cold baths a few terms after I joined and later made available scrumpy for senior boys in a dedicated refreshment room, a privilege not infrequently abused. However, it was the prefects who ran low-level workings of the house from day to day.

But he had the twin misfortunes of being both what now would be called “vertically challenged”, and also of suffering from a most vulnerable stutter. It was rumoured that in the war he had been a tank commander, and had one day returned home to find his entire house, with his wife inside it, flattened to the ground by a bomb, and that his stutter originated from this. Whether or not that was true, we were shamefully merciless towards him, he commanded but little respect, and his house was commonly regarded as the reprobate among houses by higher authority.³³

The communal dayroom in which we spent our first couple of years until admitted in the studies was a feral place, and not everyone survived. The small, the physically weak, those whose voices broke late, and those with too high an opinion of themselves, had a particularly hard time. For me, after years at Parkfield when I had been the school’s golden boy, there were lessons to be learned, which were not always pleasant, but in retrospect immensely valuable. Even so, the problem proved to be even more intractable than manic depression, which we finally beat (see below). But at least Sherborne made a start! It taught me at that early age how essential it is to “see yourself as others see you” – which many folk sadly never learn at all, to their own detriment and that of those around them. I did not always like what others saw in me, and neither did they! But how valuable to have at least some of the rough edges knocked off me in that bear pit before I went out into the Big Wide World.

Life improved when I graduated into the studies, sharing in my first and later terms with James Stedeford, who became a lifelong friend until he died of cancer. In the middle I spent several terms with Jeremy Rickford, whose father was an FRCOG with a Harley Street practice. Jeremy became a consultant anaesthetist and on one occasion was to treat James Stedeford. Part of his training was spent at the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin, in his words, “the oldest Lying-in Hospital to have been founded for the sole purpose of safer childbirth in its own dedicated building and still in occupation to this day.” It had been founded in 1757 by Dr Bartholomew Mosse, who effectively invented the discipline of gynaecology.³⁴

James Stedeford had already, through contact with Church Army, made a start along the path of evangelical commitment, and on at least one occasion put me to shame by his courage in getting out of bed after lights out in order to say his prayers. Later on, he (at Brasenose College), Antony Harrop (from Westcott House at Sherborne, and then at Jesus College, Oxford), and I would meet together as OICCU members in order to pray (at the chaplain’s request) for the Christian ministry at Sherborne, and all three of us went through the Operation Mobilisation (see below) training course

³³ I was very glad, on returning to the school not long after I had left, to discover that Bruce, no longer in charge of School House, had finally found happiness again and remarried.

³⁴ Bartholomew Mosse was not the only member of the family to have founded a hospital. Another, a missionary as I recall, founded another in North China in the early twentieth century. There are photographs of it, but it no longer exists as such.

before embarking on OM in Summer 1970. Subsequently, he studied theology at Bristol, where he met his future wife Gill, and together they spent the rest of their lives working with the Church's Ministry among Jewish People until in October 2001 James had to retire with cancer, dying three weeks later. Six months before he died, the pair of them took me around the Bletchley Park decoding centre, where the Shirburnian Alan Turing had famously served his country during the war.

'Chief'

Headmaster during those years was Robert William Powell (universally referred to as 'Chief'), a classicist who set great store by maintaining his dignity in public in academical cap and gown. Under him the school prospered, in one year gaining as many as 22 Oxbridge places, no small achievement. I never heard anyone admit to understanding his sermons, which certainly defeated me. But in class he relaxed, especially when taking the Classical Sixth through one of the Greek tragedies or comedies. Fortunately we were not required, as he had been in his day, to learn all the variant readings of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.

He particularly favoured the translations of Aristophanes by Benjamin Bickley Rogers, who excelled in reproducing as closely as possible in English the meters of the original Greek, with occasional recourse to those of Gilbert and Sullivan. There springs to mind the refrain put into the mouth of Aeschylus in *The Frogs*, something like

ὦ πονοὶ οὐ πελαθεὶς ἐπ' ἀρωγᾶν;³⁵

which became

Ho! Smiting, approachest thou not to the rescue?

Equally impossible to forget is the way he used to chortle behind his desk at Aristophanes' jokes about the bodily functions in lines which had been carefully excised from our innocent student editions, such as that about the gentleman who determined to ascend to heaven on a dung beetle, choosing this particular beast as his transport so that he would only have to pack one supply of food.

We never read the *Lysistrata*.

But for all his outward pomp and circumstance, Chief was not above sending himself up on occasions, as when he stood up in front of the school assembly and solemnly declaimed:

"I have seen ... too many boys ... standing in the Courts ... talking to masters ... with their hands in their pockets."

[Pause]

"I mean, the *boys'* hands in their *own* pockets!"

That must have been the fruit of at least ten minutes in the bath the previous evening!

One notable feature of his reign was Chief's Choir, which met in his house on Sunday afternoons to sing glees, madrigals and the like. Not being a singer myself after my voice broke on account of my

³⁵ I apologise to the learned folk who object to the absence of accents here but I never learned them, and have no text before me to copy.

difficulties in reading a stave, referred to below, I attended only once, on being besought by the deputy leader to make up numbers on a bad day. Peter on the other hand, was far more attracted by the prospect of mad wriggles, especially as the upper parts were supplied from Sherborne School for Girls up the road, among them the lovely and crystal clear Miss (later Dame) Emma Kirkby, whom I believe that, never a one to miss his opportunities, he got to know quite well. And I suspect she was not alone.

RAE, FARNBOROUGH, 1969

Operational Research; Don Hampton; FORTRAN IV; hitchhiking holiday

NEW COLLEGE

Croix; Barbara Levick; Garry Bennett; Ayer

The Hayters

Warden during my time was Sir William Hayter, a diplomatic giant who with his most charming and genteel wife Lady Iris had been Ambassador to Moscow 1953-7, and as such had been tasked with conducting Khrushchev around Oxford during the visit of B & K in 1956. I think it was at a lunch to which they invited me in my first term that he told me how, on seeing in the College's antechapel Epstein's powerful but not beautiful sculpture of Lazarus, contorted and struggling to release himself from his grave clothes, the Russian leader exploded in front of his entire entourage of photographers and reporters about the appalling decadence of western art; which made the headlines in the news and evening papers that day.

Next day a telegram arrived for him which Hayter I imagine duly passed on: "DEAR MR KHRUSHCHEV. YOU STICK TO MURDER. I'LL STICK TO SCULPTURE. JACOB EPSTEIN." Somehow or other our diplomat must have survived, because he was appointed Warden in 1958. He and Lady Iris always showed me the greatest kindness.

REDEDICATION

A man's foes shall be they of his own household.

(Matthew 10:36 AV)

On arrival at New College in September 1969, I very deliberately rededicated my life to Jesus in the context of the Oxford University Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (OICCU), that descendant of Charles Simeon's ministry in Cambridge 150 years previously. This followed a conscious decision I had made a few weeks before, when I had hitch-hiked alone down to Florence. At that point, sitting in a corner of the Loggia dei Lanzi, I became acutely aware of my spiritual loneliness and need of God, and resolved to seek Him out as soon as possible on arrival at New College, where I knew such opportunity would be available.

And so I hitched my wagon to OICCU and its local manifestation, the college CU group, which I was later to lead as Rep. On Sundays I would attend St Ebbe's Church, whose Rector, the late Keith Weston, a wonderful man with a lovely smile and sense of humour, was consistently quite the best Bible expositor I have ever heard. St Ebbe's was a city church which worked hand in hand with OICCU: if this was your scene (as it was mine) you went to OICCU events during the week and St Ebbe's on Sunday morning (after HC at your college chapel of course). If not, and you were still evangelically inclined, you went to St Aldate's which provided the entire student package under one roof.

(In more recent times St Aldate's became the province of Revd Charlie Cleverly, whose daughter Alice married my nephew Andy there in August 2003. There was quite a bit of tribal rivalry between St Aldate's and St Ebbe's in my day, and it would not surprise me if this still persisted today.)

Beside many good friends made there who remain to this day, I acquired through OICCU's Saturday night Bible readings, bookstalls and local college meetings a thorough if non-academic introduction to the Bible.³⁶

And although I was later to outgrow this historic manifestation of the faith in favour of something far more all-encompassing, the Life of God that gripped me there has never abandoned me or let me escape, even though in the valley of the shadow it has frequently seemed to have vanished over the horizon.

News of this change of life direction, however, when I let it out at home that first Christmas vacation, went down like a lead balloon.

My father had had some very unfortunate experiences of evangelicals of the shallower kind, both in the Navy and in the City, which had left him fiercely opposed to their breed. As a result, he did not take kindly to my announcement that I had thrown in my lot with them hook, line, and sinker. He had no knowledge of Charles Simeon and was I think quite surprised to learn that there were giants on my mother's side of the family as well as on his own. He concluded I had been brainwashed.

Yet his instincts were impeccable and his personal faith in God deep and unshakeable – as you would expect from someone whose father was a saint. As he explained to me once,

“When you are on the bridge of a ship being dive-bombed on all sides, you KNOW there's a God.”

As is evident from *Half A Lifetime*, he had all the time in the world for Salvationists, and for the Church Army, as witness his comment on the Sisters he was able to help rescue from the sinking *Lancastria* at St Nazaire on 17 June 1940:

“Among our survivors were some women of the Church Army whose quiet calm as they attended the wounded and shocked was an example to us all.”³⁷

But he had no use at all for “hot gospellers”, whom he feared I had joined. His words of warning to me at that time were very strongly expressed. They were meant well, as advice a father felt bound to give his son, but they missed their mark, and communication between us at the deepest, unseen level, was never the same. Evangelicalism was just not his thing. It is to his eternal credit that, even though, as events turned out, it must have seemed to him that his warnings had been true all along, he never once turned round and said “I told you so.”

As my faith matured in later years, I also discovered that many of the aspects of OICCU-type religion, and the rather manipulative network through which I became involved in it, which had so upset my father, were equally distasteful to me. He had been more right than I knew. Some of these aspects were wholly absent from the equally evangelical organisation *Operation Mobilisation*, founded by George Verwer, with which I spent time in the long vacations of 1970 and 1971 and through which I learned masses, not least from its total dependence upon prayer for its inspiration and resources.

³⁶ Prominent in OICCU in those days was N.T. (“Tom”) Wright, President 1970-1, later Bishop of Durham and Professor at St Andrew's, to become one of the most respected New Testament scholars and theologians of his age.

³⁷ HAL II:21.

And even though I later found that evangelicalism no longer satisfied my needs, to the end of my life I continue to hold George in deepest respect as a friend and one of the three greatest men I ever met (the others being Peter Woodhead and the “Vicar of Baghdad” Andrew White). Even my father acquired a little respect for OM when he heard in 1970 that they were on the point of buying and ocean-going ship, even though I was quite unable to give him an acceptable answer as to where the money to purchase it came from!

My mother, on the other hand, though a little bewildered at first, reacted differently. As always, she wanted to know what her son was thinking, and what lay behind his new religious enthusiasm. At lunchtimes, when I took a break from the intensive study of my classical set books, she was keen to discuss my ideas. She listened well, and as I explained myself, became sympathetic and began to see the natural links between the shape of my new faith and the Anglican beliefs she had held and practised all her life, which then acquired for her a deeper significance of their own. Before long we met very happily in the middle, and found a church in Rowledge where we both felt at home, which we began to attend together.

Meanwhile, the discovery of a portrait of Charles Simeon upon the wall of Grandmatoo’s house in Farnham, and her pride in him, brought us extremely close together, and she gave me terrific moral (and prayer) support. I recall seeing a copy of Dr Billy Graham’s *Peace With God* on a bookshelf just inside her front door, dating I think to his 1954 Haringay crusade.

CRISIS IN MY PARENTS’ MARRIAGE

Around the same time, in 1970, when my mother was menopausal, the strange antipathy she had long exhibited towards Grandmatoo suddenly redirected itself towards my father instead. On returning from the 1971 (I think) Hilary term at New College, I found that she had had a nervous breakdown while both parents were on holiday in St Moritz, for which my father informed me that I had been assigned the blame. This, I was told, a result of the lunchtime conversations I had been having with her about my new-found evangelical faith. I later discovered that the true reasons were otherwise, but even when they had become plain, my father never retracted the allegation, leaving it hanging over me for the rest of his days. I don’t think he had any idea of the devastating impact it had on me.

I think this is best described as a blind spot. By any standard, my father was not strong in what today we might call emotional intelligence. But it caused my father much grief. He later lamented to Robert his failure to get through to me, in spite of many genuine and loving attempts to do so, and Robert, with no knowledge of this conversation, must have been mystified at my curious behaviour. But these things take time to heal. (Peter was likewise unaware, having been for the most part away with the Navy.) The Navy had taught him to dance, to write gripping English narrative, to play a good hand of bridge, to carry out artificial resuscitation, to hold Sunday divisions on board ship, and to hunt and kill enemy submarines (a favour eagerly reciprocated), but not how to draw on his faith as a resource with which to meet the inevitable personal crises of life.

This unhappiness between my parents continued until my mother died some fifteen years later, albeit mollified a little towards the end.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

These twin family crises helped to precipitate my descent into manic depression. The fertile ground already prepared was my family and genetic inheritance. My own nature – my very complex

constitution described at the start of this essay – proved vulnerable to both. The combination proved fatal.

In 1972, at the start of what was expected to be my final term of studying classics at New College, Oxford I had my first episode of mania, which lasted for a term. Soon after, in January 1973, I experienced the most horrific depression, culminating in an attempt at suicide from which I still bear the scars and, refusing to co-operate with those trying to save my life in Intensive Care, went into a coma for perhaps two weeks from which it was very doubtful if I would recover.

At the time I had been staying at the North Oxford Overseas Centre in Banbury Road. This centre for overseas students in which indigenous evangelicals were invited to live as hosts, was then being run by the genial Ken Bennett and his wife Phyllis (R.I.P. both), a couple of Methodist ex-missionaries with hearts of gold, to whom I owe the deepest and most precious lesson in the forgiveness of Jesus that I have ever experienced anywhere. It was a happy, open, cheerful place for people of many nationalities. As a result of decades of this ministry, Ken and Phyllis acquired large numbers of friends all over the world. Living there for a term provided me with my first experience of catering for myself, and my mother went to enormous pains to help be set out along this path. This included some basic lessons in cookery such as teaching me how to make a white sauce. In 2017 Barbara improved on this by teaching me how to scramble an egg.

The Priory

When all else failed, my parents were independently directed to the eminent Harley Street consultant Dr Will Sargent, a specialist in treating brainwash victims from the Cold War and author of the popular book *Battle for the Mind*. A man of immense kindness and humaneness, he had pioneered a therapy called narcosis for the treatment of severe depression involving a carefully blended combination of Electro-Convulsant Therapy, medication, and, most important of all, enforced sleep. He found me a bed at the pioneering Priory Hospital in Roehampton, nowadays often in the news for rehabilitating the offspring of wealthy sheikhs, and celebrities who have suffered from excessive ‘partying’. This proved wholly successful.

However, the culture at The Priory in those days was that if you managed to find a correct balance of brain chemistry (as, by medication, tablets, injections etc), the newly restored brain would then be able to sort out your other problems. This view, which flew in the face of the insights of, in particular, Carl Jung, was to cause me more damage in subsequent decades than anyone could possibly have anticipated. It meant that even when I began to recover and was capable of communication again, nobody bothered to sit down beside me and enquire what had been my problems, how did I come to find myself in such a desperate state, and what did I think might help to prevent me from falling into such misery again. In other words, my own feelings, thoughts and opinions were of no consequence. The doctors there considered their job done once the presenting symptoms were alleviated and the patient despatched home. ECT had saved my life, but no attempt was made to heal *me*. This was inevitably going to store up trouble for the future.

The modern mantra, “No decision about you without you” was unknown at The Priory, where all decisions about one’s treatment were handed down from on high without any discussion with the patient at all.

Further, although The Priory itself had a chapel, I never saw it functioning or learned if there was an available chaplain. And although I was known to be a practising Anglican, no attempt whatever was made to minister to my spiritual needs. Indeed, recognition that humans are spiritual beings at all, with spiritual needs, was totally absent. I was offered no form of ministry such as anointing, the

laying on of hands, or any such spiritual support. In fact the whole tenor of life at The Priory at that time as I experienced it was singularly hostile to the Christian faith. My own beliefs and practice were considered to be the problem, not a source of potential healing. When I went back later for check-ups, my participation in OICCU was made a matter of derision. I was left in no doubt that I was to blame for having caused my own illness, as if by voluntarily contracting some form of religious mania. For years afterwards I felt this was a charge against which I had to defend myself, and it took decades before I could shake off the shame I had acquired there for the practice of my own personal religious faith. The whole atmosphere reminded me at the time of what I had heard of treatment of patients in those grim psychiatric institutions behind the Iron Curtain. And all the while my family were given to believe that what was happening to me was necessary for the purposes of my sanity. "Dear Priory," murmured my mother as she drove me back for yet another appointment. Little did she know. After all, they had saved my life, had they not?

While there in my hospital bed, Peter came to see me. It was the time of the American Watergate crisis in summer 1973. A while before, he told me, when everyone was thinking in terms of 'religious mania' and the like, he had gone to the authorities at The Priory and told them the truth about my parents' marriage. But nobody listened. Or if they did, nobody wrote it down. Or if they did, nobody ever heeded it. It was never mentioned.

Thank you, Peter. You were the only person who ever told them the truth. It wasn't your fault that they didn't want to know. This was probably the best thing you ever did for me, and I never forgot it.

Beyond that, nobody at The Priory showed any kind of understanding of the very unusual kind of mind I had been born with; nor were they interested. They had no comprehension of exceptional brains and their particular needs, and the specific types of problem to which they are most prone and none of thinkers like Jung who had investigated them, whose approach to psychotherapy turned out that the one thing to which I later responded most positively. For instance, for my mental and emotional health I depend on having available at least one sympathetic friend with whom I can share my personal burdens or discharge my troubles, or on whom to try out my latest brainwaves. Such friends provide me with the air which I breathe, and I shall say more about them below. At The Priory, for such resources I had to depend upon my visitors. Nobody there was interested. Jung would have been appalled.

But worst of all, the very heart of what I am was not simply denied, but actively and positively ridiculed. Apparently, someone had cottoned on to the fact of my propensity for brainwaves. This facility was then mercilessly mocked as 'wild ideas' which were said to be a characteristic of my deluded mind, particularly at follow up appointments, which I attended with my mother. I can remember being asked by two less senior and unfamiliar psychiatrists, in the most grossly patronising way, "No more 'wild ideas', then?", to which I meekly replied, "Oh, no". I had learned by then that it pays never to let your guard down in the presence of a psychiatrist.³⁸ This treatment taught me a lesson it took me decades from which to escape: it was not safe or OK to be me. All this led to an accumulation of frustration and anger at The Priory, and I was simply terrified of psychiatrists for the next thirty years.

³⁸ By contrast Dr Sargant, when we saw him later near the end of his life, I think at his home, pronounced that my religious ideas, when well, had really been 'quite sensible.' At that time he himself appeared to have become a little wobbly, expressing the fear that one of the cults, whose extreme indoctrination tactics he had opposed, was pursuing him with a view to getting him struck off the Medical Register. A sad end to a good man who had rescued many.

But let me also record the great kindness of some of the nurses at The Priory, doing what I think must have been a frightful job. I remember in particular the cheeriness of Irish Sister Macaulay (“Got the glums, then?”). But she was not alone. And the food was good there.³⁹

On my first visit to The Priory I was in a deep depressive coma, and it is very unlikely that anything else available at the time would have achieved the success that Dr Sargant obtained with his use of ECT in narcosis. But I have wondered whether, on my two subsequent visits, in 1975 and 1979, when my presenting symptoms were those of mania, whether enforced ECT was equally justified rather than an abuse. Certainly on at least one later occasion, in 1999, the excellent NHS psychiatrist Dr Nicholas Renton successfully brought me down from the peak of mania by means of his own devising which did not include forcible ECT, and for this I owe him a large debt of gratitude.

Managing my mind is the hardest thing I have ever had to do. I am still learning.

Guitar

Healing came to me in several large steps. It was my mother above all who was able to enter into my experience and find me. The first major leap on my return home from The Priory was her inspired proposal that I should seek guitar lessons from Gillian Herridge, a neighbour just up the road, and her boyfriend, later husband, John Park, who had taught her. John was a very talented folk guitarist, and together they taught me the well-trodden path of Bert Weedon. There was no technical skill involved for me, but it got me started and gave me enormous therapeutic pleasure. I collected the song books of Simon and Garfunkel (Kathy’s Song particularly appealed), Joan Baez (“That wailing woman,” as my father called her), Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen and the Beatles, with the chords all marked in. After a total failure on the piano and only moderate success on the Sherborne School euphonium, here was an instrument I could enjoy with a competence that at least satisfied me.

Later on, I was to spend a few weekends on a series of courses at West Dean College near Midhurst called ‘Accompanying songs on the guitar’, led by the wizard Ronald Zachary Taylor, who took me to pieces on arrival and then began to reassemble me with some kind of classical technique, the very minimum of which consisted in holding one’s weapon properly. This went on until I bought The Pad in 1984, on which more below, after which the pressures of mortgage and other expenses caused me to stop attending; but not before Ron had sold me a very carefully selected Spanish guitar which was my delight for years afterwards.

The other sticking point was that I lack the ability, innate in all true musicians, to read a line of music on a stave and know at once how it is to sound; and then convert that information into instructions to the voice or instrument. I think it is a facility of making connections in the brain which my brain –

³⁹ Subsequent reading suggests to me that some of the criticisms I have levelled at the culture of The Priory may in fact have been due to the influence of Dr Sargant himself. For instance, that I was not offered psychotherapy as part of my treatment turns out to have resulted from the fact that Sargant himself abhorred the practice. I found one assessment titled ‘Visionary or Disaster’ which seemed to conclude that he was both. And I think I was probably on the receiving end of both. On the one hand he was brilliant at managing brain chemistry, which is how he saved my life. On the other hand, having early on rejected the strong Methodist element in his family background, he was not a believer of any kind, with the inevitable consequence that he completely failed to comprehend *human nature* – just what people *are*. In my case this was doubly unfortunate as he had a strong and heavily loaded line on such things as conversion and brainwashing, as in his book *Battle for the Mind*, which I possessed for a long time but never read. This meant that his own misconceptions married very closely with my father’s, and the two must have fed on each other. But I never found a word against Dr Kelly.

unlike Peter's or Barbara's – simply does not possess. But if I am singing a song to the guitar and equipped with chord names, I can just about cope.

Return to New College

Finals; gradual return of faith and experience of God. OM. Oak Hall holidays.

FIRST JOBS

In 1974, upon rejection by both the Diplomatic Service and wider Civil Service, and the total failure to assist by a careers advisory firm to which my very concerned father had directed me, I set about aimlessly looking for a job “in industry”. After several failures I applied to a wise old Personnel Manager in Courtaulds, who told me in one: what I was looking for was Operational Research. He himself had nothing to offer, but advised me to read up on the subject. And so he supplied the key to my employed life ever after. I went home and bought Wicks and Yewdall, *Operational Research*, ‘clicked’, not least because it recalled my happy seven months at the RAE in 1969. A few interviews later found myself in the Operational Research and Management Science division of Shell-Mex and BP Ltd in The Strand, where I worked on projects related to DERV refinement and the cost-effectiveness of changing petrol stations to self-service.

This worked well until in mid-1975 my manic depression blew up again (perhaps in part because I had not yet been put on lithium) and another spell in The Priory was required. I was summarily dismissed soon after returning to work with no right of redress. But even this cloud turned out to have an extremely silver lining.

EASAMS AND MOSSILE

I remained unemployed until some months later I was bravely taken on by the avionics company EASAMS – Elliot Automation Space and Advanced Military Systems – in Camberley, near the RAE where I had worked before and so only a few miles from home, after a genial interview with one Mike Pettifor, one of many to whom my eternal thanks are due but totally unpayable. I was placed on the small Air Defence team under Ian (I.D.H.) Smith, who nursed me from nothing into competence later on. When after a few months I complained that I seemed to be contributing nothing at all, he simply replied, “It’s early days yet.”

After a year my brain was invaded out of nowhere by the archetypal ‘brainwave’ for **MOSSILE**. This was a ‘fast flyout’ missile model, hitherto believed unviable, which I pioneered and made to work. It was one of the best and most satisfying pieces of work I ever did, second perhaps only to my PhD thesis, and I acquired some little notoriety from it within the company and I think MoD. It meant recovering my FORTRAN capability and my long-forgotten A level mathematics, as well as acquiring all the new concepts of missile kinematics. As I went along I documented some of this in “MARTIN’S BOOK OF MATHEMATICS” which still survives today. Within a few weeks my mathematician colleague Dave Burdon christened it **MOSSILE**, which Ian interpreted as **Missile Onboard Simulation Solving Interception Launch Equations**, and the name stuck and became official. Ian later described it as “the most cost-effective project [he had] ever seen.” However, it was a little too late to be viable for implementation in Sea Harrier on whose avionics EASAMS were working. Had it been sufficiently tested in time, it might have taken part, like Peter, in the Falklands campaign of 1982.

In the spring of 1978 I returned from a memorable holiday in Israel in which Walter Moberly had done an excellent job serving as historical and archaeological guide, to find that my father had left home and gone to live with Mouse in Kent.

This separation of my parents did nothing for my emotional stability, and I became a right pain to my bosses. I was enormously fortunate to be under John D. York, quite the best and most supportive head of department I ever had. Indeed, it will make a valid point if I overstate it by saying that he seemed to me quite the best head of department anyone ever had. At a time when I was sorely in need of a father, John amply filled the gap by providing the very combination of firm discipline when required (as it was) and enormously sensitive support and encouragement that I so lacked. In return I gave him a product that went on to be enormously successful after I had left in late 1979. But the overall strain was too much for me and I went high as a kite, and had to take time off.

This period of recuperation happily included a visit to my old New College colleague Richard Fryer in Exeter, who with Walter Moberly very kindly gave me my introduction to the imposing Castle Drogo, built imaginatively by Lutyens for the Home and Colonial Stores magnate Julius Drewe between 1911 and 1930 near the village Drewsteignton in Devon. With this I promptly fell in love at first sight, and it rapidly became the fruitful source of many a fantasy. Sadly, my ambition to take it over one day as Mosse of Drogo, Baron, MA, BSc, PhD, was never realised, and I had to make do with naming after it the house which Barbara and I bought in 1996. Thereafter on occasional visits to the south west, Richard had a well-defined role as guide to the Castle in exchange for lunch at the Drewe Arms beforehand and a National Trust cream tea on site afterwards.

For my birthday celebration that year my father invited me to join him at the Piltdown Man pub on the A272 in Sussex, where we had often picnicked in Parkfield days. As he requested, I delivered him in my mini a crate of whisky he had left behind at Willowbank. But relations were not easy for one doing his level best to steer a middle course.

It was at about this time that I was given by Anna Harper a copy of *Self-Abandonment to Divine Love*, by Jean-Pierre de Caussade. Anna was as I recall another Samaritan colleague of my mother's, who ran the Acorn Christian Healing Trust in Bordon, not far from Farnham. It was the first of the great classic Christian mystics to make sense to me – as few ever did. Even today it still has a magic for me:

"How delightful the peace one enjoys when one has learned by faith to see God in this way through all creatures as through a transparent veil! Darkness becomes light and bitterness sweet. Faith by showing us the truth of things changes their ugliness into beauty and their malice into goodness: faith is the mother of gentleness, confidence and joy; she can have only tenderness and compassion towards her enemies who enrich her so greatly at their own cost. The more cruel the action of the creature, the more profitable does the action of God make it for the soul who endures it. While the human tool does its best to injure, the divine artificer, in whose hands it does its work, makes use of that very malice to remove from the soul what is injurious. The will of God has nothing but sweetness, favours and treasures for souls submissive to it; we cannot have too much confidence in that will, we cannot abandon ourselves too much to it. God's will desires and can always accomplish what will contribute most to our perfection on condition that we allow God to act. Faith does not doubt this. The more our senses are faithless, revolted, uncertain and in despair, the more surely faith says: 'This is God; all is well.'"⁴⁰

In the same year, I chose to upgrade my BA to MA by simply sending up a cheque through the post, which caused much ribaldry in the office among those who had had to do extra work for their second degrees. My defence that I had probably worked at least as hard for my Oxford BA as anyone else would have had for an MA anywhere else, and that Oxford had invented MAs anyway and so were entitled to issue them as they pleased, did not cut much ice!

⁴⁰ de Caussade, *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*, p.55

Later on, I was sent to represent the company at a weekend's conference in Bristol on Remotely Piloted Vehicles, as they were then known. Arriving at my hotel late on the Friday afternoon, I was dismayed to find my Mini Clubman's battery was totally dead, and counted myself enormously fortunate in completely 'foreign' territory to discover a Halford's branch which not only sold me a replacement but also fitted it on the spot, attributing this to my guardian angel, whom I later Christened Gabriel – not because this was necessarily his real name, but in order to boost his ego just in case it wasn't. It seemed good policy.

In one of the breaks I touted to some of the RAF personnel present a whimsical idea that the best investment for our air defences would surely be in a swarm of updated Spitfires, several of which could be manufactured for the price of a single jet fighter. The thought behind this came from our air combat modelling, which suggested that in today's high-speed world, the advantage in air combat lay with the slower, more manoeuvrable aircraft, which would sooner find itself *behind* its opponent, which would therefore present a more vulnerable target. My RAF interlocutors did not dissent, but nostalgically preferred wartime Mosquitos which, being made of wood, presented a lower radar target to its opponents' missiles.⁴¹

I returned from the conference full of enthusiasm for RPVs and submitted a report urging that an avionics company such as our own surely must invest such things, which was undoubtedly a key growth area for the future. I never found out if this recommendation was taken up, since I soon moved on to another job.⁴²

But my decision to leave EASAMS towards the end of the year was ill-fated. I had set my heart on buying the maisonette about to be vacated by Ian Smith and his recent wife Claire, (classically) the departmental secretary. Ian and Claire were happy with the idea. So I put in to John York for a promotion that would make this possible. Knowing the quality of my creation, and the customer's delight in it, I felt that this was not unjustified – and indeed, subsequent events were to support my view.⁴³ But John's hands were tied by the financial exigencies of the day imposed upon him by the Company, even though I was armed with a generous offer from an up-and-coming software house in Camberley.⁴⁴ Instead, in a bid to retain me, he introduced me to a reliable local insurance broker

⁴¹ I tried this one out in a subsequent interview with a Plessey site down south (not the one where I later ended up), and was shot down in flames. ("So you are one of *those*, are you?") I was duly informed that WW2 aircraft, of whatever construction, would in no way provide a strong enough platform from which to launch a modern missile. And was not offered the job. Pity. I like Spitfires.

⁴² I was very gratified therefore to learn, much later in life, that my cousin James Fanshawe, after leaving the Navy, having set himself up in the field of innovative maritime technology, had become in time a recognised leading authority on Autonomous (ie unmanned) Ships. James is a man who, like his father my Uncle Dick, is in his very deliberate way one of those people with a distinct gift for Getting Things Done. He would certainly be one of the first people I would choose to have beside me in a major crisis. Like many a busy man, he will make time for you if he recognises that you really need his help. And you know that once he has accepted responsibility for a problem, you can leave it safely in his hands. Every now and then it has given me enormous pleasure to glimpse the possibility that the great respect in which I hold him is not entirely one way.

⁴³ Many years later I was working for what had become a sister avionics company in the Plessey group, and persuaded my boss Cecil Dixon that our department needed a missile model of its own, and we got approval to approach EASAMS for a copy of my final **MOSSILE** report in order to do so. We were invited to a meeting with EASAMS at Camberley, where John York, I think now a director, introduced us to his assembled team. "Gentlemen," he said, "That's **MOSSILE**, and this is Mosse!" It was the proudest moment of my life. It turned out that **MOSSILE** had been translated into at least two other computer languages, had been sold to the government in various guises on two or three different contracts, and as well as to one NATO ally.

⁴⁴ This was in the days before the IBM PC and its compatibles had established their dominance in the market for small computers. The company seemed to be quite strong in offering advice on the wide existing range – not of course an area in which I myself had anything to offer.

called John E. Lane, who duly sold me two excellent life insurance policies intended to finance the deal.

The proposed purchase caused mixed reactions. My father, very much in defensive mode, wrote from Kent to make it quite plain that if this move was an attempt to put pressure on him to return home, it was misplaced. He seemed to have decided that my mother and I were ganging up against him. There seemed to be something slightly Learesque about him at this point. GMT, over the phone, expressed her displeasure. Clearly she saw me as deserting my mother in her hour of need. Only my mother understood, correctly seeing it as the next step for her fledgling son in establishing his independence, getting his own two feet firmly on the ground, which would be necessary if he were ever to find a life partner and become truly himself. The achievement of this, as a mother, had become her primary *raison d'être*. Accordingly, whatever her own complicated feelings may have been, she backed me to the hilt. In the end the purchase fell through, but I got the job.⁴⁵ At the leaving do I was presented with a handsome barometer set on a circular granite base, which I have cherished ever since. Amongst the other signatures on leaving card there was, in Dave Burdon's hand,

A don challenged Martin to darts;
"The nearest to bullseye starts."
 But Mosse finished first,
 So the don quietly cursed,
"Best of three for a Master of Arts!"

I was soon employed in the inner recesses of the RAE, conducting a survey of different types of computer modelling package. (I didn't think much of any of them. As in my opinion should have been well known, if a job can't be done in FORTRAN, it's not worth doing! *Real Programmers Write FORTRAN!*). But it was probably a trial run in order to get the measure of me, and if so, a failure. By then, if not before, I was well into another bipolar crisis under the stresses of it all. I had to make my third and final stay in The Priory, and was then again summarily dismissed on release, this time by letter, even before I had returned to work. My father was so worried about my health, and not unjustifiably, that he returned, uneasily, home after six months staying with his sister. I bought a large 'Welcome Home' card to greet his arrival.

Christmas was evidently going to be unhappy. How was I going to reassure him of my love after all that had happened? I went up to Oxford and found him a beautiful presentation edition of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* – a boxed single volume with gilt edges. It cost £18 – the most expensive present I had ever given anyone. I recognised that this was a risk. My father did not read sophisticated literature, preferring most of the time light contemporary fiction, or historical stuff about the Navy and the world he knew. But I thought it was worth try. In it I wrote the dedication, "To Aragorn, with love from Frodo," hoping he might just for once stretch himself and take the bait. Had he done so, intrigued, he might have discovered in due course what I really thought about him, and why I had gone to such an unlikely expense. Frodo was the young adventurer who at the end all but botches his entire mission. *But Aragorn was the King!* But alas, he never tried it. Suspicions took over, and he never once opened it. The book was not read until by myself, long after he was dead. Meanwhile I was still unemployed, and as the months ticked by my father began to ask, exasperatedly, "Is there no other kind of work you can do?"

I was taken on in 1979 by Plessey Defence Systems in Addlestone, Surrey, to work, initially on a software team led by the highly competent Anna Sands on project WAVELL. This was a distributed database system, a kind of prototype internet web, working in real time and devised for the army.

⁴⁵ David Lane's life insurance policies later helped to finance my flat The Pad, in Emsworth, in 1984.

But although it did include a small non-FORTRAN modelling component, it wasn't really my cup of tea, and I was soon switched to a low level software management post, compiling 'standards' – the documents intended to ensure uniformity in the generation and testing of software. I found it convenient to issue semi-official memoranda in advance so as to try out my provisions before setting them in concrete, thus earning the gentle riposte from the highly respected software team leader my friend Rob Naylor:

A man of great memos is Mosse –
For standards he don't give a tosse!
Just fill in the form
Comply with the norm
Don't argue with me – I'm the bosse!

But it was at least a job, and the start of a return to normality.

Later on I took over from one Peter Van Peborgh (PVP) responsibility for a central record-keeping job 'MCCS', a thankless task which was actually executed meticulously and with greatest pains, patience and unflinching good humour by Nick Salkilld, of whom more below.

Woking

For three pivotal years, 1980-83, Captain Peter Woodhead, RN, and his cordon bleu wife Carol, an indefatigable evangelist,⁴⁶ very kindly allowed me to lodge with them and their children Simon and Emma during the week in their upper room in Woking (actually the town of my birth), which they had offered to God for the use of "the weak and vulnerable of society." I had been introduced to them by PVP, who also lived in Woking.

The love and care which Peter and Carol bestowed on me proved an absolute turning point in my life, enabling me to begin once more to grow in confidence and self-respect. I cannot overstate my debt to them.

Meanwhile PVP and his wife Linda soon became friends for life, and invited me to join them and their children Philip and Alison for dinner on alternate Tuesday evenings, towards which I would provide a regulation bottle of cider. The enormous kindness which they showed me then continued when Barbara came on the scene, and Peter became best man when Barbara and I married in January 1989. Together they gave us strong support when bipolar disorder asserted itself. In later years I was to become even more indebted to Peter, who served, often over a pub meal, as an invaluable sounding board for my various 'brainwaves' when they arrived, enabling me to clarify my ideas and distinguish the more useful ones from the rest. PVP also provided time and again much helpful advice in the IT area when needed, and I frequently made use of his as my consultant on all things scientific.

While I was lodging in Woking, Peter Woodhead was appointed No 2 to Admiral Sandy Woodward in charge of the Falklands Task Force. Having initially been involved in the planning at Northwood, he was then flown out to *Hermes*, becoming responsible for all airborne operations. A letter I received from him dated 30 May 1982 ends

⁴⁶ A point explained by her husband Peter who related at her funeral in early 2016 how she was so shocked at the age of 35 that no one had ever previously told her about Jesus, that she resolved that no future acquaintance should ever have to suffer the same fate!

“Continue to pray hard for me Pray too for peace – there is no mileage in this continued bloodshed as there is no final military solution to the FI.”

Meanwhile at home Carol as senior naval wife was heavily engaged in seeing to the welfare of the wives and families of the other absent seamen of Woking.

My brother Peter was also present, as captain of *Ambuscade*.⁴⁷ Afterwards, Woodhead became his senior officer in the Gulf of Oman.

On one occasion while living in Woking I took part in some type of carnival procession organised by the Church of St Mary of Bethany to which we belonged. Under a placard proclaiming “MEN’S LIB” I found myself wearing a pillow inside my front and pushing a pram. Unless my imagination deceives me, it was a rather outsize pram containing Carol, who was not a large person, dressed in baby clothes. Anyway, it raised a laugh.

At some time my father’s health took a blow when he had to have his spleen extracted at the King Edward VII Hospital in London, where it was also found necessary to cut out a part of his pancreas, leaving him diabetic ever afterwards. So my mother adjusted her cooking to a new regime in which his daily CHO count had to be limited. It was fortunate he had given up taking sugar in his coffee a while back.

THE PAD

In due course I was able to stand on my own two feet, and in late 1983 changed one Plessey job for another down, at their West Leigh site near Havant.⁴⁸ The next year I bought The Pad – my flat in Emsworth – which my mother helped me to kit out, by decorating, and also giving me an armchair which she had gone to great trouble to upholster herself.

Purchase negotiations had been protracted over some six months as the surveyor detected subsidence in one of the blocks of garages, although not that containing the garage belonging to the flat I was trying to buy. To facilitate things, my father generously offered to put up £1000 for the garage, although in the end mercifully I did not need to take this up. This was not untypical of him. When I moved in, he installed the ventilation slats into the airing cupboard for me, as well as a much-needed bookshelf and a spice rack for the kitchen, which today holds my diaries from the 1960s onwards. Despite our differences, I was never in need of reassurance of his love for me. In the interim I had been lodging at Plessey’s generous expense in Jingles Guest House about halfway between my place of work and my future flat, returning home at weekends.

When first moving into The Lawn, Holybourne, in 1984, Grandmatoo had a special bookshelf made, carefully designed so that her bed nestled snugly into it as it fitted neatly against the wall. It so happened that at the very time I was moving into The Pad, she was leaving The Lawn for a nursing

⁴⁷ There exists a remarkable record of life aboard *Ambuscade* during this campaign, interspersed with intimate letters home to his family, in *War and Peas*, written by Peter’s First Lieutenant, now Rear Admiral John Lippiett, CB, MBE, RN.

⁴⁸ By the time I left WAVELL the limerickers had still not given up. My leaving card, which reflected the reward of two tubes of Smarties for the 200th entry into the Fault/Change Report system which I administered, read:

“A project down south at West Leigh
To put flying stuff on a T.V.
Attracted young Mosse
Who’s to WAVELL a losse
Here’s his present – a single Smartie!”

Somebody else wrote simply, “Peace – at last!”

home in Woking (the town where I had been born). We therefore diverted the removals van⁴⁹ to pick up her bookshelf (and, if I am not mistaken, her bed as well) and bring it to The Pad along with my other possessions from Farnham. "Grandmatoo's bookshelf" remains with us today.

The new job was with Plessey Avionics, as it was then called, located on a site with which my father had been in frequent telephone contact in his Admiralty days. I had been strongly attracted to it by an advertisement in *The Daily Telegraph*, and I was interviewed by an Irishman called Bill Northern, head of the New Systems and Techniques laboratory. I was still something of an unknown quantity, short of scientific background but with the success of **MOSSILE** to my credit. It was **MOSSILE** that won.⁵⁰

The attraction of this new post lay in the opportunity to return to FORTRAN modelling, this time in the new, structured, version, FORTRAN 77, which has been my language ever since; in fact, I was told, I even acquired the nickname, 'Mr FORTRAN,' since most other projects involved more recent computer languages. It involved modelling, mostly, radar propagation systems such as Interrogation Friend or Foe (IFF). My pitch was that although not a scientist by training, I was a professional modeller by experience. When this was understood and accepted, I gained credibility and even approval within MoD for the quality of my reports. It was accepted by the customer at meetings, that I offered assessments of the performance of given systems, not scientific explanations of how those systems worked, which my bosses provided.

In fact I had learned most of my trade on arrival from Derek Hasted, a highly ingenious Cambridge mathematics graduate who in his spare time taught classical guitar. Some years later, Barbara and I were to have enormous pleasure attending concerts of HAGO, the Hampshire Area Guitar Orchestra which he created and led, mostly composed of his own pupils, playing for charity in local churches. This was true delight, and I was only sorry that they never issued any CDs of their wonderful repertoire.

At one meeting on a particular non-IFF project, my bosses were unable to attend, and I had to represent the company on my own. I was very touched when a member of the Government technical authority from the RAE, who understood my strengths and weaknesses, kindly and tactfully covered for me when questions were asked on which I was clearly going to be out of my depth.

I was frequently found working with, and later, under, the company's Chief Mathematician, the exceptionally gifted Dr Nigel Coote, who was just a fortnight younger than me and had similarly belonged to the public school generation that pioneered the "New Maths" School Mathematics Project. Since then he had achieved triple firsts with distinction, and the honour of Senior Wrangler at Cambridge, followed by a doctorate at Princeton. From this experience I gained much, not just in terms of mathematical instruction, but simply from seeing at close hand how a true mathematician *thinks*. But I fear that he must have found my frequent manic or near-manic 'highs' somewhat exasperating.

Meanwhile, I set about developing a software capability so as to enable others on site with less modelling experience to do similar work of their own. This involved creating such things as graph-drawing and curve-fitting facilities, and making them easy to use.

⁴⁹ A. Robins and Sons Co Ltd, which Farnham residents had as a matter of course used to conduct their removal operations since 1907.

⁵⁰ Many years later, attending Bill Northern's leaving do, I went up to address him with, "Cheerio, Bill, I shall always think of you as the man who gave me a job." He spun round and looked me in the face. "That," he said, was one of the best decisions I ever made, and I never regretted it once!"

The peak of my career there came when in 1988, together with my colleague Cliff Wheatley, I co-wrote in 1988 the NIS Operational Benefit Study which formed the basis of MoD's successful bid to persuade the Treasury to fund the expensive but highly effective NATO Identification System, on which most of my labours since joining had been spent.⁵¹

DEATH OF MY MOTHER

My mother died on 10 April 1986, and James Fanshawe's wife Rosie came round to The Pad one evening to break the news to me most gently. To everyone's great surprise, however, including my own, I did not collapse in a heap of depression, but found myself upheld in a bubble of equilibrium that lasted a few weeks until my system had absorbed the shock.

My mother sought no memorial, simply wanting her ashes to be scattered in a stream, or perhaps it was in the Alice Holt Forest, near Rowledge, where she and I had for a time worshipped. This proved not to be formally possible, and so they were interred in the Garden of Remembrance of St Thomas-on-the-Bourne. My heartbroken father later had a Peace rose planted in memory of her by Aldershot Cemetery.

According to the account which prevailed among the family, my mother was accorded the lion's share of the blame for the failure of my parents' marriage. I had only a worm's eye view of the business, but I was present all of the time, and although I could see much of what lay behind the conventional account, I could never see it as presenting anything remotely like a balance. But trying to honour both sides without even the appearance of partisanship was never easy, and it became evident towards the end of his life that in my father's case I had not entirely succeeded. So I was very gratified when Robert wrote to me in recent years from Australia:

I was privy to some of the most intimate details concerning the difficulties that arose between your parents in later years. They were two very different people. Your mother was warm loving and one of the kindest people I have ever known. She was always interesting to listen to and showed great interest in what others had to say. Both Merle and I admired and loved her dearly. We spent many happy weekends at Willowbank. Whenever we visited in summer it was my job to mow the lawn and when I had finished, we all sat under an umbrella, enjoying our pre-lunch drinks. They were wonderful relaxing and fun times. We both loved being there. I wonder if you know the story concerning your mother and her father? She told us that she lost her father when she was two or three years old. He was killed when his car plunged into a ravine in India. Sadly, and tragically the adults in their wisdom, decided not to tell your mother the facts. For many years she believed, that she had been abandoned by her father. Merle feels that because of this searing experience, your mother was emotionally scarred and needed a man who could fill the void. Unfortunately, your father didn't possess that ability, no doubt, due to his experience with his own mother who often resorted to emotional blackmail to get her own way by using her health as a

⁵¹ I once asked Cliff if he thought that life was meant to be an exercise in thinking, a belief not far from my own. "Doesn't seem probable," he replied, shaking his head sagely. "Too many people never give it a try!"

I must record also our debt to Odette McInnes, without whose dedicated and meticulous attention to the mundane task of data preparation our energies would have been quite hopelessly in vain. To her great misfortune, this role fell way below her past proven capabilities, and it was distressing to see someone so able being thus underused, while being quite unable to do anything about it. This was Barbara's and my engagement year, and we were most grateful to Odette and her husband Ron for kindly letting us make use of their private retreat at the bottom of a field somewhere in Devon for our summer holiday.

weapon. This cruel behaviour on the part of your Grandmother was told to me by my own father and confirmed by Phyllis when she visited us in South Africa. As a result of this behaviour by his mother your father found it impossible to meet the emotional requirements of your own mother. That was the main problem affecting their marriage. Their respective childhood experiences made them emotionally incompatible. Unfortunately, no one ever counselled your mother and pointed out to her that under the circumstances no matter how hard the other party tried, it would never be sufficient to fill the void.

Your father too could relax and be very entertaining but he had been brought up in a very different era. He was the product of the naval system that existed between the two world wars. Family background, class, rank and tradition were what mattered. It was extremely difficult for anyone of that generation to relax and unwind outside their comfort zone. They could manage it because it was part of their training as a naval officer, however, they were always more at ease amongst their peers. Colonials were accepted by them for their eccentric and unorthodox behaviour which was tolerated with a degree of amusement. After-all, we posed no threat to the social pecking order of the establishment. Your father, however, was never condescending towards me. Nevertheless, I often saw, in his relationship with others that, when he was outside his comfort zone, he would become somewhat stiff and formal. He did not mean to be like that but officers of his generation (like my own father) found it difficult to bridge the gap and at the same time be relaxed.

I have discussed my grandfather Simeon's fatal accident above. That my grandmother found impossible to handle well the loss of her husband after just four years of marriage, in a foreign country, with tragic consequences for my mother, is not something I can as her grandson possibly hold against her. I am not her judge any more than I am that of my parents. She was my grandmother. She loved me and I loved her and that is that. I know my cousin Richenda Simeon, another grandchild, feels just the same.

With some of the proceeds of the money I inherited from her, I invested in an Amstrad PC 1512, one of the new 'IBM-compatible Personal Computers', dubbed BONKERS after the favourite epithet of Lord Hailsham who had shown me such kindness in my schooldays. It seemed a good name for computer, and the ease it imparted to typing and printing was to set the tone for several years that followed: it is no exaggeration that it opened for me a new era. I began by writing short articles for the Parish Magazine.

I encountered my mother once again, in a dream, which I think took place during my dialysis years 2010-14, although I have so far not managed to unearth the report of it in my journal. I saw myself, perhaps from above, meeting her as she emerged from her car. "So you're not dead," I said as I moved towards her. "No, I'm not," she confirmed. And she looked quite her normal, radiant, happy, natural self again, as though all was now well with her. I was glad.

KAY

Not long after our mother died, Peter happened to ask our father an innocent question about the ships he had served in. This sparked something. Before long he was typing hard at his reminiscences of his life in the Navy – *Half A Lifetime* as he judged it, with some accuracy as it turned out (he left aged 45 and lived to be 85), which came out in two parts: WW2 first in Part II in 1986, whose floppy-bound typescripts were welcomed by the Imperial War Museum in April 1987. Part I, about his

earlier life and training, followed in 1988. These soon became welcome source material for scholars and historians of WW2, as references here and there began to show.

(A little after his death, I produced a single rudimentary edition of photocopies, with some of his own photographs pasted into place, complete with indexes and bound together by the daughter of a neighbour of ours, who was a skilled amateur bookbinder. In 2015 I tried again, with an electronic typescript generated by an acquaintance of Peter's, edited by myself with some added historical notes. After consultation with Peter on various issues of taste and detail, printing was done professionally, free of charge, on 200-year archive paper by my kind and noble friend John Cozens, and binding by Lee Prior. Copies were then issued to the family as requested, at cost price.)

My father soldiered on nobly briefly in Willowbank on his own. Sometimes he would come down to visit me, when I might treat him to grilled trout and specially concocted diabetic chocolate mousse; On another disastrous occasion he offered to take me out. Being single and not in the habit of eating out, I took advice from a friend as to where to go. The advice proved poor, and JPM was Not Pleased.

On another occasion in 1986 I went to lunch with him in Farnham and was treated to a pre-prepared duck à l'orange, bought specially from a local supermarket, of which he was justly proud. This may have been the inspiration behind the comment in my own Visitors' Book from a grateful (and repeated) visitor that year to the effect

"Hmm ... Tiggers do like Poulet à l'orange!!"

Since the previous entry, by a local (male) guest, read

"Thanks for a great meal, my one good feed of the week!",

and a slightly earlier one, by Melanie Moore, who had come with her husband, a greatly valued and dependable friend who was a senior colleague at Plessey called Ray Moore, I think on a return visit, recorded

"Good dinner we had here",

I think I must have been progressing well in the culinary line! Fortunately, I did not have to progress much further.

Then on one momentous day my father invited himself to a meal, and when we were sitting down, announced loudly and proudly,

"I HAVE FOUND ANOTHER WOMAN!"

It turned out that Kay Rickards (née Cochran), from St Mawes, Cornwall had been a sweetheart from his early days in the Navy to whom he had proposed fifty years earlier at a dance. She turned him down and accepted a proposal from another officer, one David Rickards, the same night, when my poor heartbroken father had to drive them both home! But both had outlived their spouses, and were ready to try again. There was a grand Meeting of Families at Willowbank in April 1987. Kay was elegant, charming, an excellent seamstress, who was to give him eight well-deserved years of happy marriage until he died in 1995.

The wedding took place in June 1987 in St James's, Piccadilly when the incidental music was chosen from Irving Berlin. My father honoured me by asking me to act as official photographer, which partly backfired as my second film was lost in the post when I sent it away for processing and was never

recovered; but mercifully the important shots outside the church and some of the reception at a large nearby hotel afterwards survived, so I was forgiven.

The first Royal Visit to The Pad took place on 18 October 1987, and I remember it took me nearly all morning to vacuum up all the dust from the corridor.

BARBARA

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing; and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

(Proverbs 18:22, AV)

Meanwhile my mother had kept her promise. That same year, 1987, Barbara Corey came on the scene, and everything in my life changed for the better. Her undeviating love and support were to carry me for more than the next three decades.

We had met in a silent group on retreat at the ecumenical centre founded in 1940 by Brother Roger at Taizé in Burgundy, in the summer of 1987 whither I had been taken on holiday with my close and deeply beloved friends Walter and Meredith Moberly, to whom I am eternally grateful.⁵² Barbara had gone there, very nervously, to accompany a party from the Royal College of Music, where she was chaplain – the same institution where David Fanshawe had undergone his formal musical training long before.

At the time, I was writing the *Alternative Christianity*, series of eight articles which were published in the Anglican charismatic journal ARMLink in 1988-9 promoting the practice of *waiting on God* – contemplative prayer – which had become central to me since I first discovered it in the book of that name by Andrew Murray, my second or third year at New College, and has remained so ever since.

This practice of waiting on God is for me very much the business of learning to *Think*, whereby one waits in silence for the Spirit of God, who indwells one's deep inner, unconscious, mind or spirit, to reveal His wisdom to the outer or conscious mind which encamps around it. It is how I personally learned one of the most important lessons of one's existence, that PRAYER TAKES TIME.

In it lay also for me the key to overcoming depression and later discovering the mystical tradition which turned out to be so much richer than the evangelical faith in which I had consciously entered upon my spiritual journey. In the same book I was to find the bridge between the catholic and evangelical traditions that I later promoted in *Peacemaking in God's Church*; but all that lay in the future.

Barbara is exceedingly musical, with competence in the past in six different instruments (including voice), although by far her favourite is the recorder, to which she has returned late in life. Not only does she also possess a talent for crosswords, but in later life she acquired a remarkable skill in Su Doku, so that on her first entry into *The Times* national Su Doku competition, she came 55th among the 100 finalists. But she is even more talented in 'Killer' Su Doku, in which expertise is so rare that *The Times* does not even run a competition; if they did so, I have no doubt at all that she would regularly feature in the first ten. In neither does she face any competition at home. Thanks to her exceedingly enlightened parents, she has from girlhood been passionately keen on the theatre. Indeed, it is a standing joke between that she is always far more interested in the actors we are watching than in the plots themselves.

⁵² While we were there some 3000 young people of 60 different nationalities filled its Church of Reconciliation and its extension to overflowing. We came to love both the silences and the characteristic chants during its worship. Brother Roger was assassinated during evening prayer in 2005.

In 1976, while training to be a music teacher, she experienced a dramatic 'Damascene' conversion to Christ in a charismatic 'happy-clappy' environment in Liverpool. After some memorable years teaching juniors, she was called into Church Army, where she was given a superb ministerial training which served her for life. During this process, she lost her initial explosive evangelicalism, which matured in time into a broader, more contemplative faith. As such she had already embarked upon the same journey along which God was to call me. In her case it was to lead to three excellent books, of which the first, *The Treasures of Darkness*, reflecting as it does her passion for the mediaeval mystics like Julian of Norwich and the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, shows every sign of becoming a classic of our age.

COURTSHIP

When we met, Barbara already had a good understanding of psychology, in which she began training as preparation for ordination. It was she who first introduced me to the life and work of the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung, founder of analytical psychology, which later had such an impact on me. I can remember well how, when she was sizing me up in those early days, she gave me his book, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, whose unfamiliar notions severely challenged my naïve evangelical orthodoxy. I was later glad they did.

But her arrival had provoked in me a state of extreme consternation. I had previously determined from previous experience that God intended me to be one of His solitaires, a bachelor in my Pad for the rest of my days. And now He was changing His mind! And more, as I learned on receiving two Christmas cards from the same person in the same year, Barbara seemed to share His opinion. I resigned myself to the inevitable. And have never once regretted it.

Our courtship was facilitated over the new year by Graham and Carolyn Cornfield in Knowle, West Midlands, who by offering hospitality had gently developed a ministry of providing a neutral space where aspiring Christian husbands could bring their potential brides and get to know each other away from families and friends. I was not the first to benefit from this kindness; nor was it indeed a first time for me.

Returning to The Pad, we called in at Willowbank on the way, making Barbara only the third young lady ever to have been invited by me to the parental home, which was clearly recognised as significant! Besides my father and Kay, present were also Kay's daughter Angela Firth and her husband Ian, already doubtless suffering from the cancer which led to his suicide nearly two years later. As a Church Army sister, Barbara was later to do much to make me acceptable to my father.

From then on for much of the year we commuted between each other's flats on alternate weekends, South Kensington one weekend, Emsworth the next. To facilitate this we purchased a very convenient rail concession card which was available at the time offering the bearer a reduction of some 33% in fares. There being no stipulation that it was tied to any particular bearer (we checked), whoever used it one weekend would post it back to the other midweek for use the next. This worked very well and saved us quite a lot.

On Friday 12th February 1988 I arrived at Barbara's flat in South Ken, and we planned the next day, how we would go out to a jeweller's and find a ring. And so we did. In fact we found a very attractive ring prominently displayed in the window of the first jeweller we arrived at. It had a lozenge-shaped sapphire in the centre surrounded by a ring of tiny diamonds. Fortunately I had come with my bank account primed for such an occasion, and that was that. (Barbara told me later she had spent the previous week scouting out all the local jewellers, which explained our rapid success.)

On our return she prepared me one of her signature dishes of chilli con carne. Halfway through the meal I jumped up and said, “This won’t do. I haven’t proposed to you yet!”, went down one knee and made good the omission. I was glad she hadn’t changed her mind in the previous two hours. Ever afterwards, by tradition, we would celebrate Valentine’s day a day early.

Shortly afterwards, Barbara made me a handsome return for the ring: a Hewlett-Packard IIC scientific calculator of my own choice, the kind that runs on ‘reverse Polish’ logic. Now as any calculator aficionado will tell you, once you are familiar with reverse Polish, you will never want to return to any other kind of calculator again. I had met such a gem in my EASAMS days, and coveted one ever since. And this was a beauty, my pride and joy for years to come. Its neat mode of operation makes it is a delight to use. Not only did it support me through my working life at Plessey ever after. Its ten-digit display and ready programmability qualified it to serve during my OU mathematics course and exams in 1992-5. It was always on hand during the lengthy gestation of ‘ e , i & π ’. Its first set of batteries lasted fifteen years. And it still does our monthly accounts. Beyond doubt I had by far the better of the deal!

But I had to win my spurs. Barbara had been receiving some increasingly exorbitant bills from her local gas company who were proving deaf to her pleas for reassessment. It was plain she was being charged for the wrong meter in her small block of flats, and we managed to prove this by switching off her central heating and all her other gas appliances for a few days and checking the reading. There followed a campaign of increasingly pointed letters to increasingly higher officials within the gas company until, with a little help from a friendly showroom salesman who later left to join the police, they capitulated. As a result Barbara entered the marriage with a gas bill of a mere £415 for me to pay instead of over £1000. (Her positive contribution was a magnificent seven piece set of Ducal Victoria pine furniture which still adorns our bedroom to this day.) This success made me persona very grata with her parents Ken and Margaret, her sister Sheila and husband Phil Walker, and expert piano tuner brother David from the very start, who all gave me the most unqualified welcome into their family.

We were married in St John’s Church, Ainsdale, Southport on 14 January 1989. My father, welcoming the union, lamented that we had only just managed to miss achieving two Mosse weddings in successive years! My best man Peter Van Peborgh distinguished himself by repeating in his speech a limerick of a WAVELL colleague, Bob Millar:

“This may come to you as a surprise
But Martin’s mild manner’s a disguise
He is in reality
Just a duality
He’s **SUPERMAN** – and he flies!

Afterwards, in chauffeur’s cap, he drove us to the Leasowe Castle Hotel in the Wirral, where we had planned to spend our wedding night. On arrival we relaxed with glasses of Tia Maria before going up to bed. But before undressing, I said to my bride, “Barbara, *please make something of me.*” The rest of this story is the result.

On return from honeymoon in Majorca, we went to see Grandmatoo, very shortly before she died in her nursing home in Woking, This was her first and last opportunity to meet Barbara, who accordingly put on the voluminous satin wedding dress Peter’s Sarah had taken enormous pains to create. GMT had lost her sight by then, but was well able to appreciate it by its feel, being truly delighted to meet my bride at last. After meeting her, Barbara and I paraded around the ward, and in a side room met 105-year old Bessie, who had clearly lost nothing of a lifetime’s forthrightness.

“D’you like what you got?” she squawked. I replied that I did, and left it at that. I don’t suppose she knew a thing about calculators.

MARRIED LIFE

Together, in our first shared year in The Pad, we decided to leave the privately run Priory for Dr Renton, a dedicated, hard-pressed NHS psychiatrist in Havant, who not for the last time came to our rescue by taking us on. When we went for our final consultation Dr Kelly, the new Medical Director, a kind and sensitive man who had seen me as an out-patient but never treated me in crisis internally, could see the anger blazing in my eyes and, alarmed, inquired as to the reason for this. I replied in fury, “You took my father’s side in a family dispute and *you did not check your facts!*” And to his eternal credit, he was man enough to admit that this was entirely true. He had read nothing of the family problems to which Peter had alerted the Priory, and lamented that family therapy was not available in those days (though the thought of my father submitting to anything of the kind defeats the imagination!). But our days with that institution were ended. It was simply his misfortune to have been in the hot seat at the time.

It seems plain that the appointment of Desmond Kelly as Medical Director in 1979 brought enormous benefits to The Priory and to its staff at all levels. He was undoubtedly a well-respected psychiatrist of great competence. I experienced from him consistently a humaneness I had not found there before. And although he was certainly a fan of Dr Sargant and his pioneering methods, I doubt very much if the total failure to meet my human needs of spiritual support and psychotherapy that I had encountered would have been sustained under him or prevailed today.

Before we left, Dr Kelly ascertained quite rightly that we had already arranged an alternative psychiatrist to go to, and Barbara confirmed that Dr Renton was in place. Then he made a very remarkable comment. Part of my problem, he said, was that I “feel things very deeply.” I wondered what he would have made of Jesus. But later I gave him credit for a valuable perception. This was nothing to do with manic depression. Sometimes such deep motivations were an asset. But at others, as will have been plainly obvious to those closest to me, they could make me obsessive, insensitive, and intolerant of other views.

But I had broken out of the first of a succession of several cages, one inside the other, in which I had seemed to be confined. Several more were to follow.

Soon afterwards, I was introduced to the deeply contemplative Jungian psychotherapist Jackie Brookfield, also a Church of England Reader, and went on to see her on and off for twelve years. Jackie was the first person to give me any hope that God had any means of healing deep emotional problems as mine beyond tablets and medication. She listened. She loved. And she prayed. She once told me that prayer was the most significant thing she did for any of her clients, which I am sure was true. More concretely, she had me embark on the practice of keeping a journal, which was of enormous practical value at the time and continues to be a life-saver. My most recent twenty-eight journals, from March 2005, still exist, form an effective chronicle of my progress in becoming a Thinker.

Within two years of marriage, Barbara and I decided together against having children, having rightly understood that manic depression was to a large extent hereditary. Neither of us had any desire to pass on such faulty genes to a new generation. And although this did not come without deep inner cost to Barbara, it was a decision that to this day we have never regretted.

The emotional void this left in our lives, God soon filled with Frodo, a six-month-old fox-red Labrador puppy we bought from a breeder in East Sussex in 1999. His great-grandsire Sandringham Hugo had belonged to Her Majesty The Queen, and two of his forebears had been Crufts Field Trials Champion. Frodo was a Very Special Dog, extraordinarily affectionate, capable of giving and receiving love in large measure, and equally sociable with other dogs, happy to stand still while puppies leaped and crawled all over him. As such he brought a fresh dimension into our lives and a shared focus for our attentions and affections. We did not feel in the least short-changed!

But far more significant than Frodo and his successor Rufus, whom we acquired in 2016, for the happiness and stability of our marriage, was the habit of praying together at least twice a day. Within our first year we made a point of reciting a routine set of prayers before turning the lights out at night. Among these was one Barbara found herself being given very early on:

Defend, O Lord, our marriage from the attacks of the Evil One.
Protect us on every side by the power of your victorious love, against which Satan is disarmed.
Lord Jesus You called us together and made us one.
Keep us continually open to You and to each other,
And may we walk together, safe in Your love and protection for the rest of our married life.
We ask this in Jesus' precious Name, Amen.

Then, while on holiday together in North Wales in 1997, I found myself stuck in such a depression that private prayer became forbidding and impossible. So I asked Barbara if I could join her as she prayed a form of the morning office. At that time she was using a forerunner of the Church of England Common Worship, so we used that together each morning for several years, occasionally trying alternatives, before settling down to Common Worship, with the C of E annual lectionary, which we still use today. On occasions we have used the evening office as well.

This has supplied us with a daily diet of Scripture, always including a psalm, supplemented with a set of accompanying notes, including some to which Barbara herself had contributed.⁵³ In addition, we read from external authors such as the Trappist monk Thomas Merton and Ronald Blythe,⁵⁴ who for

⁵³ Barbara's Bible notes were frequently in demand from mainstream Christian publishers over many years, making a healthy addition to the household economy.

⁵⁴ Today we read in chapter 3, 'The Black Map', in Blythe's book *Divine Landscapes*, his utterly horrendous and blood-chilling account of the atrocious murders by torture, the rack, hanging (including drawing and quartering), burning and the like that were committed on *both* sides of the Reformation by people who, whatever their profession, had clearly not an inkling of the love of the God in whose Name they committed them, during the reigns of Henry VIII, Mary and Elizabeth I. And although of course much was done to patch it all up and make amends and compromises afterwards, it seems to me beyond question that many of the seemingly insoluble problems that bedevil Britain today owe their very intractability to the fact that deep down, the past history behind them – all those fearful, traumatic deaths – remains unhealed. I do believe therefore that our very best efforts on the conventional fronts of politics, economics, medicine, social reform and so on are doomed to achieve no more than partial success until the Churches and the nation penitently and publicly bring all those violent, hate-inspired deaths before God, wait patiently on Him and seek His will as to how He wishes to heal them. That He eagerly wishes to do so I am absolutely certain. I am equally certain that this remedy will work as nothing else will, and that by making possible solutions to the intractable problems of today, it will open up for us the kind of future – only far better – that politicians forever promise but on today's premises are quite unable to deliver. One reason for my certainty is that it is precisely this approach to an incident of long-past violence in my own family that finally healed my own manic depression in 2002, as I have described in this document. I believe therefore that this route leads to a future "happy and glorious" beyond any comparison with the perpetual misery of economic, social and environmental doom which is daily threatened upon us (the 'red alert' of climate change within 30 years etc) by scientists and

years contributed the Word from Wormingford column on the last page of *Church Times*. Day after day, apart from the obvious spiritual benefits of learning what God has said to people from other sectors of the Church, this practice brings us into line with each other each day, providing us with topics of fruitful conversation in which we come to understand each other better, and a stimulus with which to start our thinking. Also included is a regular round of prayers for our families, friends and those such as medical practitioners on whom we depend. This we have appreciated increasingly as time goes on. Today we would both agree that this most enriching routine constitutes the most worthwhile thing we do. And as the old evangelical cliché has it, “the family that prays together, stays together.”

Every year on our wedding anniversary, before going out for a celebratory meal, we would always dig out our album of wedding photos and play through the tape of the service and reception, which Barbara’s brother David had arranged for us. Walter Moberly’s carefully constructed address still comes across as fresh and penetrating today as it did then.

DEATH OF MY FATHER

In 1995 my father’s health, already weakened by diabetes, went into decline. Sadly, at the same time, all his old anxieties and fears about me began to surface again. Ever prudent about money, he continued his practice of sending Peter and me an annual tax-free allowance to the legal limit of something like £5000. But when I wrote back to thank him, saying we were putting it towards her training as a psychotherapist (and so providing her with independent support for the future in the event of my death, of which I thought he would approve), he wrote back almost explosively. Evidently in his present state of mind, Barbara did not count as a true Mosse, and so did not qualify for his beneficence. Since he had hitherto unquestionably welcomed her into the family (with evident relief that I was at last becoming ‘normal’), it was plain that he in this respect was no longer himself. The letter was so unpleasant – one of the most unpleasant that I have ever received – that in distress we took it round to Mouse, who was horrified and instructed me to tear it up there and then, which I did, leaving the pieces on her carpet. Then, forever the instinctive healer of broken relationships, she went to see him on our behalf to seek to heal the injustice, but on that very rare occasion in her life, even she was unable to get through to him.

others who know nothing more than the fashionable secularism of today, and in consequence have nothing better to offer than current failed remedies.

Further, I challenge any who ridicule this approach to have the courage to test it in private. Take a copy of Andrew Murray’s classic *Waiting on God* (see Bibliography), and spend a month by working each day through one of its 31 chapters, listening in inner silence for an appreciable time (say, half an hour per day) to learn what God (if He is there at all) may wish to teach them. My only stipulation is total honesty. No cheating, no shortcuts. Only a genuine desire to discover God – if He exists. A breach of this stipulation will simply demonstrate an inability honestly to subject your scepticism to the challenge of a simple experiment; which will impress neither you, nor God, nor anyone else to whom you report it. (This exercise is of course open to anyone at all, with or without an axe to grind. Have a Bible to hand for reference, or a notebook in which to record your thoughts, if you wish. But please be aware that this is neither a Bible Study nor a session for writing your journal, worthy though those two activities may be. Nor is it an exercise in meditation (on a topic of your own choice). The object is purely to follow the instruction of Psalm 46:10: “Be STILL and know that I am God.”) I can confidently predict one outcome to everyone who tries it: you will get a surprise! But whatever happens, when you have completed the course, you will be in a better position to assess my proposal that the best way to approach our future is by first inviting God to heal our bloodthirsty, violent past.

Barbara's mother, Margaret, on hearing about this, recognised clearly the huge difference in my father at this time from the John she had known, who had welcomed her and Ken so warmly by letter and in person into the family on our engagement in 1988. This was a different man altogether.

So Barbara, taking time off of her own accord from her training at the Westminster Pastoral Foundation in London, went to visit him in his bed in King Edward VII Hospital in order to make peace. He was lying there within his eyes closed, but in a lucid moment he murmured, "Martin ... there has been a misunderstanding."

Later on, when we went to see him in Frimley Hospital to which he had been transferred, I brought him some wooden toothpicks he had requested, and he was very grateful. Then he asked, "Martin, are there any ships on the horizon?" He was back in the Navy. So I turned round, looked out of the window, and replied, "None that I can see, Daddy."

The most moving story about his passing came to me a few years later from my cousin, his nephew James Fanshawe, who had enjoyed a most successful career in the Navy, and therefore had far more in common with my father than I had. Shortly before my father died, James went to see him. Having once recognised him, my father asked him to send for the Mess Treasurer, and James immediately knew where he was. As he explained to me, when as a Naval Officer you are about to leave a ship, one of your most essential final acts must be to send for the Mess Treasurer in order to pay your outstanding Mess bill. Failure to do so is the ultimate disgrace. So my father was indicating, in terms that only another Naval Officer would understand, that he was just about to make his departure. James appreciated at once the significance of this, and the mental state which it implied, rose to the occasion and entered right into it. For the next hour he sat and listened patiently to my father's reminiscences, as a young seaman might to an old. They then parted in suitable terms, to the evident bafflement of the watching nurses. James then rang Peter to alert him as to the probable imminence of my father's death, which occurred about three days later on 6 August 1995. (The funeral took place in St Andrew's Parish Church in Farnham, where he had worshipped for approaching four decades. I read John Masefield's poem, 'Sea Fever'.)

On both times when James has told me this story, I have found it deeply moving. I had no idea of the closeness between the two, and it thrilled me to discover that he had found, within the family, someone with whom he could communicate to fill the empty gap belonging to the son with whom he could not.⁵⁵ (This was of course in addition to Peter, with whom he could always communicate.) Conversely, within a few years of his death, I was to find in Robert a substitute for the father with whom I had lost inner communication some twenty-five years before when I entered New College.

Robert and I have met barely half a dozen times, but in recent years have corresponded a great deal, discovering that we have masses in common in terms of the way our minds work, and in spiritual and political values, and in our shared passion for Mosse family history and values. In all such areas we have found ourselves to be, in his lawyer's Latin, *ad idem*. He has understood me, my ins and outs, my ups and downs, from the very first, and has never made once me feel ashamed to be myself.

⁵⁵ I have wondered if this closeness did not date from the six months in 1978 when my father lodged with James's parents in Kent. If so, it will have been one of the few beneficial results of that tumultuous year – another being my friendship with Helen, a Jewish girl, who had escorted me around the bazaars of the Old City in Jerusalem during my holiday in Israel with Oak Hall that spring, while exploring the possibility of going to live there herself. The friendship continues at a distance to this day.

Not long after my father died, I learned from Mouse that near the end of his life he had confided in her that, "I have totally failed with Martin." That is very sad, and not as true as he believed. We never fully recovered our ability to communicate with each other, but lost never our love for each other or my respect for him, or my deep pride in what he achieved during his best years, the war. As I concluded when I came to produce a de luxe edition of his memoirs some years after his death, *my father was a king*. And Willowbank, the beautiful house and garden near Farnham in which I grew up from 1964 onwards, was his kingdom. I have sometimes wondered if it was not God's thank-you to him for all he had achieved in the war.

Correspondingly, as I was already aware when Robert confirmed it long afterwards, he was indeed very proud of my academic and intellectual achievements. This come across to me never more clearly than when, some time after he married Kay in 1987, he introduced me to a new acquaintance with the affirmation, "Martin is the boffin of the family." I grew six inches on the spot.

BRAINWAVES

In 1989 some idiot cancelled the Cold War and we all began to lose our contracts. After that my lack of scientific versatility hit home and I was increasingly at a loose end, having to justify my continued employment from month to month. At one point I proposed that the company set up an elite Think Tank, offering the name PHRONTISTERION,⁵⁶ a means of generating future business ideas. And when approval was granted, I then attempted to drum up support for investment in Remotely Piloted vehicles, as at EASAMS before. But in spite of a little local enthusiasm, the idea failed to take off. And although some managers went out of their way to find work for me, it proved a losing battle. Meanwhile, the insecurity proved quite stressful.

By 1996 my condition had become so serious that when Dr Renton offered to take me out of paid employment for the rest of my life, with Barbara's full support I leapt at the opportunity. This was one of the most beneficial decisions ever taken for me by a doctor. From then on until I reached pensionable age, I was supported by Incapacity Benefit, by income from inherited investments superbly managed by Patrick Phelan (another of so many Godsend to us), and by a succession of jobs Barbara found herself which terminated in that of teaching Christian Spirituality at Sarum College, one of the two most rewarding posts she ever held.

We felt it confirmed our decision, taken five years previously, not to have children.

In February 1996 we had bought our dormer bungalow Drogo, whose discovery we owed to Mouse, whose purchase of her cottage in Westbourne I had slightly helped to facilitate some years before.

One afternoon, when we had been househunting for a while, the doorbell rang at The Pad and there were Mouse and a friend. "We've found your house," she squawked, and so she had, just five minutes' walk away. Our instant conviction that she was right was confirmed by the fact that it had been on a falling market for six months, resulting in a significant drop in price.

Drogo was largely paid for from with sums skilfully negotiated by Peter from the estate of our father, who had died the previous year. It was wonderful to sit back and just let successive cheques roll in without having to do a single thing about it! So no mortgage worries. Income from letting The Pad for a few years until the market rose again also helped to keep us afloat.

⁵⁶ This being the name given by Aristophanes in *The Frogs* to the 'Thinkery' which he humorously supposed was inhabited by his victim Socrates. Nowadays we might call it a Think Tank. Plato was to get his own back on Socrates' behalf by his hilarious portrayal of Aristophanes in *The Symposium*.

Much as I loved my new stress-free status, I hankered after an opportunity to support myself from my own inner resources. On 21 August 1998 there appeared in my journal what became my wavy logo, together with its mathematical formula and an interpretation. The next day I was expressing with considerable excitement my deep inner desire to start implementing some of the thoughts in my head as a possible business, to which the day after that my unconscious supplied the name BRAINWAVES, conceptually the successor of PHRONTISTERION. I was ideally placed to do the work of a Thinker to which God had been calling me all my life, mostly unrecognised. This proved to be by far the most fulfilling situation to which I had ever been called.

Already in possession of BONKERS, I soon began to equip myself with software utilities such as the remarkable ASEASYAS spreadsheet which I still use to this day, and with a large supply of reference volumes such as the complete *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Had I realised that the internet was just about to burst into life, it is possible that I might have held back on this. But at this point my natural Luddism came very much to the fore, and it was several years before I was convinced by our curate at St James', Emsworth, Revd Tom Kennar, to embrace the new era of email and the world wide web – a gift that goes on giving.

I also set about recreating from memory some of the facilities, and in particular for graph-drawing and curve-fitting, that I had already initiated at work. Thus equipped, I began researching, and reporting the results of my assorted researches under the general title BRAINWAVES.

After a few years I took the opportunity to invite the amazing John Cozens (R.I.P.), who was already managing our computer systems, to create and maintain the BRAINWAVES website www.brainwaves.org.uk. He did a superb job until his death in 2017.⁵⁷ And although the dream of making BRAINWAVES a paying financial concern never materialised, the platform for my thoughts offered by the website proved a thoroughly worthwhile challenge and a *raison d'être* ever afterwards.

None of this, however, would have been possible without the faithful support, not just of Barbara, but also of numerous inestimable friends who frequently assisted me by criticising and agreeing, and disagreeing, usually by email or letter, with the various drafts with which I bombarded them. Peter Van Peborgh I have identified already in this role. Others included my former New College colleagues James Bradby and Crispin (now Richard) Lee; Dr Elizabeth Moberly, sister of Walter, an unshakeable mainstream theologian from the Russian Orthodox camp; Fr Nicholas King, SJ, to whom I regularly turned for an authentic Roman Catholic opinion; my cousin Richenda Simeon, who was most helpful in enabling to find the right level at which to target the early sections of 'e, i & π'; and my old colleague and assistant from project WAVELL Nick Salkilld, who twice meticulously read through early drafts of that book and, besides picking up a mass of typographical errors, was responsible for some valuable suggestions of design and style which made a massive impact upon the final product.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ John was one of the kindest and most diligent workmen I have ever met. Time and again he would waive his fee, giving his services free, especially in helping me print family volumes with photographs such as my father's *Half A Lifetime*. But Barbara and I were both taken by surprise to learn at his funeral just how unstinting he was of his spare time in raising money for charity – he seemed to do nothing else!

⁵⁸ Nick had been a most valued friend from the start, on WAVELL. He was the first person who, when I described to him the symptoms of my mental affliction told me generically its generic name manic depression, thus enabling me for the first time to begin to get a handle on my problem. No doctor had bothered to tell me this, thus magnifying the sense that it had been some unnameable under-the-table illness of which I ought to be ashamed. Now I could explain myself in recognisable terms to other people like the Woodheads who were

This process was an essential part in my development as a Thinker, as the project evolved from 1998 onwards, and particularly as, unconsciously, I found myself increasingly engaged upon The Quest which I describe below. I doubt very much if any of them has any idea what an enormous service they were providing me with, in some cases at considerable personal cost, but from my point of view my debt to their continuing loyal support cannot be overstated, and I would at least to record that fact here.

One of the most extraordinary features of my life has been the long train of simply wonderful people whom God has introduced into it, time after time, one after another, each one ideally suited to the task of the occasion. I am so glad that, even though it is way beyond me to thank them adequately for all I owe them, He is more than up to it!

The OU mathematics course on which I had embarked on Barbara's encouragement in 1992 now began to pay dividends. While revising for my final exam in the History of Mathematics one summer afternoon on holiday in Scotland in September 1995, I was suddenly hit by the brainwave that turned into 'e, i & π ', whose first full edition first appeared in 2013, owing much to the computer skills of John Cozens and the bookbinding wizardry of Lee Prior in Farnborough, as well as the new fields opened to me by the OU. I took enormous pleasure devouring the large volume of reading matter this involved and all the fresh understanding gained, as well as in shaping and reshaping the book as the underlying patterns within the subject progressively became apparent.

A recent unsolicited comment received in Russian from one Kurbon Ostanov read,

Dear Martin Moss! A very attractive approach to understanding mathematical patterns and therefore will be of great benefit in teaching mathematics in schools.

That struck me as rather special. It means that he had seen directly to the heart of the book and made more sense of it than all the various publishers I had tried, a fistful of whose rejection slips I had thrown away not long before. I was really touched and, with the assistance of Google Translate, replied in kind. He replied:

Dear Martin Mosse! Thank you for your feedback. Since I already admire your book and its wonderful ideas and facts, I will try to convey them to those who are interested in this. I hope this work of yours and in the future will be of great benefit in educating students to study this wonderful science as mathematics.

In another message he wrote,

Dear Martin! I wish you health and a quick recovery. As far as I can, I will acquaint the youth with this wonderful work of yours, so that your efforts, efforts will give their positive shoots for the prosperity of all mankind. Thank you so much.

FINAL HEALING

I am the LORD that healeth thee.

happy to offer any help they could, without having as it were to hang my head in shame. Nevertheless, the fact that schizophrenia had once been considered a possible diagnosis remained on my record, and even within the last four years was thrown at me as an opening gambit by a rather undertrained staff member from my local surgery given the routine task of investigating my everyday welfare (height, weight, blood pressure, diet etc). "How's the schizophrenia?", she began gaily! I nearly fell off my seat. Nick's continued friendship, and the occasional gifts of Snoopy albums and, recently, a sample Latin book he had rebound, have been among the unexpected treasures that have come my way from time to time on my journey through life.

Then in the course of time, in 2001/2, after I had stopped seeing Jackie, my unconscious came to the rescue. I received two clear instructions, several months apart, to seek very specific forms of prayer ministry, with anointing and the laying on of hands, from my vicar. These related to the two inherited components of my bipolar condition, which was then healed and never troubled me again.

The first such component became apparent from the unusually large number of close relatives I had who had suffered from some form or other of mood disorder. After reading his authoritative book *A Mood Apart*, I consulted Dr P.C. Whybrow as described above. I then decided to follow the approach described by the psychiatrist Dr Kenneth McAll in his book *Healing the Family Tree*, in which he has frequently invoked the services of a Christian minister to bring before God the more intractable conditions of certain patients which seemed to have their origins rooted way back in their ancestry. So on 12 July 2001 I requested such prayer from my vicar in his church, which helped to alleviate the problem, without completely removing it.

This became evident when my former stablemate James Stedeford died in October 2001 and I was asked to say a few words at his funeral the next month. I wrote the address, but found myself prevented by the fear of depression from setting forth alone on an unfamiliar journey to get there in time. So I emailed it to Antony Harrop, who delivered it on my behalf. Fear of my being caught alone often affected our marriage, and once prevented Barbara from pursuing PhD course she had set her eyes on.⁵⁹

However, the next year, my unconscious struck again. This time I needed to bring before God in a similar way John, son of William de Mosse, my earliest known Mosse ancestor, who had been beheaded in Westmorland in 1256 for felony, and on that account was still not Resting In Peace. So we asked the same priest to come to our house on 12 October 2002 and minister to me in terms of the laying-on-of-hands, anointing, even the Holy Communion – the works! I read the lesson from Ecclesiasticus 44:9-15 about “some there be which have no memorial”. Afterwards, as time went by, it became apparent that the job was now done and the healing complete. From which time we never looked back.

⁵⁹ This ever-present vulnerability to being caught alone when you least expect it is a permanent threat to the bipolar. A classic instance happened to St Paul, travelling alone through Asia Minor as described in 2 Corinthians. He had set off from Ephesus for Macedonia in seemingly good heart (Acts 20:1), and has agreed to meet with Titus *en route*, in the Troad. It started well (2 Cor 2:12). But he has been over-confident, travelling on his own, and so, being manic depressive, he is vulnerable. Luke his doctor is not with him. But Titus is late. And Paul crashes with a severe panic attack (“far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life itself. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death,” 1:8-9). This is bad, very bad. He is alone, with no friends, no supporting church, no sense of God's presence, no chaplain, nothing. His new converts would have been in no position to minister to a problem of this magnitude. He has seldom been so unprotected. The 'enemy of his soul' has devastatingly assaulted him. But he has himself to blame: Jesus had taught His emissaries to go out in pairs (Luke 10:1). Many an MD would I think instantly recognise his predicament whether or not they saw it in the same spiritual terms.

Nevertheless, he keeps going with his mission, coasting, I would say, yet without peace of mind (2 Cor 2:13), and makes it to Macedonia, where his depression returns in force (7:5), until finally he is joined by Titus with excellent news from Corinth (7:13), and at once characteristically shoots to the opposite emotional extreme (“so that my joy was greater than ever”, 7:7). I believe Paul was healed of this condition during his two year spell in Caesarea jail, Acts 24:27: it can happen. (On all this see my Annex ‘Paul’s Mental Constitution,’ in Wiebe, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, pp.36-38.)

[I should add that on a number of occasions in the past I had been taken by well-wishing friends including my mother to services of healing, led by Christian leaders of good repute and long experience, to no effect. I had also been ‘prayed over’ by earnest charismatics who at least once informed me, wrongly, that I had then been healed. Sometimes this might even involve a gentle shove,⁶⁰ causing me to lose balance and end up on the floor in classic fashion. But God is not as arbitrary as that. In my case, little could be achieved until He had managed to communicate what were the precise causes of the problem to be addressed. After that, the process of ministry was low-key and undramatic, requiring no more than a humble parish priest carrying out his normal role in the usual way. My advice to any similar sufferer would be to make a priority of *waiting upon God* in all areas of their lives, and then letting God decide what happens next.

The point for me is that God desires above all to *communicate* with His children and will use any means to attract their habitual attention. This is why He does not go in for cheap, instant solutions to the toughest problems, as though waving a magic wand to solve them were ever in our best interests. I suspect that through a mechanism scarcely imaginable to us, He needed someone willing to share His burden of grief for my wretched ancestor, and prepared to wait upon Him for as long as it took, until I was able to hear His preferred *means* of healing for both of us. This involves a concept of the operation and depths of His love undreamed of even in some Christian circles; and also, I suspect, way beyond the imagination of any who have no prior personal knowledge of the love of Calvary; and of those who today like to use the “problem of suffering” as a stick with which to beat God. His love is quite immeasurable and unfathomable until we have experienced it for ourselves; but freely available to all.]

Around 2005, on the request of the amazing Renal Department of Queen Alexandra Hospital Portsmouth, my superb GP Dr Philip Tibbs, a true gift from God, and a man of deep faith himself, bravely took the plunge and removed me from lithium, which was clearly destroying my kidneys, without replacing it, since there was no adequate replacement available. “Don’t worry,” he assured me, in a refreshing change from the forebodings of The Priory about what happens if you stop your medication. “If it all goes pear-shaped, we’ll sort you out.” But it didn’t. I never had another bipolar episode. I had escaped another cage!

LAMPETER

Shortly before that, again with Barbara’s encouragement, I had begun to apply to do a PhD in theology at Lampeter, where she had preceded me in studying for her MA in Celtic Christianity under Tom O’ Loughlin and Jonathan Wooding. Theology was a subject in which I had no first degree, from which Dr Renton, supported by the opinion of an academic who knew me, therefore tried hard to dissuade me. It may be that he saw it as a sign of mania. I disagreed, and left. I don’t like being told I cannot do what I have already decided to do. It runs in the family.

NEMO MOSSE IMPUNE LACESSIT!, or

NO ONE TAKES ON MOSSE AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!

⁶⁰ It is not uncommon and well attested in the genuine healing ministry for the subject to faint temporarily to the ground while the Holy Spirit washes over them, while carrying out a work of deep inner healing. But it also happens, and is equally well attested, that in less professional situations, practitioners and their assistants feel a need to give the Holy Spirit a little help in this respect, to help Him in His task and so offer reassurance to all present that authentic ministry is being presented, according to best current charismatic practice.

(And yet the very bravest of us, such as Grandfather and Uncle Shorland, have possessed a quality of meekness about them, verging on sainthood, which defies this. I find myself unable to resolve the paradox.)

There being no other obvious candidate to be my psychiatrist, I had turned to Dr Tibbs, who was psychiatrically trained, who had most kindly accepted the job and cared for me with enormous understanding for perhaps fifteen years.

Being accepted at Lampeter, I was initially assigned rather unhappily to an Old Testament scholar whose views on the New Testament seemed to me to be rather ill-informed and unreconstructed. Seeing that this initial arrangement was not going to work, I was soon deftly recaptured for himself by the head of department, the wise, kindly, highly knowledgeable and most supportive Professor 'DP' Davies. This new relationship worked extremely well. Not long afterwards, 'DP' expressed the insight that has transformed my life ever since. Since the bulk of work currently being done on the NT concentrated on exegesis, he suggested, why not make use of my Oxford degree in ancient history and centre my studies, instead, on NT history?⁶¹ After year I was awarded an MTh, which enabled me to proceed towards a PhD. And so my PhD thesis, *The Three Gospels*, was completed in 2005 after two years' work rather than the usual three.

My studies at Lampeter were made possible by two other people. The first was Betty, the landlady whose en suite room gave me a welcoming home from home whenever I needed it; and Kathy Miles in the university library's Interlending Department, who throughout my studies spared no trouble in keeping me supplied with an unflinching sequence of books and articles, often obtained from places such as the British Library and posted on. She had to contend with my innate Luddism which made me highly reluctant to make use of the internet which was just coming into being. In addition, she became a personal friend and a pleasure to look forward to as every visit approached. And besides that, when my PhD had been granted and my fees long expired, I set about revising the work for publication, she was still unstinting in her support, whenever I was in need of complex detailed references for the Bibliography. Thank you, Kathy, so very much. What a lot I owe to you!

Publication

After another year's work at home, my thesis *The Three Gospels* was published with a slightly revised subtitle *New Testament History Introduced by the Synoptic Problem*, by Paternoster (a recommendation I owe to my friend Walter Moberly) in 2007; of which more below. It carried the following commendation from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams:

"This is a fine piece of work, creatively challenging a number of paradigms of New Testament scholarship and making use of all kinds of early Christian evidence to reconstruct a full and persuasive chronology for the biblical documents. Like Bishop John Robinson's work on the dating of the New Testament books and events, it asks us to start by being a bit more sceptical about accumulated scholarly habits and return for a fresh look at the literary and historical evidence. It will certainly provoke controversy, and is unlikely to convince everyone, but it is argued with energy and clarity and insists, rightly, on the true significance of many neglected sources and arguments. A real achievement."

⁶¹ This suggestion mirrored in inspiration and significance the insight of the Courtaulds Personnel Manager who, in 1974 when I had no idea just what it was I wanted to do, had first told me that what I was looking for was Operational Research. Another Godsend, first class!

The Jesuit scholar Nicholas King also gave it a generous unsolicited review in *The Tablet*,⁶² and A. E. Harvey, ever keen to promote the work of amateur students of the Gospels, wrote most enthusiastically in *The Times Literary Supplement*.⁶³

In due course I sent a complimentary copy to His Holiness Pope Benedict VI, as a goodwill gesture in recognition of his own work *Jesus of Nazareth*, which had impressed me, since Benedict was himself no mean theologian. This suggestion, together with the correct address to which to send it I owed to Father Tom Grufferty, priest of St Thomas' Catholic Church in Emsworth, which I had begun attending at the time as part of an (abortive) exploration into the possibility of becoming a Roman Catholic myself.⁶⁴ I inscribed the book as a joint gift from myself and Barbara, since we habitually included him in our intercessions list during the morning office.

Within a short time, back came the reply on headed notepaper of the Secretariat of State:

"From the Vatican, 3 October 2008

"Dear Dr Mosse,

The Holy Father wishes me to express his gratitude for your kind letter and for your book, *The Three Gospels: New Testament History Introduced by the Synoptic Gospels*. He appreciates your thoughtful gesture and the sentiments which motivated it.

His Holiness will remember you and you wife Barbara in his prayers. He invokes upon you God's blessings of joy and peace.

Yours sincerely,

Monsignor Gabriele Caccia

Assessor"

The authenticity of this letter was confirmed by our friend Fr Anthony Doe, who had extensive experience of the inner workings of the Vatican, obtained from time spent living at the English School in Rome. He was able to confirm for us that, coming through such a personage, this letter had definitely originated from His Holiness himself. I wondered if Barbara was not the first ordained Anglican woman priest to have entered into a prayer partnership with a reigning Pope!

As Roman Catholic chaplain to the Royal College of Music, Anthony had been Barbara's close colleague when she was serving as the Anglican one when I met her in 1987. He has been a cherished and highly esteemed friend and counsellor to both of us ever since. Such are his personal qualities that Cardinal Basil Hume had selected him to go for training as a psychotherapist to work with priests in the Roman Catholic Church.

In the late 2000s we periodically played host to a philosophy reading group of around eight men from our then church, St James' Emsworth, and its curate, Revd Tom Kennar. We were fortunate to have with us Nadim Bahkshov, a specialist in philosophy with a wealth of wide reading behind him. So besides Plato's *Republic*, with which we began (of course), and favourites of mine such as *Guide*

⁶² Nicholas King, 'The case against 'Q'', *The Tablet*, 7 June 2008.

⁶³ A.E. Harvey, 'Mark and Maths', *TLS* 23, 2008.

⁶⁴ I had been pointed in his direction by Father Andrew Chandler, as he then was, priest of St Patrick's Catholic Church on Hayling Island, who gave me enormous assistance at this stage in my career, becoming a friend for life in the process. Andrew subsequently left the priesthood in order to get married, and migrated with his wife Terri to the Channel Islands.

for the Perplexed, by E. F. Schumacher,⁶⁵ it was often on his suggestion that we revelled in such gems as Seyyed Hossein Nasr's *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* and Thoreau's *Walden*, from which the following passage impressed me so much that I reproduced it on my website under the title "A HERMIT DISCOVERS THE KINGDOM"

I learned this, at least, by my experiment [of living alone in the woods]; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them. (p. 303).

When the group disbanded, I diverted my Thursday evenings to a course of Pilates exercises in Havant Recreation centre, which proved highly beneficial in a different direction until health concerns overruled.

DIALYSIS, TRANSPLANT AND AFTER

Unfortunately, the healing of manic depression was too late to save my kidneys, which continued to deteriorate. In September or October 2010, under the overall supervision of the kindly 'gentle giant' Dr Juan Mason, of the brilliant Wessex Renal Unit in Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth, I began a routine of four times daily peritoneal dialysis⁶⁶ which after detailed training I was myself able to administer and monitor at home. Chosen in preference to the much more constrained haemodialysis, this allowed us the freedom to go out, away to friends or on holiday as we pleased. We soon got used to it, and I really came to enjoy the regular rhythm it brought to my day, and all the reading time it afforded, just as a monk lives by the often fourfold office which defines his day. I even wondered at times how I would ever return to normal life should that ever become possible!

How much I owe to the astonishing Peritoneal Dialysis team, operating from within QA. Led by an absolute dynamo called Gerry Endall, this group of seven highly trained, utterly dependable, women (mostly) sustained throughout a level of efficiency, competence and total dedication to their patients quite unmatched by any team I have seen anywhere in my life. Gerry's team were available for us on the end of a telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They all knew each of their patients and their problems individually, and always had answers to them. Periodically they would pay us a house visit to ensure all was well. They were supported by a friendly and wholly reliable firm called Baxters, who were responsible for maintaining our supplies of fluid and all the necessary associated kit, and in four years never let us down once.

When hospital management proposed to economise by reducing their hours, the team collectively went into revolt, demanding that full 24-hour coverage be reinstated, in spite of the extra toll on themselves personally. They got their way.

Gerry's team operated on the admirable principle, "No decision about me without me." It is a pity that this has not been more widely observed in the medical world.

⁶⁵ Author of *Small is Beautiful*, which Uncle Dick had recommended me on a visit to Bourne Tap in the late 1970s.

⁶⁶ Technically known as Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis, CAPD, or just PD for short.

One proud commitment they made was to ensure that patients could go on holiday anywhere in the world – be it Disney Land, Florida, or deep into Africa, miles from the nearest renal unit – and their supplies would be there, waiting for them. It was requested that you sent a postcard back from your destination, and I seem to recall a map on the wall showing proudly whence these had all come.

I have every confidence that if they are still handing out gold medals in heaven, then Gerry and her amazing PD team are likely to come away one day very heavily laden! She ran, as they said, a very “tight ship”.⁶⁷

This continued until my creatinine level began to rise so high that even dialysis could not maintain adequate kidney function. At this point Barbara offered me what is perhaps the greatest gift that any wife can bestow upon her husband: her own spare kidney. Extensive tests revealed that it was compatible. On 1 July 2014 it was removed from her in QA by Mr Sam Dutta by keyhole surgery, and brilliantly installed inside me by conventional means by Miss Sonia Wakelin (keyhole surgery being not yet available for this part of the proceedings). Seven years later I am still alive to tell the story.

And here I must pay tribute also to the skill and dedication not just of the doctors and surgeons of the astonishing Wessex Renal Department at QA, but also to the extraordinary band of nurses of both sexes, nearly all of them devout Roman Catholics, who had been recruited from the Philippines. Their cheerfulness, patience and evident, uplifting, love for their charges made them stand out as quite unique within the hospital, a beacon and an example to other wards – as was confirmed to me on my recent spell in the Cardiology Department by a nurse who had long ago begun her training there.⁶⁸

This gift was in turn immediately followed by the greatest kindness that has happened to the pair of us in the whole of our marriage. James Bradby, perhaps the sanest person I ever met, with whom I had studied Greek History under the incomparable Geoffrey de Ste. Croix in 1971-2, was very generously loaned to us by his wife Jane to look after us at home for around the first ten days after we had been released from QA. Cycling down the 90 miles from Monkton Combe in just a few hours, he moved in and simply took over, doing absolutely everything necessary to keep us alive: shopping, cooking, washing up, cleaning the house, mowing the lawn, managing the garden and maintaining our spirits. Without this wonderful, unsought, spontaneous offer we cannot imagine how we would have survived.

From then on, my renal function was managed most expertly by Dr Natalie Borman, whom we both adored and came to regard as the “other woman in my life.” At the top of her tree, yet young enough to be our daughter, Natalie has an unerring gift for discerning from my blood results when

⁶⁷ Had she been running a similar team in the Cardiology Department, they would surely have been known as Gerry and the Pacemakers!

⁶⁸ Less can be said of the quality of food at the Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth, which for the most part has been abysmal since the patients’ kitchen was demolished in the expansion of 2009. Since then, food has been imported four times a week down the M4 from Wales which, as distinct from locally made soups, which are often delicious, has been widely recognised by patients and doctors alike to be severely deficient in nutrition as well in quality and flavour. Complaints to management have so far availed nothing. When this has been drawn to the attention of Government, the response has been to point to the excellent Report of the Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food (2020), produced by Philip Shelley and Prue Leith, which however by April 2021 had clearly had zero impact upon QA. The strong impression is given that a decision has been taken at a very high level that under no circumstances, no matter how great the medical need, the number of patients affected or the volume of public protest, is any significant action ever going to be taken to rectify this matter. I hope very much that I am proved wrong. Meanwhile, it is a disgrace to an exceedingly fine hospital and a blot upon the NHS.

trouble is brewing, and knowing what to do about it, and when it only seemed to us to be brewing but really all was well and there was no cause for panic. That I have lived this long since the transplant is in very large measure due to her.

But it was not until 19 October 2020 that I was finally declared free of bipolar disorder, which had “burnt itself out”, by a specialist old age psychiatrist called Dr Ahsan, having been progressively taken off flupentixol over a period of six months, some eighteen years after I believe my healing was complete, thereby illustrating what for me is a truism: *everything comes to him who waits*. This did not simply deliver me from noxious side-effects. It meant that I was finally, from a medical point of view, a free man. I was in a position to be held responsible for my curious and often crazy-seeming notions, which could no longer be dismissed as manic ‘wild ideas’. It was, for perhaps the first time in my life, officially OK to be a *Thinker* – what God had spent 70 years turning me into. And so I escaped from another cage.

RESOLUTION

There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.
(St Luke 12:3 NIV)

I have now reached the end of my story. But some of the deeper enquirers will I hope be asking themselves, How is it that three perfectly decent individuals, each with plenty to be said for them by those who knew them well, should manage to entangle themselves in messes that proved in the end to be quite impossible to unravel? After all, misunderstandings between generations are two a penny. Marital breakdowns happen every day. Yet everywhere else, among other reasonable people, they frequently succumb to the attrition of time. Attitudes do soften as well as harden. Misunderstandings can be cleared up. Rapprochement is possible. Marriages do heal. Fathers and sons can come together and support each other again. Why did the Mosses prove such an obstinate exception?

Einstein held that

'The grand aim of science [is] to cover the greatest number of empirical facts by logical deduction from *the smallest possible number of hypotheses or axioms*.'⁶⁹

Accordingly, I offer therefore a single cause that explains all these mysteries: Occultism. In the back streets of Aldershot when I was growing up there used to live a practising medium called Mrs R– to whose healing seances from time to time my family went when we were boys; not all together, but certainly my parents went, separately,⁷⁰ my mother taking me and I think (though am not certain) Peter also, initially. The ‘control’ spirit, depicted on the wall, was a Native American called B–. On the altar there was a cross, which seems to me today to have been the worst form of deceit, apparently intended to calm to consciences of those innocent souls whose religious understanding did not run very deep. I know that spiritualism is often popularly depicted as mere quackery, but this was not quackery. People really did get healed. I believe that my mother’s bad back, from which she had suffered for as long as I can remember, received genuine benefit. On the other hand, I was ‘treated’ for my hay fever and perhaps other ailments, but do not recall any significant improvement although I did lose a wart on the little finger of my right hand. But she and I never went to any of her other sessions, where contact was supposedly made with dead loved ones or things like that. And no one

⁶⁹ Albert Einstein, quoted in Lincoln Barnett (1950 ed.), *The Universe and Dr Einstein*. This principle is famously known in a different guise to researchers in all manner of disciplines as Occam’s Razor.

⁷⁰ My father could only go on Saturdays, when he was at home.

in church ever warned us of any inherent dangers. Indeed, as is well known, in some middle-class circles such things had been quietly acceptable for centuries.

Then when I went up to Oxford and joined OICCU, I began to discover for the first time that all such matters were absolutely forbidden in the Bible with an unqualified anathema. I therefore renounced any such kind of connection myself and, on coming home, probably on my second vacation, explained my disquiet to my mother. As always, she was open to my thoughts and approaches to life. So together we sat down with a Prayer Book and a Bible, and I took her verse by verse through all the relevant passages I could dig up.⁷¹ I then gave her to read a book called *I Talked With Spirits*, by V. H. Ernest, an ex-medium who explained horrifyingly from personal experience the full dangers of occult involvement of any kind. And not only was my mother convinced, but she also left a copy of the book lying around the house for my father to read (though he didn't) and dropped one through the medium's letterbox.

And then, if you will pardon the expression, *all hell was let loose*. My father was absolutely furious. "WHAT'S WRONG WITH MRS R-?", he demanded to know, so that I scarcely knew how to reply. After all, Jesus went about healing, didn't He? So what could be wrong with healing? I was already in trouble for my new-found evangelicalism, and now this! In vain did I plead that it rather mattered whom you got your healing from. But he would have none of it. And so another topic was created on which any form of discussion or communication was completely taboo. My father perceived himself to be under threat, had no reasoned argument to make in support of his position, and so again the barricades went up between himself and me, and between himself and my mother. And stayed up.

After my mother died, he once let slip in conversation in the car that he was still attending seances – not with Mrs R- herself, apparently, because he identified the 'control' spirit as "son of B-". I imagined Mrs R- to be dead. I said nothing.

Among the artefacts belonging to the Captain (JRM of Copenhagen, above) was his beautiful old chest, with its fine ornate brass hinges. After my father died, and before his effects were transferred to Peter's farm cottage Lower Peake, I opened it, saw inside for the first time, and was horrified. There were records, clearly of one or more seances, where someone had been consulting a spirit 'control', depicted as a Native American (though not the one I recognised from the walls of Mrs R-'s sitting room) about a dead person who was apparently my Granny Mosse. And this mystified me totally. For I instantly assumed that these records were inherited, which made no sense whatever. Grandfather, a saint of ever there was one, would have been the last person on earth to go to seances and consult mediums about his departed wife! Could it have come from an earlier generation? But if so, why would Grandfather have kept such things? It simply did not add up. So I shelved the question at the back of my mind and let it go.

What I think must be the truth did not dawn on me until a few weeks ago. I had missed, totally discounted, the perfectly obvious and most simple solution. Those items were records of enquiries made by my father himself about his own mother! – to whose memory he had always been devoted, being punctilious about putting flowers on "Ma's grave" on her anniversaries. Not only had he attended healing sessions at Mrs R-; he had evidently also attended deeper sessions with her or her successor at which questions were asked and answered about the departed. He really had been bitten with this occult thing. And it had eaten into him, right into him, to an extent nobody ever guessed – not friends, naval colleagues, doctors or family. Such is the way. Quite a respectable

⁷¹ Such as Leviticus 19:31, 20:6,27; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 2 Kings 21:6, 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19.

matter, you will understand. Nothing fanatical, like “that religion of yours”, as he once referred to my new-found evangelical faith. No wonder he was so excessively hostile when I had raised the matter, quite beyond normal rationality. No wonder his disagreements with other members of his family had proved so intractable. No wonder, even, when close to death, his old irrational fears about me were still around there, ready to surface and immune to the pleas of even his saintly sister. His occultism explains why at the end of his life he was displaying a character quite unlike his true self. It was not the real John Mosse who effectively rejected his own daughter-in-law, and she did not hold it against him.

I don't know when my father first started attending seances. I can't believe for a moment that he was at it during the war. So surely some time after his mother died in 1958, I would guess within 1 to 5 years later. It was the early 1960s, while I was still at Parkfield, that we were first taken by my mother, so probably around then.

What a topsy-turvy world we lived in! When I succumbed to my faulty heredity (on both sides of my father's line) and ended up in The Priory, it was I who they were given to understand suffered from 'wild ideas'. And all the time he had been attending séances as though it were a perfectly rational, normal activity, with no sinister overtones or harmful side effects, indeed an entirely personal matter not even worth mentioning.

And the remarkable thing is this. My father had been duly attending the Church of England all his life – not every Sunday, it is true – a Church which explicitly affirms its belief in both Testaments of the Bible (eg “The Old Testament is not contrary to the New....”, Article VII, BCP) and yet nobody had ever taught him the difference between good and evil.

News of my father's occult involvement has so far produced one consistent response: amazement, even among family members who knew him well. John Mosse was the last person anyone would ever have suspected of having been a 'dabbler'. He was far too down to earth. He had far too much good sense. His war record spoke for itself. That his relationships with both his wife and his younger son had both collapsed within months of each other had prompted no one to ask any deeper questions about what might be going on in our family. What a thoroughly odd lot they must have all thought us! The easy answers were always the most convenient, not requiring the lifting of too many stones. And so when my mother died, far from at peace with herself, scarcely anyone suspected that her marriage problems had any source other than within.

Whether those séance records still exist, the evidence which explains what had really gone wrong in our home, which I firmly believe to have been the reason why our problems proved intractable to the last, I have never troubled to enquire. If they do, we need look no further. But for the good of both my father and my family, I hope very much that they have by now been destroyed. Unless death really is total annihilation – and the whole presupposition of spiritualism is that it is not – then by now he will quite probably be deeply embarrassed by those records, and the kindest thing we can do for him is to destroy them utterly. He needs to be allowed to move on. At the very least, this may help us to imagine him without his occultism. And so we shall all finally escape from our Cage.

GRACE

I had always wanted to complete this Part by overturning the somewhat gloomy end to the previous section with an account of what I imagine the actual ending to be, in God's Time and in God's Place. I could not do so if I still adhered to the original evangelicalism which caused my father so much grief. According to this chilling doctrine, if you are on the wrong side of God when you die, that's it. You've had it. Missed the last bus. But I can now. For the truth is

“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,
his mercies *never* come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is thy faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22-3 RSV)

There follows an excerpt from letter I wrote to Robert on 12 September 2021, weeks after writing most of the previous section:

Having on 15 August reached the conclusions which I did [in the section Resolution above], and feeling somewhat out of my depth, on 7 September I wrote to ... my Prayer Partner of Last Resort ... asking him to put these disturbing matters before God. Usually I count on a delay of about a fortnight before seeing results in such cases. This time it was rather quicker.

Last night, 11 September, I ... had a most remarkable dream. In it, my father and I met up in our respective cars in the car park of a rather run-down old motorway-type service station. He was absolutely beaming. We greeted each other with a closeness I had never experienced in adult life, exchanged news and lighthearted chat of a kind any father might exchange with a son in young healthy adulthood, including a joke about girlfriends, where the point was that it was in the *plural!* (... For me, this degree of closeness and mutual understanding was quite unprecedented.) Then, as it happened, my car was stolen, and he stood round in support as I vainly tried to get through to the police on 999. End of Dream.

So I woke up in absolute delight as its meaning simply forced itself on me straight away, repeating over and over again to myself in bed, “I have got my father back! I have got my father back! I have got my father back!” I suspect you will recognise such an experience. You just *know* something has happened.

Beyond any doubt in my mind [my friend’s] prayers had been answered, and in record time. The hold which my father’s séance records had had over our family for so many decades, which had ruined and blighted our lives for so long, with no one anywhere having a clue what had gone wrong, had finally been broken! My father himself had been set free from their consequences and those of his occult attendances generally, and God’s further healing of our family, which He loves so much, was now back on track and well under way. I could even imagine my parents recovering their past love for each other and being happy with each other again.

I could even dare hope that this fresh outpouring of His love might have reverberations elsewhere in the family around the world.

And we can all start being once more what Mosses were always intended to be.

As to those séance records ... it’ll get sorted, sooner or later. Either way, however, I believe they have now lost their power and it is only a matter of time.

And in this ending, all of us in my family will end up happily addressing each other in terms to which the present tense of *amo* would not be inappropriate.⁷²

I have subsequently printed off a wartime photo of my father at his Brylcreemed best and stuck it against my dressing table mirror, alongside one of my mother which was already there. He smiles

⁷² As, “*Ego amo te.*” “*Sane; et ego amo te, quoque!*”

down at me as I do my (very feeble) morning exercises. Every now and then I look up at him and we wink at each other, and have a good laugh before I go to bed. This never happened before!

PART I ANNEX A

On 28 January 2021 I had a minor stroke on my right side.

At the end of February 2021 I wrote BRAINWAVES Report BW/030 'Consequences of the Reformation', discussed in Part III below, supplying for the first time an answer that satisfied me to a question I had first asked in my teens. Beginning to distribute this felt like a personal *Nunc Dimittis*.

Then on 4 March I had an angina attack at 4 am, upon which I was admitted to Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth. Whilst there I was found to have a 5.5 cm tumour growing on my left non-functioning kidney, deemed almost certainly cancerous.

On 12 March I was allowed home. There followed a delay of a week until a Multi-Disciplinary Team met to discuss a problem that had defeated some of the world's greatest intellects for all of seventy years: what on earth to do about me? Happily they reached the decision Barbara and I had already made our choice. Since I was in no pain, my body was already a no-go area for surgeons, and standard chemo- and radio-therapies etc were likely to do more harm than good, I was to be allowed to live at home with Barbara and Rufus for the rest of my days. No further scans were to be taken, since no result was likely to alter the decision not to intervene; and hence there would be no indication how fast, if at all, the tumour was growing. As a result no timescales were offered and none available today.

So I have been afforded several glorious months – five to date – in which to put my house in order, say any necessary farewells to friends and family, and write this document. It was already approaching ten pages long when I resumed it after returning home. It remains to be seen how close to completion I can bring it. Logically speaking, can anyone ever quite complete his own autobiography?

Otherwise, most of that time has been spent resting in bed, my default, or alternating on my wheelie frame ("the chariot") between the bedroom, bathroom, study, 'quiet room' (containing the laptops on which I write this, communicate by email, and order any necessities such as a replacement for our 20-year old garden strimmer reported defunct last week by Jim our indefatigably loyal gardener) and, decreasingly, as mobility declines, the dining and sitting rooms, mostly for the purpose of watching Diana Gabaldon's brilliant *Outlander* DVD series on TV at weekends. Nowadays Barbara brings me all my meals in bed, besides running the entire house and managing Rufus' twice daily walks. Anyone wishing to get some idea of what it entails to be such a carer would do well to read my cousin Kate's extraordinary and most moving family record, *An Extra Pair of Hands*, which came out this year.

Since visitors have become legal, I have also enjoyed 'holding court', lying in state in bed and enjoying the visits of kind friends ("Have you come far?") and relatives at a rate of about one a week, so as to prevent Barbara from feeling she is just a conveyor belt for providing refreshments for visitors, and allow her space to develop her own interests such as practising the recorder, learning to write poetry, and researching the ever-changing North Lancashire coastline for a proposed historical novel.

But I am a free man, or should I say, Free Thinker?

GLORY BE TO GOD!

PART II: POLITICS

Whilst in Great Ormond Street Hospital in Summer 1958, I was invited to join the local Wolf Cub pack. And so, on the appointed day, both my parents came up to witness me make my formal promises “to do my duty to God and The Queen” – promises which, when not prohibited by the absence of *mens sana in corpore sano*, I have sought to uphold all my life.

This is the principal reason why I always felt bound to oppose any diminution of Her Majesty’s authority by transfer of national sovereignty to the European Empire, by whatever name it went, which I considered a total affront to Her Majesty and all that she stood for. For me, matters of politics, economics, trade, immigration, race and other topics of intellectual debate had almost nothing to do with it. (Beyond that, I saw such a transfer as a betrayal of all the historic freedoms for which my ancestors had fought, offered and, when necessary, given their lives in war after war.)

Her Majesty has an unerring gift for making people happy. When things are done as she would like, things run smoothly. People are happiest. The Commonwealth, that most wonderful of organisations which in so many areas serves as a beacon and, like Her Majesty, a blessing for the rest of the world, is very largely her own creation and a case in point. There is a queue of countries waiting to join. We hate and despise our elected politicians, but will turn out in our thousands in the pouring rain to celebrate her birthdays and jubilees. In her extraordinarily long reign, one can count the number of missteps she has made on the fingers of one hand, if that.

I think it must have been something of this kind that (ex-)President Barack Obama must have had in mind when he described her as “Queen of the World.” Would that she were! How much happier a place would our world be. So each further step towards diminishing her authority and surrendering overseas such powers as still remain to her strike me as total folly. Her job is to make us happy. That is the God-given role of the monarchy, and you will find few, if any, anywhere in the world, so well equipped for the task. When you have a Head of State so extraordinarily gifted in this area, to seek to have less of her rule rather than more is an aspiration that defeats me totally.

‘Twas ever thus. Her Majesty’s parents demonstrated the same gift for maintaining the happiness of the peoples of Britain and the Empire during WW2. Barbara experienced it herself when she had tea with the Queen Mother during her (Barbara’s!) Church Army days, and was as impressed by the research she had done into the backgrounds of those who joined her as by her humour and lightness of touch.

Grandfather, aged almost 94, in his 1972 interview by Uncle Dick referred to above, spoke of her predecessors like this:

“HTM: Queen Victoria was elderly and one very, very rarely saw her, but King Edward [VII] – I saw him in London once when I happened to be there – he passed in a carriage with a policeman in front of him on horseback and he went about and you read about what he was doing. He used to go to Europe and do things and keep us alive and keep everybody in the countries happy.”⁷³

When I was at New College, I was given by a fellow Christian Union member a pamphlet called *A Warning to the Nation* by one David E. Gardner. In retrospect, its very alarmist tone has in my judgement largely withstood the test of time. Its quotations are not always word perfect, but nevertheless I am still impressed by the following statement attributed to King Alfred the Great:

⁷³ *Grandfather*, p.9.

“There is only one way in which to found any kingdom, and that is on the sure and certain foundation of faith in Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ crucified. And it is on *that foundation* that I am determined to build my kingdom.” (p.15, emphasis original.)

I have not managed to verify this quotation, but I can easily believe it. Its ethos certainly survives today.

I have this mental image of a conversation in heaven around 1942 running something like this:

“How are We going to thank the people of Britain for standing all but alone for so long against those who would have destroyed Our Beloved People, the Jews? I know: when the war is over, We will give them Elizabeth to be their Queen, long to reign over them.”

And so it came to pass.

I never heard one argument which suggested that joining or remaining in the EU would be beneficial to Her Majesty. But I did hear several which implied that she really did not matter. It is not a line of reasoning that I am able to comprehend.

Nevertheless, such a transfer happened on 1 January 1973, a few days before my suicide attempt.

The business of extracting us from the European Empire became – apart from the Cold War – the only political cause to which I have ever completely devoted my energies. So in 1996-7 Barbara and I gave our full support to Sir James Goldsmith’s Referendum Party, which sought to obtain a national referendum on whether the UK should stay in or leave the EU, promising to disband once Parliament had taken a vote on the matter. I became the local team’s expert on the Treaty of Maastricht, which had formally established the EU with ‘legal personality’, acting in support of our candidate the lawyer Tony Green. At that time, the very possibility of recovering full self-government under the Crown, such as my ancestors had enjoyed, appeared nowhere most people’s remotest horizon, and we secured not one seat in Parliament.

Peter, a moving force in his local Conservative Association, objected, “You are taking away our votes.” I pondered on that one.

But Sir James, after giving £20 million of his own money to his cause, died three months later of cancer, of which we, his “Rabble Army”, who with our calypso-like anthem, “Let the People Decide”, attended his historic party rally at the Alexandra Palace on 13 April 1997, had been totally unaware. He left one signal achievement to his credit. He forced both main party leaders, Sir John Major and Tony Blair, to promise not to take Britain into the euro without a referendum.

We had been ahead of our time. The referendum for which we had campaigned finally took place nineteen years later, on 23 June 2016 – another example of the power of waiting – and we won by the slender margin of 4%. In the meantime, by any means available to me, I had been pressing the case for leaving the EU and staying out of the euro to all who would listen, and quite a few who would not. Dr Kelly might well have thought his caveat fully justified.

The next day I received an email from Robert in Australia, who with Merle had been fully supportive of my efforts throughout:

“Have been following the unfolding events live on Tunnel Bear. Mirabile dictu. At last power will rest in the hands of the people and not the unelected bureaucratic poseurs.

This is akin to ‘the finest hour’. Well done!”

I replied with an email entitled "TOAD'S - GREAT - DAY!", making reference to the end of *The Wind in the Willows* with E. H. Shepard's magnificent picture of that worthy amphibian looking for all the world like Nigel Farage without the beer mug:

*Shout - Hooray!
And let each one of the crowd try and shout it very loud,
In honour of an animal of whom you're justly proud,
For it's Toad's - great - day!*

For, like him or loathe him (my own opinion tended to alter with the weather and the time of day), history will surely record that the result of that referendum was in very large measure to the political skills, efforts and antics of Nigel Farage. (My personal preference in this respect was for Daniel Hannan, MEP, no friend of Farage and a man of very contrasting temperament, who had done masses to found support for Brexit within the Conservative Party from earliest days, and whose book *How We Invented Freedom and Why it Matters* expresses what it means for me to be English better than anything else I can recall reading.) Regardless of subsequent events, this was Farage's great day.

After a long period of Parliamentary turmoil, the UK duly left the EU on 31 December 2020, just over two months since I had been declared free of bipolar disorder. As far as I was concerned, the job was done. I had kept my childhood promise to Her Majesty. I was free of the next cage, and could now stand down.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN⁷⁴

⁷⁴ This was the title of an excellent book on "The Spiritual Dimension of Monarchy" by the academic and theologian Ian Bradley, a New College predecessor of mine who in 1998/9 had been Barbara's external examiner for her MA dissertation at Lampeter 'Between Two Worlds', on the iconography of the Celtic / Viking high crosses on the Isle of Man, who with his wife Lucy remains a personal friend.

PART II ANNEX A

This Annex was prompted by the statement from a good friend of mine that

“The whole point of the European Union was to win the peace!”

with which I found myself in partial agreement, having once deciphered the phrase about “winning the peace,” which one heard quite often on the lips of cabinet ministers and other prominent figures at the time of the 2016 referendum, but which was usually left untranslated. But I never followed the massive jump to the deduction that we therefore should remain as members of the EU. For this I never heard anyone provide any kind of rigorous support indicating they had given it any serious analysis.

Since this argument is commonly expressed in terms of sovereignty, perhaps we had better begin by defining the term. You can have an excellent debate about whether retention of sovereignty is a good or bad thing, but if you can’t define what you mean by it, you can’t have a debate at all!

I would define it as “the right of a nation to make and unmake its own laws.” This country possessed this right for most of history down to 1973, and, since the start of this year, possesses it today. In the interval, to a large extent, we had lost it. Contrast membership of NATO, or the Commonwealth, neither of which affects our ability to make or unmake our laws. It is in no way synonymous with the *shared obligations* which accompany membership of either of those two organisations; or for that matter a marriage! This definition would have avoided a lot of wasted ink. It also explains why I think phrases like “pooled / shared sovereignty”, which someone introduced into the debate at the time, strike me as contradictions in terms, rather like “biblical” and “unbiblical denominations”: the concept of a denomination itself is unbiblical!

“Peace in Europe.” What a charming, romantic concept! Song contests, cultural exchanges, football matches, sports events and a new opera house in every capital! Who could possibly be against it? Only those old-fashioned, warmongering, inward-looking, parochial, xenophobic, hate-ridden, outdated old Brexiteers without a brain above their bellies! Solidarity! It’s obviously a good idea. Let’s all vote to Remain!

It’s a bit like the slogan “Black Lives Matter.” What sane individual could possibly disagree? Obviously, all lives matter! But beware people who use slogans so bland that no one could disagree with as a cover for programmes that are in fact highly controversial!⁷⁵ What questions are they not asking?

“For far too long ... the European continent had been torn by strife and war,”

wrote my friend. But wars do not just happen, any more than “sources” write books of the Bible. *People* (i.e. countries) start them. But we are not often told *who*. Perhaps it would help us to tackle the problem if we raised the question. So, who in postwar Europe was likely to start the war the EU’s predecessors devised it expressly to prevent? Whom were they afraid of?

I have another very close, intelligent Christian friend who answered to this question, “Russia”. Wrong! The threat from Russia led to the formation of *NATO*, that brave organisation which for decades faced down the Soviet threat, winning the Cold War by the grace of God without one nuclear bomb being dropped and seeing the Russian Empire collapse in 1988-9, just when Barbara and I were getting married (to the amazement of well-intentioned liberals and noble peaceniks

⁷⁵ Cf. Lord Beloff’s words, “The first thing is to state objectives so self-evidently desirable that hardly anyone could be found to repudiate them.” (*Britain and European Union*, p.9).

everywhere who told us throughout that the policy of nuclear deterrence was grossly immoral in the extreme and could only end in the total destruction of the planet; I refer here to the Cold War, not our wedding). It wasn't the Russians.

No, what really worried the Europeans was **Germany's long term inability to live with its neighbours**. Spell it out! In the previous century, Germany had developed an unfortunate habit of invading the rest of Europe, and in particular France, roughly once per generation, starting in 1870. That is what the rest of Europe desperately wanted to prevent. It's not politically correct to admit it today, but **Germany was the problem that the Europeans realised they had to deal with**, in the very long term.

So two canny Frenchmen called Schuman and Monnet put their heads together and worked out what to do about it. What commodities, they reasoned, does any potential belligerent most need in the modern world? Answer: coal and steel. So they worked out that if they could make control of these two items the subject to a *group* of countries, they could never all fall under the dominance of Germany on its own. This would prevent Germany from launching another war on the rest of them in the future. And so in 1951 the European Coal and Steel Community was established by the Treaty of Paris between Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. "The ECSC was an international organisation based on the principle of internationalism and started a process of integration which ultimately led to the creation of the EU" (Wikipedia. It's official. It must be true!) Pretty canny, that!

Does it then follow that this process of maintaining a free Europe will be best served by British membership? It is certainly not obvious. And I have my doubts. Consider. Dictators with zero conscience and no limits to their ruthlessness are a fact of history. They have happened and they will go on happening, as Mosses are only too aware:

My great-great-great-great grandfather Captain James Robert Mosse RN (1745-1801), fought Napoleon as captain of HMS *Monarch*, losing his life at the Battle of Copenhagen, and was commemorated at public expense in the 'Two Captains' Monument in St Paul's Cathedral.

My grandfather, Captain HT Mosse RN, fought the Kaiser as captain of HMS *King Orry*.

My father, Commander JP Mosse DSC RN, fought Hitler as captain of HMS *Mermaid*.

My brother, Commander PJ Mosse RN, fought Galtieri as captain of HMS *Ambuscade*.

We don't like dictators in our family! But we are always ready for them.

Germany has had her fair share of them. So has Russia, even today. It is naïve to pretend they will never happen again. Sooner or later, there is a genuine possibility that another one will arise in Germany yet again (which is why Mrs Thatcher was bitterly opposed to German reunification). And such a man will not be deterred by 1000 regulations made in Brussels telling him he really must stick to the rules, keep to his quota of raw materials and please, don't invade France! In such a day, France and Co are going to need more than *politesse*, nice wine and wishful thinking to keep them safe. If he wants to invade, he will invade. Putin with his concept of asymmetric warfare⁷⁶ would find a way of doing it at the drop of a hat, were he so inclined (cf. Ukraine). Time after time he outmanoeuvres the West. Mercifully he isn't. But somebody else might. And if Britain were already under the thumb of the Brussels bureaucracy, having already lost both the will and the ability to determine her own future, and undefended by her historic Royal Navy, she would be horribly

⁷⁶ See my BRAINWAVES Report BW/025 'The Technology of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow'.

vulnerable too. Who would maintain the peace then? Certainly not the Americans, in their present or any previous mood.

Suppose the EU project did fail, a new German dictator invaded, and the EU collapsed, as well it probably will (see below). What then? I submit that the lesson of the twentieth century, if not before, is that *a free Europe needs a strong independent Britain as the guarantor of its freedom*. And it is only through a strong Royal Navy that such a guarantee can be maintained.

Why otherwise would I expect the EU to collapse in the face of a major threat? Once upon a time, every single country in Europe was characterised by a strong Christian faith (cf “Christendom”). There’s still quite a lot of it about, France being the only state I know which is legally secular. But the founders of the EU, though Catholics (who therefore still get the fullest support from *The Tablet*, despite all) expressly created their new organisation to be totally secular. All their laws and institutions were deliberately designed so as to exclude any mention of the God whom their peoples had once so loved, and who had given them the glories of European culture. This sheer ingratitude seems to me to be an infallible recipe for disaster. The God Who Is Love is the most cohesive force in the universe. It is He who holds things together, who forms the bonds between people and between nations. To try and design a cohesive organisation while deliberately excluding Him is rather like trying to design a new planet, Star Wars-fashion, while deliberately rejecting the natural, omnipresent pre-existing force of gravity! I cannot think of any strategy more certainly doomed to ultimate failure!

Even at grass roots level, the peoples of Europe are aware of the fragility of the organisation in which they have put their trust. I have on my study wall a *Times* article dated 17 March 2019 headed “Most on Continent think EU will collapse by 2040,” which reads,

“Most Europeans believe that collapse over the next two decades, raising the spectre of new conflicts and war on the continent, according to a report by a think tank in Berlin.... Younger voters, aged 18 to 34, are particularly worried about the potential for conflict to break out between EU countries.”

Well, of course they are. Given that their Empire has quite deliberately rejected the love of God, which alone can overcome the sinfulness of mortal men, what other prospect can they possibly expect? Isn’t it perfectly obvious? It almost happened at the start of 2021 in the squabbles that broke out over the shortage of Covid vaccines. Isn’t idealism a wonderful thing? But plain common sense often works an awful lot better!

“Collaborating to prevent further strife is an entirely worthy and honourable aim,”

we are told. Indeed. But if you have good reason to believe it isn’t going to work anyway, it’s not a lot of use! Can anyone suggest a precedent? Worthiness, honour and good intentions are no substitute for sitting down and using our God-given brains. Consideration of history, and God’s purposes in shaping it, would be an excellent start.

Let us look at it from our side of the Channel. Some 10,000 years ago, the melting waters from the last ice age washed away the land bridge between Britain and the Continent, creating what Shakespeare called

This fortress built by nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war ...,

This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands.

In consequence, Britain has always needed a strong Navy, to which historically we have looked for our national identity, our trade and prosperity, our interface with the rest of the world, and our security;⁷⁷ and, it seems to me, God has taken great pains down history to give us the Navy we have so needed.

Together with our faith in Christ and our Christian monarchy, the Navy has formed one of three great mutually interlocking pillars which for centuries have sustained British life, necessitated by the fact that God has created us to be an island. The first two came in with the Celts at the time of Patrick and Columba, who set great store by establishing Christian monarchs like Oswald to replace tribal chiefs and paganism.⁷⁸ Hence came the tradition of Alfred and subsequent monarchs, who made the faith their central platform and the Navy their primary strength. Even our national anthem is not a glorification of the country (“O Canada!”, “Advance, Australia fair!”, “My country, ‘tis of thee”) but a prayer to God for the preservation of the monarch. And even today, remarkably, each daily session of Parliament begins with a round of Christian prayer. Is it really it is a good idea to subject a country, whose roots were so deliberately founded in God and stood for centuries, to the rule of an organisation which has deliberately rejected Him and lasted a mere 76 years? Timescales! How could such a policy conceivably benefit anyone? In the immortal words of the great John McEnroe, “You cannot be serious!”

Functionally, what we did was to replace our God-given Navy by the EU. All those benefits listed above that by God’s grace we used to obtain from the Navy, we then decided to get from the EU instead. And today we have the most piffling Navy we have ever had in history, so that we cannot even repel the small flotilla of refugees which the government in its wisdom has decided not to admit to these islands, still less the Armada of Philip II or the navies of Napoleon, the Kaiser or Hitler. But *it is a strong navy above all else that we will need* if we are to be of any use in the future of maintaining the freedom of Europe which matters a very great deal to us all.

In the same way, even in our time, a greatly diminished Royal Navy served to guarantee the freedom of the Falkland Islanders. But there is a difference. The Falklanders were our kith and kin, Britishers wanting to remain British. In any European war this would not be the case. In WW1 and WW2, we went to war on account of our obligations to defend our friends and allies who were not kith and kin, often with very different traditions. But as a Briton, and indeed as an Englishman, I would always support such action, and hope very much that my fellow-countrymen would do the same. Like David Fanshawe, *I love the world*. Which includes Europe. But I don’t like dictators.

And the one person (other than Enoch Powell), who saw in advance more clearly than anyone else in the world that it was all bound to end in tears was the redoubtable Général de Gaulle. He, and almost he, alone, realised that it could not work. So he said “Non!” and very wisely kept on saying “Non!” until he had made his point. And as it turned out, he was right. It didn’t work out. The Brits never became Europeans at heart, as he knew full well they would not. There is after all in existence

⁷⁷ See Dartnell, *Origins*, pp.57-59. Conversely, this is why Britain has never needed a large standing army. Contrast Europe, with its land links to the East, whence come both trade and invaders, has historically had a considerable need of them, and far less need of permanent strong navies. It’s like Athens and Sparta: history determined by pre-existing geography!

⁷⁸ Ian Bradley, *Following the Celtic Way*, p.77.

(largely thanks to God's dedicated servant HM The Queen) a perfectly good home in the world to which we already do fit very comfortably, the universally admired and entirely English-speaking Commonwealth, with which we already share ties not only of language, but history, kinship, law, trade and so forth, and whose predecessors shed quite a lot of blood in order to bring about the peace we all cherish, and in which we have the luxury of enjoying debates like these! And these we abandoned at the behest of Edward Heath, given his promise that membership of the EEC would involve no loss of national sovereignty, which as has now been shown he already knew to be false. (They were rather upset at the time by this betrayal, as they saw it, but I am told by well-informed friends they have now largely forgotten.)

Why reject so many wonderful gifts which God has bestowed on us over the centuries? Is there a greater folly? Can we not simply trust that He really did know what He was doing all along when blessing us so richly, instead of "going down to Egypt" like the Israelites of Jeremiah's day? He usually knows best!

PART III: THE QUEST

I raised what must have been my first theological question when I was about five. I asked my mother whether I had become “better” when I was christened. Sensing that I needed some kind of positive answer, she duly gave one, although my recollection is that she didn’t sound too convinced. I suspect that at that particular time neither of us had too firm a grasp of the doctrine of original sin.

Somewhere near the end of my time at Sherborne, I began wondering how well my infant faith would stand up to intelligent examination, and found myself pretty shaken by a very critical paperback I found in the Upper Library, which shed all manner of doubts on the gospel accounts of Jesus’ last days. These were in part dispelled by *The Day Christ Died*, by Jim Bishop, which I found in my own house library. Later on, lightweight apologetical IVF books such as F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents*, which found and devoured from the bookstalls of OICCU, gave me additional confidence.

The end product of this particular search was my PhD thesis, *The Three Gospels*, completed in 2005 as described above and published in 2007. This opened to me a new world, leading to an invitation by the Canadian scholar Ben Wiebe (R.I.P.) to write the opening chapter ‘On Doing New Testament History’ to his compendium *Jesus and Christian Origins* in 2019. This book, the product of six different contributors apart from Wiebe himself, provided a snapshot of New Testament scholarship at a time when the German-led scepticism, which had dominated the previous century, was being replaced by a more thoughtful approach fronted by Richard Bauckham,⁷⁹ in which far greater prominence was given to the historical individuals involved as the justification for narrative trustworthiness. By then my teenage doubts had long been dispelled.

But it wasn’t just the historicity of the Gospels that I wondered about in my schooldays. It seemed to me a real weakness of Christianity that, two thousand years after Jesus walked the earth, He still had not returned as He had promised. This did not seem to worry most of the churches I had attended, and I managed to put it to the back of my mind, where for ages it occupied what I came to call my “pending tray”.

Other problems continued to trouble me. How could I possibly accept the identification “Christian ≡ evangelical” which seemed to pervade the OICCU and other circles in which I moved at the time, given the number of deep, spiritually rich Christians I knew from other traditions, as well as the mystical writers who, at least until I discovered de Caussade (quoted above), seemed way beyond my comprehension? Could I really continue in an arrogance which dismissed them all as “unsound”, “woolly” and “unbiblical”, when their knowledge of God seemed so much deeper than my own?

In my Oxford days, in the first flush of mania of 1972, I had tried solutions such as rejecting St Paul as being, in reality, a perverter of the Christian faith, sneaked in by the devil to deceive us all. That didn’t last long. I sought support from my former Greek history tutor, Geoffrey de Ste. Croix, an atheist who had shown me enormous kindness and for whom I had developed a considerable affection as a result. He detested Paul, but even he could not buy the idea of Paul as a Christian renegade who deceived the entire body of Church Fathers, about whom he knew quite a lot.⁸⁰

On joining Operation Mobilisation in 1970 and 1971 I had been asked to give my assent to the belief in “the eternal separation from God of all those who die without Christ.” On those occasions I signed up, but with no great enthusiasm. It was pretty standard fare among the circles within which I

⁷⁹ See especially Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Eerdmans, 2006).

⁸⁰ His lectures on the Persecutions of the Early Church were popularly summed up as, “Too little, and too late”!

moved at the time. You took it for granted. It did not occur to me then to probe the biblical basis for it, which I later happily concluded to be absolutely nil.

But by 1973 I had moved on, and could no longer sign this clause. So in spite of all I had learned from OM, and my enormous personal admiration for George Verwer himself, who remains a greatly respected friend and one of the three greatest men I have ever met, I have not returned to OM since, even though for a long time I continued to identify myself as an evangelical, and to benefit from what is surely the greatest contribution which evangelicals have offered to the wider Christian world: the regular discipline of the "quiet time", of Bible study and prayer, at least once in the day.

(Here is perhaps the place to record the most massive benefit which I received from OM, which I associate particularly with George Verwer, namely my introduction to the writings of A.W. Tozer, who together with the Chinese pastor, Watchman Nee, was one of the few great mystics to have emerged from within the evangelical church. Tozer's short piece, 'Men', which I discovered on OM, probably in 1971, has provided me with a beacon to live by and a standard of Christian practice to which I have aspired ever since. For this above all I am eternally grateful to George and his amazing teams of trainee servants of Christ whose humbling example of Christian love and dedication have taught me so much.)

My unresolved problems with evangelicalism and Protestantism generally grew, especially when I first learned of the extreme antisemitism of its founder. Nowhere have I seen this more forcibly expressed than in the following quotation by Gilbert Martin which I found in a book by my friend Walter Moberly, now a professor of Old Testament theology at Durham University, who records:

"It is impossible to measure the malign influence of Luther's intemperate polemic against his rivals, which became worse in his declining years (when he was racked by illnesses which would not have contributed towards equanimity). But Luther's 1543 pamphlet *Of the Jews and their Lies*, contains material which, in the light of the twentieth-century fate of Jews in Germany, makes the blood run cold (however much other factors also contributed to Nazi anti-Semitism):

'First, their synagogues or churches should be set on fire, and whatever does not burn up should be covered or spread over with dirt so that no one may ever be able to see a cinder or stone of it. And this ought to be done for the honour of God and of Christianity...Secondly, their homes should likewise be broken down and destroyed. For they perpetrate the same things there that they do in their synagogues. For this reason they ought to be put under one roof or in a stable, like gypsies...'",

(cited in Gilbert, Martin, *Exile and Return: The Emergence of Jewish Statehood* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1978), p.20.)⁸¹

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, being as a Jew somewhat more personally affected by the issue, saw no reason to mitigate the effects of this same pamphlet:

"The pamphlet was reprinted several times during the Nazi era, and its suggestions paralleled by the Nuremburg Laws. Luther's outburst ensured that hostility to the Jews

⁸¹ Moberly, *The Bible, Theology and Faith*, p.147 n.14.

would persist after the Reformation, and it left a lasting impression in countries where Lutheranism held sway.”⁸²

Very few Protestants are aware of this ghastly perversion in the historical founder of their branch of the Christian faith. But when one does appreciate it, one is forced to make a decision about the integrity of continuing to follow in the tradition of one whose views ultimately resulted in the Holocaust – of whose Nazi perpetrators my gloriously theology-free father gave the best years of his life in order to rid the world. Some find themselves able to shrug it off. After all, was not the Reformation five whole centuries ago? And anyway, Luther’s name appears nowhere in our prayer books. It is only his teachings that we follow. And so we align ourselves with Gentiles throughout history who have simply preferred to look away from the antisemitism which has been taking place all around them: “Nothing to do with me, guv – not my problem. Just an unfortunate coincidence. And anyway he was probably quite a nice chap apart from that. Nothing dangerous about Protestantism today (especially the Church of England!). And look at all the missionary work it does, all those wonderful, saintly Christians, bringing Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth – that’s what I believe in. You can’t condemn that.”

Meanwhile I continued to probe the apparent confusions which lie behind the very typical evangelical belief, which had troubled me long before, that death is the final opportunity we have to repent of our sins and turn to Christ on pain of everlasting damnation, which even my ancestor Charles Simeon had held. I have never seen this frightening doctrine, the reverse of what is to be found in Roman Catholicism, formally derived from the pages of Scripture. Certainly it cannot be found upon the lips of Jesus.⁸³ I documented my conclusions in chapter 6 of *Peacemaking in God’s World*, which I published on Amazon CreateSpace in 2016. It carries the dedication

To Carl, Sue Sarah, Hillary and Jan, who together gave me my first glimpse of the kingdom

a reference to the Society of Mary and Martha, who constitute the Sheldon Community in their retreat centre at Sheldon in Devon, where so many including ourselves have found healing, peace, restoration and spiritual refreshment. Their work is described in *The Fat Pigeon Flies*, which celebrates the first 21 years of their ministry.

Of this (my) book Nicholas King wrote for the cover:

“Martin’s Mosse’s heart is in the right place; he is properly offended by the scandal of Christian division, and wants to bang together the heads of the warring parties and get them to come back to the ancient Christian discipline of silent contemplation allied to attentive reading of the Bible.”

I still think that if you choose an anti-Semite as the originator of your faith tradition, you really must be on the lookout for pitfalls such as this. After all, in place after place in the Old Testament we discover the refrain as God says of His beloved descendants of Abraham, “You (They) shall be My people, and I will be your (their) God.” Someone therefore whose thinking is so morally corrupted as to detest those whom God Himself adores is unlikely to be a sure guide to true religion. We should

⁸² Jonathan Sacks, *Not in God’s Name*, p.78.

⁸³ On the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31, sometimes adduced in support of this grotesque teaching, please see my *Peacemaking in God’s Church*, p.81n62. One reply is that this is a *story*, a parable, and that anyone who seriously regards it as Our Lord’s definitive teaching on the Last Judgement must then explain how it is that in it Jesus Himself, universally regarded elsewhere in Christianity as the Son of God, divinely appointed by Him to be Judge of all humankind (eg Acts 17:31), has in it been supplanted by the created Patriarch Abraham. You can’t have it both ways!

not be at all surprised therefore if within all the respectable, authentic truths of Protestant evangelicalism which I myself followed with such enthusiasm for thirty years, there were to be found some major distortions of the teaching of Jesus; some of which may be crucial for the nature of the faith but completely transparent to those who have never looked elsewhere. Were there any others?

And so, a little like le Carré's George Smiley, I set out on a search for some fundamental flaw in Protestant teaching from which all other discrepancies I was unhappy with might derive. This was not something I could do on my own, and so I leaned very heavily on my evangelical friends, especially those whom I knew to be rock solid in their faith and equally were strong enough in our friendship not to reject me personally, no matter what I threw at them, how crazy they might find my doubts or how distressing or challenging might seem my scepticism. Some I have already mentioned, but no one served in this task as nobly and faithfully as my old New College colleague, Crispin (Richard) Lee, who had given the better part of his life to supporting as a linguist the work of the Wycliffe Bible Translators (aka Summer Institute of Linguistics). How he survived the hammering I gave to point after point of his unshakeable evangelical Christian faith in successive letters, while remaining a valuable and esteemed friend, supporter, prayer partner, and on occasions confessor, and at what personal cost to himself, I shall never know. But survive he did, and although he always had the honesty to admit whenever I had caused him to rethink his position or, alternatively, perhaps, dig himself even deeper into his faith, he remained true to his evangelicalism right to the end of the process. My gratitude to him God only understands.

At the same time I obtained valuable assistance in this Quest from Walter's sister Elizabeth Moberly, who could always be relied on for a clear statement of Orthodox belief and why it differed from some of the more way-out propositions I put to her. I do not recall one occasion when she budged an inch from her position, or any single theological argument with her that I won! And all was done in a spirit of most friendly, good-humoured, rivalry and academic debate. In addition, from time to time when in need of an authentic Roman Catholic viewpoint, I sought the advice of Nicholas King, mentioned above, who was always most generous and encouraging to the unbridled ideas of this wandering Protestant seeker.

It was not until I was nearly 71 that I came close to a solution which satisfied me. I recorded it in BRAINWAVES Report BW/030 'Consequences of the Reformation', which to me felt as if I was signing off. Nicholas King commented wryly:

"Broadly my response is this: I agree with the point that you are making, but perhaps the tone is a bit too strong?"

But in the end, the conclusion of the matter proved to be this. At the heart of Reformation Protestantism lies the dogma, *sola scriptura*, for which any evangelical will gladly go to the scaffold, as indeed I might have done myself for many a year: *scripture alone* suffices as the source of our knowledge of God (cf. Book of Common Prayer Article VI). And here I believe to be the root of the problem. For Jesus Himself said that Man shall live by *every* word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4) – and so not just those which He uttered before the end of the first century when the New Testament writings were complete.

God has been speaking continually before and since then to any who have ears to hear, as He famously did to St Francis when He told him to "Rebuild My Church". There is always more to learn of God from an unlimited number of sources, and Jesus told His disciples to expect to go on learning about Him from the Holy Spirit after He had gone (John 16:12-15, cf. 1 John 2:28). Indeed, my

understanding, as indicated above, has long been that the biblical practice of waiting on God (as in Psalm 62:1, Isaiah 40: 31 and Lamentations 3:25-26) lies at the very heart of Christian living. To confine our search for God and for His Truth is sadly to limit what He is able to teach us, when so much more of Him is freely available, not least, from within the mystical and contemplative traditions to be found elsewhere, which for me take us to the heart of the faith (see *Peacemaking in God's Church*, chapter 8).

Beyond that, as the psalmist put it,

“The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they display knowledge.
There is no speech nor language
where their voice is not heard.
Their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.” (Psalm 19:1-4 NIV)

That's quite a lot to be missing out on.

And what if it pleases God to reveal to someone else from a different tradition which He intends them to pass on to us? Will we be deaf to it because of our prior determination to learn only from the Bible? At the end of his account of his own early discovery of God, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, Thomas Merton defines the highest goal of the contemplative as being *contemplata tradere*, to pass on the fruits of one's contemplation – to my mind an excellent working definition of a prophet. Are we really prepared to limit the channels through which God is permitted to address us? It is like cutting off our nose to spite our face. Yet this is the consequence of the dogmas at the very foundation of Protestantism.⁸⁴

Are we really saying that God has ceased to use as His mouthpieces His servants the prophets? ⁸⁵ What then of Tozer himself, whose abbreviated collections of sayings *Gems From Tozer*, distributed by Send The Light Trust, then the literature arm of Operation Mobilisation, proclaims him to be “A Twentieth Century Prophet”? Or of the late former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, of whom Lord William Rees-Mogg, former editor of *The Times*, wrote that he “puts the case for God” better than anyone else in the land (or was it, any cleric? I forget)? I experience more of God from a single book of his⁸⁶ than I do from a whole shelfful of religious books in an Anglican church. We need to “lift up our eyes” and listen to God through whichever medium He chooses to speak.

And here I believe to be the source of the divisions which almost destroyed the Church at the time of the Reformation and continue to impoverish it today, thus delaying the coming of God's Kingdom, His unique and glorious solution to the woes of the world and the sufferings of His wayward creatures. At a time when crisis, conflict, coronavirus, climate change and the cancel culture threaten to destroy humanity, we cannot afford the limitations to the knowledge of our loving God imposed by the Reformers upon unsuspecting believers. There is far, far more to God than we will

⁸⁴ Of the other pillars of Reformation Protestantism: I have commented on *sola fide*, “by faith alone” in *Peacemaking in God's Church*, pp.59-69. *Sola gratia*, “by grace alone” presents me with no difficulties and seems to me to be obvious.

⁸⁵ And here I recall the not entirely unjustified description of my own Church of England as a “non-prophet organisation.”

⁸⁶ To choose but one, his *The Great Partnership*.

learn by restricting ourselves to what we can read of Him in the Bible. As the Welsh poet R.S Thomas put it in his poem "The Minister",

Protestantism - the adroit castrator
Of art; the bitter negation
Of song and dance and the heart's innocent joy -
You have butchered our flesh and left us only the soul's
Terrible impotence in a warm world.

It took me even longer to make very recently what for me is the most exciting discovery of my life:

GOD'S FAVOURITE OCCUPATION IS MAKING PEOPLE HAPPY!⁸⁷

That is what His Kingdom is all about, the coming of which was the very central message of Jesus from the start of His ministry onwards:

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND! REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS!

My prayer is that the Protestant Churches in particular will rediscover the simple but dramatically exciting teaching of His Son. For, I am convinced, the time is not far off when

Many shall be busy making money, and
Many shall be busy making war, and
Many shall be busy making love,
And when the whole world is looking in the opposite direction,

THE SAINTS WILL COME MARCHING IN!

And like the great St Louis, I too want to be in that number! See you there?

Here endeth the Quest.

AFTERWORD

It seems to me that we are given some fraction – perhaps 2/3, perhaps 3/4, perhaps 9/10 – of our lives in which to make our messes, and the remaining fraction to clear them up again. The trick is to know when to move from the first phase to the second. Now that takes practice.

CRUX CHRISTI NOBIS SALUS.

Martin Mosse, MA, BSc, PhD,
Version 8.3, 7 October 2021.

⁸⁷ An endearing notion, abbreviated in the Bible to "God is love" (1 John 4:16, the writer of which, it has been suggested, may have been influenced by the early first century itinerant Jewish Rabbi Yeshua ben Yosef, in the reports of whose teachings similar sentiments have occasionally been discerned. Alternative ascriptions to one 'Q' may safely be discounted. The only historical individual of that name known with any certainty to have existed was a supplier of innovative technology to the British Secret Service in the later twentieth century, whose appearance is known, and the reality of whose existence is demonstrated beyond all reasonable doubt by a number of contemporary cinematic records which survive to this day. Several of his acquaintances, customers and contrivances can be similarly identified, together with documented instances of their actual use. Any theologians or other self-opinionated frauds still claiming to believe in a first century scribe of the same name, of no known provenance or other impact upon history, and whom no one is ever recorded as having even seen, should be promptly returned to infant school for lessons in how to distinguish reality from purest fantasy.)

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