



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

Department of Economics

Working Paper Series

# Ursala Hicks: My Early Life (Up to the Age of 12)

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Aug 2011

Research Paper Number 1126

ISSN: 0819-2642

ISBN: 978-0-7340-4479-2

# Ursula Hicks: My Early Life (Up to the Age of 12)

Edited by John Creedy\*

## Abstract

Ursula Hicks (nee Webb) is well known for her contributions to public finance and development economics, and in her role as founding editor of *Review of Economic Studies*. After a brief introduction to Ursula Hicks's complex family background, this paper reproduces, with editorial material, the autobiographical sketch of her early life in Dublin. This sketch, written late in her life, is of considerable interest, not only for the light it shows on her own background, but for the glimpse it gives of life in Dublin in the early years of the 20th century. In particular, there is much discussion of the wide circle of the Religious Society of Friends, more generally known as Quakers, which played such a large part in the life of her family.

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\*The manuscript is the property of Gilly Austin, granddaughter of Frederic James Webb, Ursula's Uncle. I am very grateful for permission to reproduce it here. I should particularly like to thank Rosaleen Lee for sending me a digital version of the original typescript, for providing detailed replies to my many queries, and for providing the initial drafts of the highly complex family trees. I have also benefited substantially from the encouragement and comments on earlier drafts by Denis O'Brien.

# 1 Introduction

Ursula Kathleen Hicks (nee Webb) (1896-1985) was a distinguished economist in the fields of public finance and development economics. She was a founder, and for many years editor, of the journal *Review of Economic Studies*.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, she was somewhat (willingly) overshadowed, after their marriage in 1935, by her husband, John Hicks, the first British Nobel Prizewinner in economics and the most distinguished British economist of his generation.<sup>2</sup> Ursula left behind a short typed manuscript entitled ‘My Early Life (Up to the Age of 12)’.<sup>3</sup> This is of considerable interest, not only for the light it shows on her own background, but for the glimpse it gives of life in Dublin in the early years of the 20th century. In particular, there is much discussion of the wide circle of the Religious Society of Friends, more generally known as Quakers, which played such a large part in the life of her family. Indeed, Ursula herself pointed out that, for Quakers, Dublin was probably second only to Philadelphia, to where many Irish Quakers had earlier emigrated.

The present paper reproduces Ursula’s edited manuscript in Section 4. In view of the extensive and complex nature of her family background, a brief review is first given in Section 2. Section 3 provides a number of family trees, showing in particular the links with the Fisher and Shackleton families. This material provides further details behind the brief references and allusions made by Ursula.

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<sup>1</sup>Ursula’s career is briefly reviewed in the introduction to *Public Finance, Planning and Economic Development* (1973, edited by W.L. David. London: Macmillan).

<sup>2</sup>R.C.O. Matthews in his *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* article on John Hicks, stated that Ursula, ‘protected him and organised their lives’ during their fifty years of marriage and that, ‘they were seldom separated, even for a few days’. Their life together may justly be described in terms of a partnership, resulting in a number of joint publications in addition to shared enthusiasms.

<sup>3</sup>The reference to the year 1982 suggests that it was written some time between then and 1985.

Editorial notes are placed within square brackets. The most obvious original typing errors have been corrected silently, along with, for example, the deletion of the apostrophe in 1880's, and its movement in, for example, 'servant's quarters'. Otherwise the punctuation is the same as the original, except that consistency has been introduced in the placing of the full stop for sentences within parentheses. The temptation to divide the long paragraphs has been resisted. The repeated spelling of evidently as 'evidentially' has also been retained.

## 2 Ursula's Family Background

Ursula's father was the successful Dublin lawyer William Fisher Webb.<sup>4</sup> He was born on 29 May 1859, and died on 16 June 1924 at Sussex after a long illness during which Ursula helped her mother to look after him. William was the youngest son of James Webb (1797-1878) and Susanna (nee Fisher) (1816-1906), who were both members of prominent Irish Quaker families. As Ursula relates, William had two older sisters, Edith and Gertrude, both of whom were teachers and remained unmarried. Edith taught at the Mount School York (a Quaker school) before teaching at the highly regarded Alexandra School in Dublin. Gertrude established a kindergarten in Dublin, which Ursula attended before going to the Alexandra School. From there she was sent, at her mother's wish, to Roedean.

Ursula's mother, Isabella Mary (nee Hayward) was born on 16 May 1865 in Limerick, and died on 2 May 1931 in Surrey.<sup>5</sup> Isabella had a good ed-

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<sup>4</sup>His practice was initially at 38 Dame Street, Dublin, which is very close to Trinity College Dublin. Their home address in the 1911 census is 2 Highfield Road, Dublin. In 1910 he established a partnership with his younger cousin Leonard Webb, at 1 Suffolk Street, Dublin. This partnership was dissolved on 12 August 1915, when it seems that William and his wife moved to England.

<sup>5</sup>Her address was 'Dromaneen', in Chichester Road, Oxted, Surrey. The house was presumably named after the castle in County Cork, one of the castles formerly owned by the O'Callaghan family (William Fisher Webb's great grandmother was Mary O'Callaghan).

ucation in England.<sup>6</sup> This included the period 1877-1881 at the ‘Boys and Girls’ school, a Quaker school in Sidcot, followed by The Mount School in York from 1881-1883. Finally Isabella studied at University College London, graduating in 1893 with a BSc in Botany and Physiology.

Isabella and William were married on 22 December 1893 at Torquay. They met when Isabella was staying in Ireland with William’s family, while on holiday.<sup>7</sup> In fact the partial family trees shown in the Appendix indicate that William was marrying the daughter of his first cousin. Marriages between cousins, and across generations, were not uncommon in the three families involved.

A prominent member of the extensive Webb family was Alfred Webb (10 June 1834-31 July 1908).<sup>8</sup> Ursula recalls that he lent her father the money that enable him to be articled to a firm of solicitors. Alfred travelled widely, including an early trip to Australia during 1853-1855. This trip was partly for his health, and must have been successful as he walked from Melbourne to Sydney before sailing home.<sup>9</sup> Alfred also travelled to Iceland in 1861 with

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<sup>6</sup>In the 1871 census, she is listed as aged 5 and living with her grandfather, Joseph Hayward, then aged 69, in Whetsone, Finchley.

<sup>7</sup>Ursula relates that William’s older brother Frederic wanted to marry Isabella’s younger sister, Alice, but her father refused on the grounds that Frederic was 15 years older than Alice and was ‘drifting’ in his career (though later he was a doctor and practiced in Manchester). Isabella’s father was William Hayward (born in London 1830 and died in Torquay 1917), and her mother was Elizabeth (nee Alexander). Elizabeth’s parents were Samuel Alexander, of Limerick, and Isabella (nee Fisher). And Samuel was in turn the son of Edward Alexander and Jenepher (nee Fisher). Hence Ursula’s paternal grandmother (Susanna) was initially a Fisher, as was her maternal great-grandmother (Isabella) and great-great-grandmother. In fact Susanna and Isabella were sisters, so that William Fisher Webb married the daughter of his first cousin, Elizabeth (nee Alexander). The Alexanders were also Quakers.

<sup>8</sup>Alfred’s uncle was Thomas Webb, who was married to Mary (nee Fisher, another of the Fisher sisters mentioned in the previous footnote), who was the aunt of William Fisher Webb, Ursula’s father. Joseph Webb, who was the brother of Richard Webb (William Fisher Webb’s grandfather) was Alfred Webb’s great grandfather. Hence Alfred Webb’s father was William Fisher Webb’s second cousin), and they also shared an aunt and uncle.

<sup>9</sup>See *The Autobiography of a Quaker Nationalist*, edited by Marie-Louise Legg (1999), Cork University Press. Disappointingly this omits much of Webb’s dis-

his cousin, Joseph Shackleton<sup>10</sup> and shortly afterwards married his cousin (and Joseph's sister) Elizabeth Shackleton (1834-1907). Elizabeth was from the Ballitore Quaker community, near Dublin, the most famous member being the explorer Ernest Henry Shackleton.<sup>11</sup> Alfred Webb was energetic and wide-ranging, taking over his father's printing business, publishing articles and books<sup>12</sup> as well as being a member of parliament, and campaigning against slavery, like his remarkable parents Richard Davis and Hannah Webb (nee Waring), who were also in contact with American abolitionists. Widely respected, Alfred had the considerable honour of being invited to preside at the 10th Indian National Congress in Madras in 1894.

Hence it is easy to see that Ursula's background reflected a combination of Quaker ideals, business enterprise, education, extensive travel, and strong and colourful personalities. Viewed in this light, it is not so surprising that she should display a strong leadership and organisational role, with wide international sympathies.

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cussion of his family background. Further information is in Regan-Lefebvre, J. (2009) *Cosmopolitan Nationalism in the Victorian Empire: Ireland, India and the Politics of Alfred Webb*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>10</sup>See Stone, I.R. (2004) Joseph Shackleton in Iceland 1861, *Polar Record*, 41, pp. 157-159. For Shackleton's account see Stone, I.R. (2005) The text of Joseph Shackleton's account of his visit to Iceland 1861, *Polar Record*, 41, pp. 223-234.

<sup>11</sup>The Quaker school at Ballitore, started by Abraham Shackleton (1696-1771) in 1726, had as its most famous pupil Edmund Burke, who went from there to Trinity College Dublin in 1744. Elizabeth's father was George Shackleton (21 August 1785-1 July 1871) and her mother was Hannah (nee Fisher), the daughter of Joseph Fisher (1774-1830) and Hannah (nee Mark). Here is another Fisher connection. Elizabeth's grandfather was Abraham Shackleton (1752-1818), who took over the running of Ballitore school, started by his grandfather and namesake, and whose half-sister was Mary Leadbeater. In the first of a series of pedagogic books, Mary published *Cottage Dialogues among the Irish Peasantry*, in 1811. This contained an introduction and notes by Maria Edgeworth, the aunt of the economist Francis Ysidro Edgeworth. One of Mary's six children, Lydia, married into the Fisher family.

<sup>12</sup>Among his publications is a huge *Compendium of Irish Biography* (1878, Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son). A digital version of this book can be accessed at the Library Ireland web site: <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/index.php>.

### 3 Webb, Fisher and Shackleton Connections

This appendix illustrates just some of the complex relationships among the Fisher, Shackleton and Webb families referred to above. The trees are considerably simplified and, for example, do not include all children of the marriages listed (for example, Hannah and George Shackleton had 13 children, but only Elizabeth is shown here). Also, the trees do not demonstrate how Alfred Webb is the cousin of his wife Elizabeth Shackleton, and how there were other connections (in addition to Elizabeth's parents, George Shackleton and Hannah Fisher) between Fishers and Shackletons, and between the latter and Webbs. However, from these trees it can be seen that: Isabella Fisher's father Benjamin was a second cousin of her mother-in-law, Jenepher; Ursula's paternal Grandmother Susanna was the older sister of Ursula's maternal great grandmother Isabella; Alfred Webb's aunt Mary (from the marriage of his father's brother Thomas) was the older sister of Ursula's maternal great grandmother Isabella; Ursula's paternal grandfather James had a cousin also called James Webb, who was the grandfather of Alfred Webb, who in turn married Elizabeth Shackleton, and Elizabeth's maternal grandfather was a cousin of Jenepher Fisher; Ursula's father married the daughter of his first cousin (Elizabeth Hayward, nee Alexander). The tree in Figure 4 shows that Norman Fitzroy Webb and Melanie Louisa Webb were cousins, and also cousins of Ursula. The invitations to John and Ursula's wedding were issued by 'Mr and Mrs N.F. Webb ... on the occasion of the marriage of their cousin Miss Ursula K. Webb'.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>A blank invitation is reproduced on p. 91 of Marcuzzo, M.C. and Sanfilippo, E. with Hirai, T. and Nishizawa, T. (2006) The letters between John Hicks and Ursula Webb September-December 1935. *Institute for Economic and Business Administration Research, University of Hyogo, Working Paper*, no. 207.

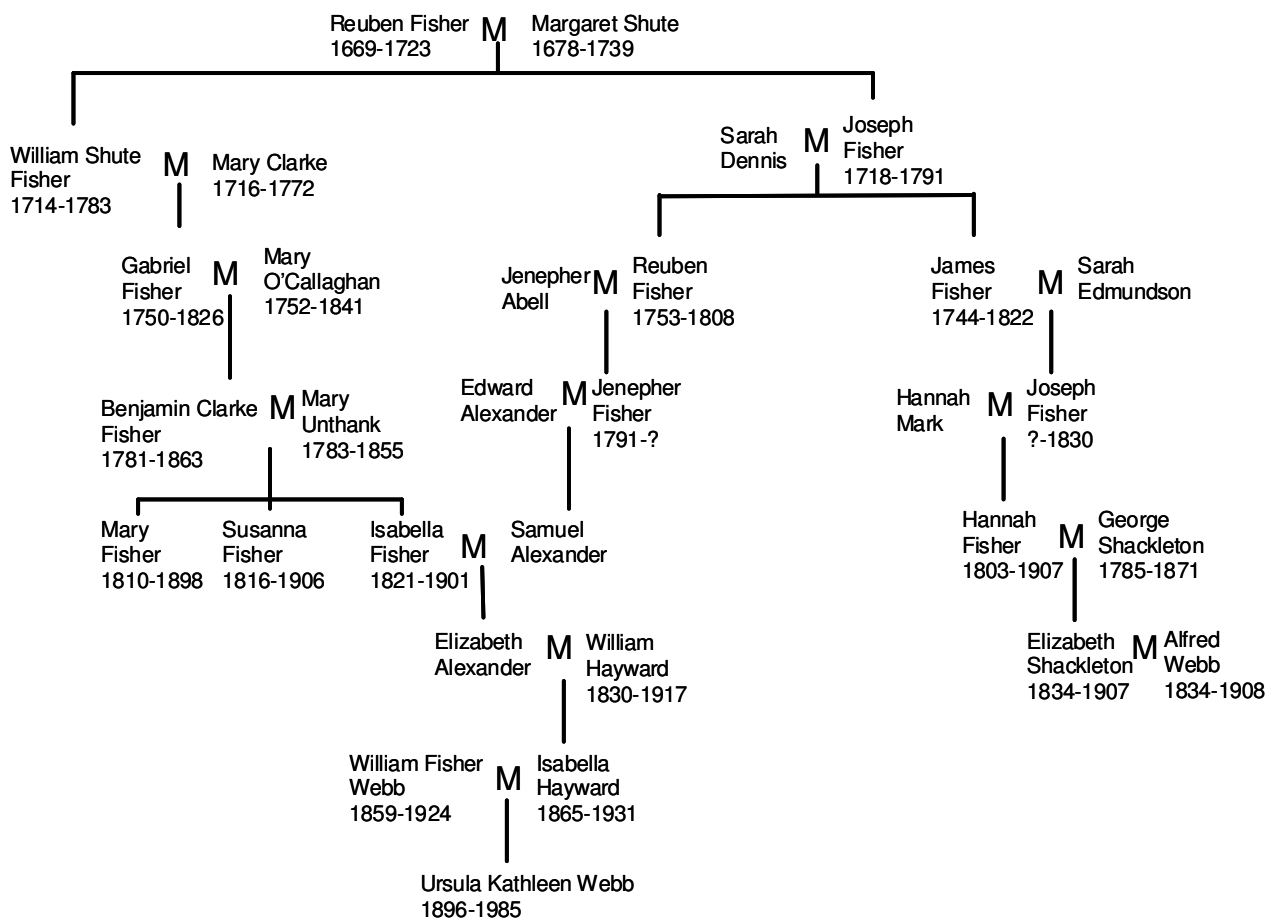


Figure 1: Family Connections: A



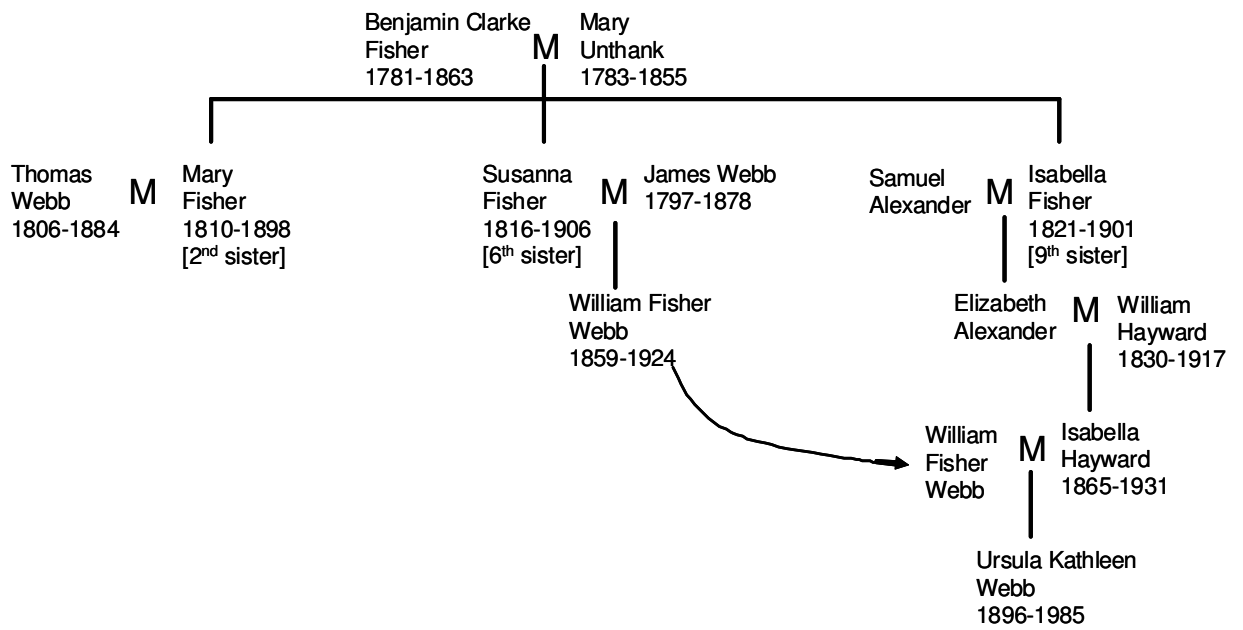


Figure 2: Family Connections: B

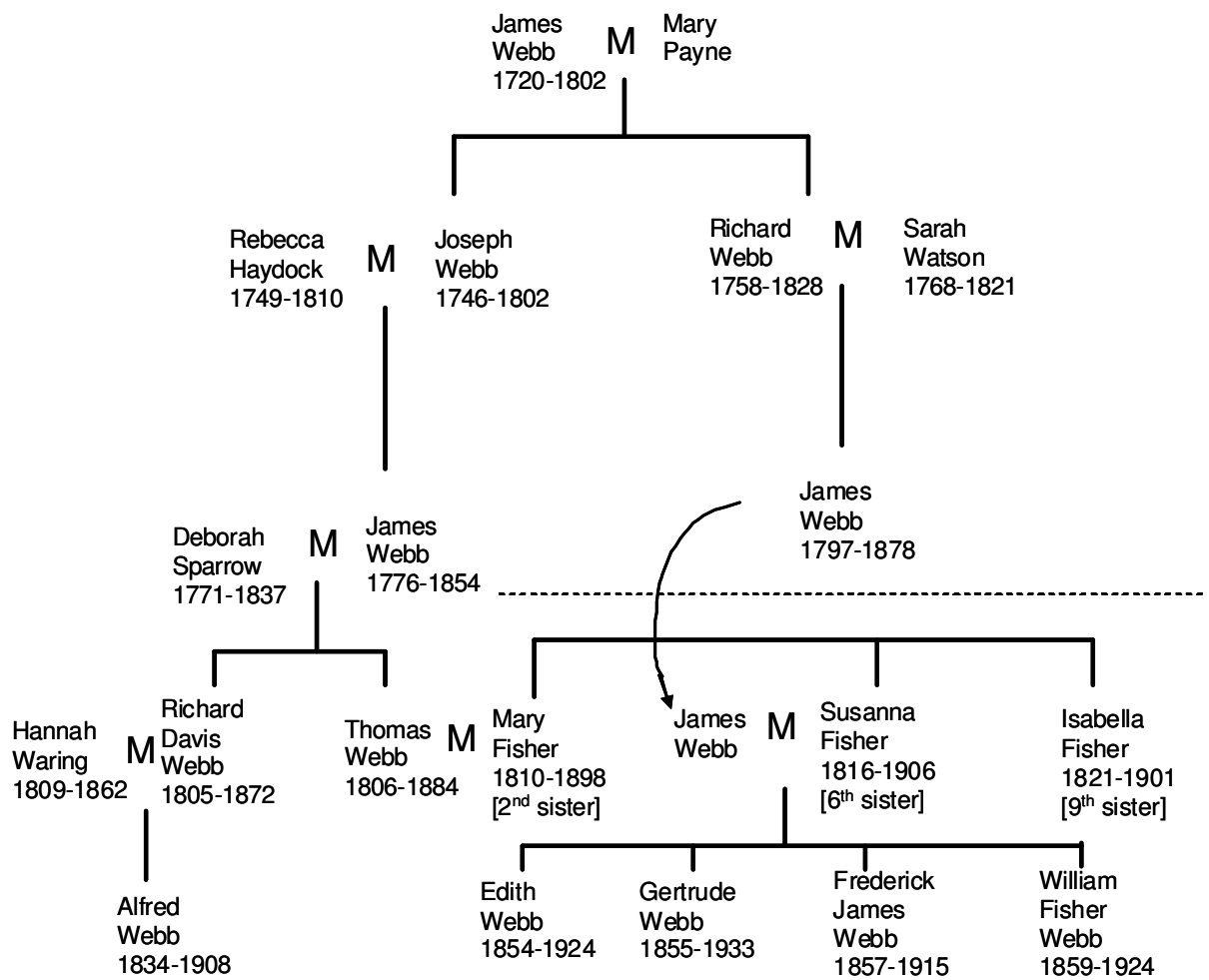


Figure 3: Family Connections: C

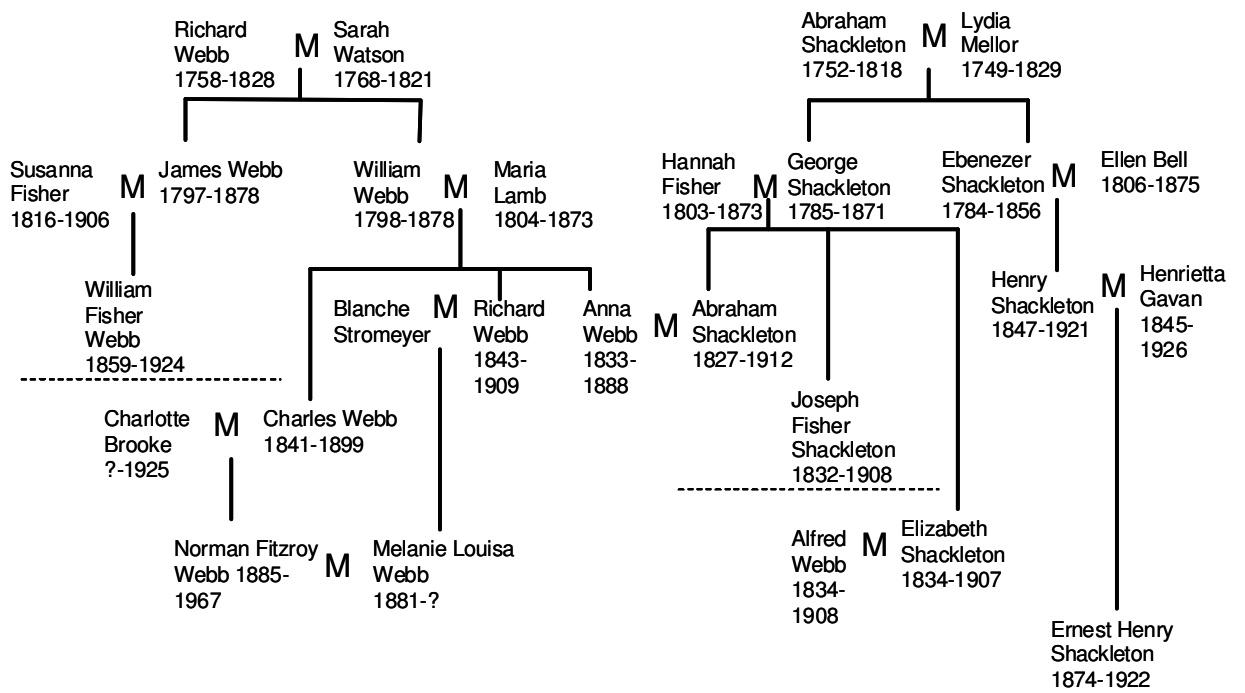


Figure 4: Family Connections: D

## 4 The Text of ‘My Early Life’

I was born on 17th February, 1896 at Clondillure, Upper Rathmines, in the Parish of St. Peter in the Barony of Upper Cross,<sup>14</sup> in the County of Dublin, Ireland. (My lawyer father was always particular that I should get this quite right; baronies are unique to County Dublin. I have no idea what administrative significance they may once have had, but at that time I am pretty sure they had none.)<sup>15</sup> The Parish of St. Peter was not at all like an English parish. There was a church of St. Peter, but it was right in town, in a rather seedy area. I suppose it followed the Anglican communion,<sup>16</sup> as the two cathedrals (St. Patrick’s and Christ Church) did, but we had no connection with it and I never heard of anybody who did. Rathmines was a good solid, but not smart shopping center. It had a very fine red sandstone ‘town hall’ built early in the century where the Rathmines Urban District Council had its base, and next door a magnificent Catholic ‘chapel’ in the style of St. Peters’ in Rome. Upper Rathmines was purely residential, mainly Protestant, largely dissenting. The inhabitants were either successful business families or professional. Clondillure was at the junction between Upper Rathmines and Rathgar, a similar residential suburb, but with two shopping enclaves; fading away into the country on the south, but reaching right down to the middle of Rathmines on the north. It had a fine ‘chapel’ (in Ireland all Catholic places of worship are ‘chapels’, all Protestant, of whatever denomination ‘churches’, apart from the Friends’ Meeting Houses). The Rathgar Road chapel was where all our domestics went to confession, then to Mass, most of them fairly regularly.

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<sup>14</sup>[This is between the Baronies of Newcastle and Rathdown, to the east, and Castleknock, to the north.]

<sup>15</sup>[Baronies were not unique to Dublin but, created after the Norman invasion, were analogous to the hundreds into which English counties were divided. They were superseded by the Local Governemen (Ireland) Act 1898, but are still used in land registrations and in planning permissions.]

<sup>16</sup>[It was Church of Ireland and was demolished in 1983. It was on land formerly of Whitefriars, Aungier Street.]

Clondillure was a large house. (It is now a Guest House.) It had been planned by my father, I imagine in the middle 1880s when he first contemplated<sup>17</sup> matrimony. It was planned to house his mother, and two elder sisters (Edith and Gertrude) and, to accommodate the ‘kindergarten’ or nursery school which Gertrude was beginning to build up. When he got married (on 19 December 1893) he turned them all out, a change they certainly resented. Clondillure (meaning the leafy field), it was then fashionable at the beginning of the Celtic Revival to give your house an Irish name, was in the typical 19th century Dublin style: grey washed (probably built of the not very handsome nearly black Dublin limestone which can be seen in some of the buildings in Trinity College). The servants’ quarters and kitchen, etc. were on the ground floor or basement, and a long flight of granite steps led up to the front door.

I have few recollections of Clondillure, as we left it when I was two and a half, but it was far too large for a young couple and a baby, even with three servants (a cook, housemaid and nanny – or nurse as we then called them – for me). The house faced north and was well back from the road. On the south, it had a large garden and a fine view to the Wicklow Mountains, especially the ‘Two Rock’, the ‘Three Rock’<sup>18</sup> and ‘Montpelier’<sup>19</sup> (The Hell Fire Club) where eighteenth century riotous parties were held.<sup>20</sup> The property had some

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<sup>17</sup>[Originally written as ‘planned’ and changed by hand.]

<sup>18</sup>[These two mountains are part of the group, with Kilmashogue and Tibbradden, of the Dublin Mountains. They take their name from granite rocks which are to the south-east of the summit of Two Rocks, and at the summit of Two Rocks. The top of the latter, known as Fairy Castle, contains the remains of a passage tomb.]

<sup>19</sup>[This was originally written as Montpellier.]

<sup>20</sup>[Montpelier Hill is named after the hunting lodge, originally called Mount Pelier, built at the summit around 1725 by William Conolly (speaker of the Irish House of Commons). The building used stones from a prehistoric cairn with a passage grave. Members of the Irish Hell Fire Club, active between 1735 and 1741, began using the building for meetings. The club was founded by Richard Parsons and Jack St Leger, and the president was Richard Chapell Whaley, known as ‘Burn-Chapel’, from his reputation for burning Catholic churches. The club was revived, in the form of ‘The Holy Fathers’, in 1771 by Whaley’s son, Thomas.]

fine trees as it had once belonged to Sir [William]<sup>21</sup> Temple, especially a fine yew (where I later made a 'house' (platform) only reachable by a rope ladder made out of cricket stumps). There were also two fine Italian cypresses, but they did not really approve of the climate, and also a splendid copper beech as high as a three-storey house. One of my favorite pastimes at about eight onwards was tree climbing, but the beech defied me, having no outstanding branches lower than about 20 feet from the ground.

All I remember inside Clondillure was my nursery, a large room facing south, and the empty drawing room to which the furniture did not stretch, the 'smoking room' three steps down (where I precipitated myself at a very early age). My father was not allowed to smoke in the public rooms as long as his mother and sisters were in residence. But my mother, very boldly at that time, was by no means averse herself to the odd cigarette.

In 1898 my father decided to sell Clondillure, and himself designed a more modern house on the property, just to the west of Clondillure. This time there was no romantic Irish name, just 2 Highfield Road – Clondillure being presumably Number 1, although it had no number. The new house had a rough cast yellow coat, with a red brick dado and a red-tiled roof. It had no great staircase. The main rooms were on the south – out of the dining room was a large garden room open to the south. The Verandah was much used in the summer. The kitchen, scullery, larder and store room were on the ground floor facing the road. (The house lay a long way back, like Clondillure.) The great move, in the summer of [18]98, was a tremendous

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<sup>21</sup>[This was originally Win, presumably a typing error for Wm. The name Temple was long associated with Dublin, though it is not clear if nearby Temple Gardens and Temple Bar are named after the family. Sir William Temple (1555-1627) was educated at Eton and King's College Cambridge, and in 1609 became Provost of Trinity College Dublin, and was a member of the Irish House of Commons from 1613 until his death. However, it was his son, Sir John Temple (1600-1677), born in Dublin, Master of the Rolls in Ireland from 1640, who came to own extensive amounts of land in Ireland. William's grandson, Sir William Temple (1628-1699) had a successful career as a diplomat, was an early employer of Jonathan Swift, and a keen gardener.]

excitement. I remember vividly the dinner being cooked in Clondillure and brought through a hole in the new granite wall, built to separate the two properties, to the new kitchen.

I remember in detail an enormous amount about 2 Highfield Road, both house and garden, as we lived there until I was 19, although for the last five years I was away in term time at Roedean, and we went many holidays out of Ireland, at least once a year to stay with my mother's parents at Torquay. The garden at 2 Highfield Road was splendid. Both my parents were very keen gardeners. My father experimenting with fruit vegetables and flowers, my mother, who was a very distinguished botanist, specializing on the rock garden (more of this below). We grew most of our vegetables and fruit, except for onions, carrots and main crop potatoes.

We were members of the Society of Friends, commonly called 'Quakers', of which there was a very strong body in Dublin. It appears that a very successful missionary visited Ireland sometime in the 17th century, made many converts and founded Meeting Places all over the country.<sup>22</sup> Also schools – Newtown, Mountmellick,<sup>23</sup> Lisburn.<sup>24</sup> I wish I could trace the account I once saw of all this. The converts included many names of Dublin families who were still going strong in my childhood: besides Webb, Shackleton, Pim,

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<sup>22</sup>[The Society of Friends was established by George Fox (1624-1691) who began to preach in 1647. The name Quaker arose from the comments of a judge who, convicting Fox of blasphemy in 1650, responded to the latter's injunction to 'tremble at the word of the Lord'. Fox travelled to Ireland, but the first recorded Meeting for Worship in Ireland was organised by William Edmondson in Lurgan, Co. Armagh in 1654. Edmondson was a former Cromwellian soldier and, with five other Quakers, Richard Jackson, John Edmondson, John Thompson, William Moon and John Pim, settled in Mountmellick in 1659.]

<sup>23</sup>[This was originally typed as Mount Mellick.]

<sup>24</sup>[Newtown School Waterford was founded in 1798; Lisburn, now multidenominational, was founded in 1774; Mountmellick was founded in 1786 by Jonathan Pim, John Helton, John Gatchell and Mungo Bewley. One of the oldest Quaker schools in Ireland is Drogheda Grammar School, founded in 1669 by Erasmus Smith. Another famous school, though it closed in 1847, is Ballitore, founded by Abraham Shackleton.]

Bewley, Jacob (of biscuit fame), Goodbody and others.<sup>25</sup> (All Quakers had to use Quaker firms.) In Dublin besides the senior Meeting in Eustace Street (where yearly Meeting for all Ireland was held) in the middle of town there was Churchtown, a mile or more out in the country from our suburban house (but a delightful arbutus<sup>26</sup> walk). Monkstown, some 6 miles down the coast, and later Rathmines (over a relatives ironmongers shop, which my aunts had been instrumental in establishing). It was rather evangelical and in Churchtown we were very quiet people in a very quiet place. Fairly often the Meeting passed without anyone offering prayer or delivering an address. A visitor who was moved to do so towards the end of the hour (signalled unequivocally by the passing of a train near the Meeting house) was certain to be given black looks. There was tacked on to the monthly meeting, a business meeting to choose people who would be responsible for various tasks and this ended up with a two-line message of a very practical nature.

I was not taken to Meeting until I was 7 or 8, because I was liable to wriggle too much (we sat on the second bench, in front of most people (I suppose a normal congregation would have been about 15 to 20 persons). The wooden cushionless benches had a sloping back, designed to fit an adult,

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<sup>25</sup>[In 1700 the young Mungo Bewley moved to Mountmellick. His grandson and namesake (one of the founders of the Quaker school there) started a linen factory. This Bewley's sons Samuel and Charles established silk and tea importing businesses, respectively. In 1835 Charles landed a cargo of 2,000 chests of tea from China, breaking the monopoly of the East India Company. This business eventually founded Bewley's Oriental Cafés. W&R Jacob, who started a small bakery in Waterford, established the biscuit factory in Dublin in 1852. The famous 'cream crackers' were first produced in 1885. In 1948, the company, then run by Jacob and Bewley families, became a public company. The Goodbody family arrived in Ireland about 1630, and became Quakers in about 1660. Various branches of the family established extensive business. The first Pim to settle in Ireland was John Pim (1641-1718) and was converted by William Edmundson. Extensive businesses were founded by different branches of the family, and included soap, glue, candles, tobacco, snuff, baking, brewing and malting. James Pim was involved in building the first railway line in Ireland (between Dublin and Kingstown, now called Dun Laoghaire) which opened in 1834.]

<sup>26</sup>[This was originally typed as arbutis. Arbutus (a genus of more than 14 species) are small trees or shrubs with red bark and edible red berries.]



but for a child they were torture. I think I sat pretty quiet, and I am sure the discipline was good for me (but I remember one old lady suggesting that it would be nice if I had a book to read). For me, regular Sunday Meeting was a penance. Before it started we used to go on lovely excursions in the superb country around Dublin, especially delightful, as my father felt able to take the whole day, instead of just the afternoon as on Saturday when the regime started. I complained to my mother at the loss of these excursions, but she merely said we must go to Meeting as it was good for the Business.

My father, William Fisher Webb, had 50 first cousins, one of them being my mother's mother, Elizabeth Hayward (nee Alexander). That side of the family was all descended from one Benjamin Clark Fisher, of Limerick, who carried on some sort of trade to do with carpets. A well-authenticated story told of him was that when he came back from his wedding (at Limerick Meeting), he took the new family Bible and ruled 15 lines in it. 'On each of these lines I will write the name of one of my children.' He very nearly succeeded, but all but one were girls. My father's mother was Susannah, one of the older Fisher sisters; my mother's grandmother was Isabella, one of the younger, who as a child had been a special care of Susannah.

There were plenty of Webb cousins too, though they were not all Friends. The Webbs had been 'planted' in County Down early in the 17th century. A small hamlet named Webbstown seems to mark the place. We think they came from Worcestershire or Warwickshire where the name is common (see work of Roger Webb – always a family name – in the Lady Chapel in St. Mary's Warwick). They may well have been woolen weavers, and in Ireland they took early to linen weaving. A branch of the family remained in the north in Antrim, Belfast. With some of them my mother and I developed a close friendship. There were many Webbs in Dublin, but not all of them were relatives, and some only very distant.

I was devoted to my father, who was certainly a remarkable man, though often in bad health and with very poor eyesight. His father (James Webb)

died when he was 12 and I know particularly nothing about him, except that he had a very bad stutter which was attributed to the fact that his foster mother's husband was on the run as a rebel in the '98.<sup>27</sup> She followed him (with the baby) all over the Wicklow Mountains – unknown, of course, to his parents. He had been born on February 17, 1797, exactly ninety nine years before me. My father was the youngest of four – besides two sisters already mentioned, just above him was a brother: Frederic<sup>28</sup> James, a man of great charm with a fine tenor voice, but no ambition and not a great deal of stability. My father more or less took charge of him, when he himself was on the way to becoming a successful solicitor, and induced him to take medical training (and, no doubt, paid for most of it). Uncle Fred settled down in Gorton, a seedy quarter of Manchester, where his patients were mostly Irish and he was immensely popular and built up a good practice there.<sup>29</sup>

When their father died, 'Fred and Willie' were at the Friends' School at Newtown, County Wexford.<sup>30</sup> I suspect the education was pretty poor. But somehow their mother (who was left very badly off, but probably Friends helped) managed to send the boys to Sidcot School, Somerset, (a school of some standing) for a few years. (They could take a 'British or Irish' steamer from Dublin to Bristol so that the journey was no great problem.) But this lasted only a few years. Then Fred went to teach at the Friends' School at Ackworth, in Yorkshire.<sup>31</sup> With little education and no training his prospects

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<sup>27</sup>[This refers to the Irish Rebellion, also known as the United Irishmen Rebellion, of 1798. This was against British rule and resulted in thousands of deaths over a three month period.]

<sup>28</sup>[This was originally typed as Frederick.]

<sup>29</sup>[He also published a novel based on his experiences, called *Harry Ingleby – Surgeon* (London: T. Fisher Unwin).]

<sup>30</sup>[It is likely that Ursula has in mind the Quaker school at Newtown in Waterford, rather than in neighbouring Wexford. The school dates from 1798 and still exists.]

<sup>31</sup>[This is in High Ackworth, near Pontefract, West Yorkshire. It was founded in 1779 by John Fothergill as a boarding school for Quaker boys and girls. It is one of eight Quaker schools in England, including Sidcot School, but these days most of the pupils are not Quakers.]

were poor – until my father induced him to become a doctor. My father was in even worse case. On leaving school early he was got a job as a clerk in a linen factory in Dublin. But he did not mean to stick at that. He borrowed from Alfred Webb (a wealthy, but distant cousin) sufficient to pay for him to be articled to a good firm of solicitors. They found him so useful that when his time was up, they refunded all the charges of his articleship. (While this was going on, he successfully worked for the London External LLB). But what was to come next? He had no chance of getting into an established firm of solicitors, even a Quaker firm, so the only thing was to rent a small office, put up a brass plate. He often described to me how he sat there, day after day, hoping, hoping for a foot on the stairs. Eventually they came, and then their friends and the practice began to grow. Most of his clients were Catholics, largely farmers. Apart from conveyancing, going to the Four Courts<sup>32</sup> to advise a barrister, most of the business was making wills, especially for farmers. The job was to get some coherence into them – against the instinct to be fair to all the children – ‘I’ll leave the farm to Paddy, but I would like Mary to have the cow’. And what would Paddy do without the cow and suppose Mary wanted to leave the farm? and so on. Some of the clients were in Dublin, largely widows who although not especially poor had no idea how to manage. They had to beg him to bring his little daughter for a visit – an occasion that rather terrified me, everything was so different. But they gave me cake and sacramental wine, which must have almost zero intoxicating power. I rather liked it. But there were sometimes important cases. I remember two in particular. One a Quaker wholesaling firm (Woods, Webb and Company)<sup>33</sup> who were convinced that they were being swindled

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<sup>32</sup>[The Four Courts, built in the late 1700s, initially housed the four courts of Chancery, King’s Bench, Exchequer and Common Pleas. The name was retained after they merged into the High Court of Ireland, which remained until 1924. Much of the building, along with the Public Record Office, was destroyed in 1922.]

<sup>33</sup>[This is likely to be Woods, Webb and Phenix, named after Adam Woods, his son Frederick William Woods, John Webb and James E. Phenix. They had premises at 20 Temple Lane and 7-9 Crow Street, Dublin. Adam Woods died,

by one of their suppliers – as indeed they were. I got a splendid large wooden box of sweets when that was over. The other was a case where the Dublin United Tram Company<sup>34</sup> were convinced that one of their employees was embezzling tram receipts in a large way. This he hotly denied and proof was lacking. But my father had the bright idea that he might have been altering numbers of tickets. So father sent a clerk down to court with a magnifying glass to scrutinise the ticket numbers (quite at random). Seeing this, the accused thought all was up, and made full confession.

But I must bring my mother up to date. Her mother, as I have explained, was my father's first cousin and also a grand-child of Benjamin Clark Fisher. But her father, William Hayward, came of an entirely different stock, although also Quakers. The Haywards were prosperous farmers at Kelvedon (Keldon which it was always called) on the Suffolk-Essex borders. There was a tradition that they also made (no doubt primitive) farm machinery. At any rate, there was, and is, a strong engineering tradition in that side of the family.

Joseph (my great-grandfather), as a younger son, was sent to London 'to make this fortune' which he did rather successfully, as an employee of Pickfords (and, I think, ultimately, a Director). He lived in Tottenham, which was then quite out in the country. It was his delight to have tired Pickford horses to be nursed and petted back into condition. He married Mary Walker, who came from Leicester (as I know from a very beautiful sampler which descended to me). Evidentially, the Walkers were also Quakers. Joseph and Mary had three children, William, Mary and Joseph. (I believe two others died in infancy, Joseph 1 and Maria.) William (my grandfather was sent to the Quaker School at Bootham in York, then, as now, a very good school.<sup>35</sup> He often described to me the long, weary coach journey from

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aged 90, in 1906.]

<sup>34</sup>[This began in 1891 and operated until 1945.]

<sup>35</sup>[This school was founded in 1823, by William Tuke (1732-1822), after leasing premises close to York Minster from the Quaker hospital. It moved to Bootham in

Tottenham to York. But about when he was leaving school tragedy smote the family. At 18 his sister Mary, whom he adored, contracted TB, against which there was no remedy nor any knowledge of the causes, though it was thought to be due to colds and draughts. After a long illness she died, and then it appeared that his mother had also contracted the disease, and she too slowly died. Joseph was devastated. I have a diary in which, no doubt to ease his pain, he recorded, almost minute by minute her last days and hours. With no one to look after him, little Joey also took ill and died.

But by that time William was out in the world, working (I think for a London firm) as an accountant. But the memory of the tragedy never left him. He was terrified of draughts for the children, sealed up the windows of the nursery, and when he could, the chimney also. It must have been a difficult time for my grandmother who had been brought up in Limerick as a tomboy, always out of doors with her four brothers (Alexanders).<sup>36</sup> There is a picture of her, aged about 12, I imagine, obviously up to mischief, with two red pigtails.

His firm sent William to Dublin on a job, and no doubt Friends looked after him well. There he met and married Elizabeth Alexander, aged 17 (ten years his junior), who had just left the Friends' School at Mount Mellick. They settled down in Rathgar, Dublin, but they had been married three years before my mother (Isabella Mary after her two grandmothers) was born. One of their near neighbour was Elizabeth's Aunt Susannah (Fisher) Webb (later my paternal grandmother). My inveterate tease of a father loved to tell the story of how the first time he saw his future wife she was in her bath (little Willie had been asked round to see his new little cousin).

But the Haywards did not stay very long in Dublin. William's bereaved

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1846, but the official name from 1829 to 1915 was 'Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting Boy's School'. The school boasts many famous alumni.]

<sup>36</sup>The eldest Alexander boy, George, emigrated to Australia at the time of the great Potato Famine, as did very many Irish families (some of the connection also went to South Africa) and touch was gradually lost with him.

and desperately lonely father, Joseph Hayward, longed to have his remaining child and family near him. So William gave up his job, they moved to a north London suburb, Winchmore Hill, with my mother, aged 8, and her next sister Alice, aged 6. [Annie] Kathleen must also have been born in Dublin and would have been about 4. The youngest member of the family, Joseph William Hayward, was born while they were at Winchmore Hill. After some (I fancy) unsatisfactory years at Winchmore Hill, the Haywards managed to escape to Devonshire. They settled at Kingskerswell,<sup>37</sup> a small village (but it had a station) near Newton Abbott. I suppose that while at Winchmore Hill, William may have had some accounting jobs, but on moving to Devonshire, he gave it all up. He was still in mortal terror of TB and I think he was afraid some of them would contract it in London. His father, Joseph, undoubtedly helped with the cost of the move. The new house had once been lived in by a cousin (Baldwin Hayward). Joseph was still living at Tottenham with a cousin of his wife 'Cousin Annie Walker'.<sup>38</sup> She was evidently an unpleasant woman, and in the end cheated the family. Joseph had amassed or inherited some good 18th century furniture, and some valuable china. (Some of which has come down to me – in particular a fine 17th century grandfather clock, a dining table and set of chairs to match.) In his will he left cousin Annie 'the furniture in her room'. She got wind of this and rushed everything she could carry into her room. It was only on her death, many years later, that the family recovered its rightful property.

At [Kings]kerswell the Haywards were happy but poor. Their third daughter, Annie Kathleen, had been born in London, but their only son, Joseph William, must have been born at Kerswell (he was 10 years younger than

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<sup>37</sup>[This was originally typed as Kings Kerswell. Their address, from census information, was at Barton Road, in the district of Cockington.]

<sup>38</sup>[In fact the 1871 census lists her in Joseph's household as Anne Walker, not Annie, then aged 39. In addition to Ursula's mother, the household also included Hannah and Sarah Weitch, aged 67 and 30 respectively.]

my mother).<sup>39</sup> The children did not go to school. What teaching they had was given, pretty ineffectively, by their father. Meanwhile, although he did no office work, he was keenly interested in the stock market, on this (and no doubt, helped by his father's property on his death), William gradually amassed a by no means negligible capital. On the whole he was very successful, but he put a lot of energy into the pursuit of gains. I remember how he used to sit for hours wrapped in thought, occasionally murmuring 'I don't know, I'm sure I don't know'. I now realize this was when he was thinking of sales and purchases of securities. But naturally he was not always successful. I remember one painful occasion when he bought some Alsopps Brewery shares, which immediately went down, and the family was made to drink nothing but Alsopps for some time. Another of his purchases was Gravesend and Milton Waterworks shares because he thought it was likely to be nationalized – and so it was eventually, but only by the Attlee government after World War 2. But at Kerswell such days were far off. I inherited shares in the Bank of New South Wales from my grandfather and have held them until 1982.

It became clear that William's children must have some formal education, so in 1878 the two elder girls were sent off to Sidcot School near Bristol, 7 years after my father. When Belle<sup>40</sup> and her sister Alice went to Sidcot they were aged 12 and 10.<sup>41</sup> I think Belle's years at Sidcot were some of the happiest of her life. The lessons were no problem to her; she knew all that they had to teach her by the time she was 15. Evidently the pupils at Sidcot had a great deal of freedom to explore the beautiful Mendip

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<sup>39</sup>[Here Ursula contradicts her earlier statement about the birthplaces of Annie Kathleen and Joseph William. Census records confirm her earlier statement that Isabella, Annie Kathleen and Alice were born in Ireland and Joseph was born in Winchmore Hill.]

<sup>40</sup>[This refers to Isabella, Ursula's mother.]

<sup>41</sup>[In the 1881 census, Isabella is listed as living in the School, aged 15. Alice is not included in the list of pupils which, however, does contain Albert and Ernest Alexander, both aged 13, and Emily Webb, aged 10.]

countryside. This Belle never forgot and took me to see the place when I was 10. But clearly Belle could take more education, so she was moved on to the Mount School, York which was the female equivalent of Bootham, where she did very well and made lifelong friends. But she hated the place and its restrictions. One of her main teachers at the Mount was her cousin Edith Webb (my father's elder sister). Edith had no training, but was an excellent history teacher and a most intelligent woman. Mother left the Mount with a good Matric, sufficient to take her to London University if opportunity should ever offer. And in 1890 it came. By that time the Haywards had moved to Torquay, no doubt for the sake of the three now grown-up girls. Alice had no career in prospect, but Kathleen later became an able artist training at the Art School at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Belle argued with her father that three grown-up daughters at home was far too much, so that she should be allowed to go to college. So in 1889/90 she was registered for the B.Sc. degree at University College, London, to major in Botany and Zoology. She chose UCL because the new and exciting scientific investigations seemed to be better developed than at Oxford or Cambridge. And certainly she had the best of teachers, such as Karl Pearson<sup>42</sup> and Marshall Ward (the father of the botanical explorer, F.K. Ward<sup>43</sup>). Her career was brilliant, and she emerged in 1893 with a packet of gold medals above all the men. But

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<sup>42</sup>[Pearson (1857-1936) changed his name from Carl to Karl after enrolling at the University of Heidelberg in 1879, when it was mis-spelt. Pearson was a prominent mathematical statistician and, as a protege of Francis Galton, proponent of eugenics. He became Goldsmid Professor of Applied Mathematics and Mechanics at UCL in 1884. However, in 1891 he became professor of Geometry at Gresham College, and so was not actually at UCL during Ursula's mother's time there. He later founded the statistics department at UCL in 1911, being the first person to hold the Galton Chair of Eugenics (financed by Galton's bequest)].

<sup>43</sup>[Harry Marshall Ward (1854-1906) was educated at Christ's College Cambridge 1876-1879, after which he spent several years in Ceylon. He became assistant lecturer at Owens College in 1883, and Professor of Botany at what is now Brunel. He became Professor of Botany at Cambridge in 1895. He does not appear to have been at UCL. His son, Francis Kingdon-Ward (1885-1958) took part in many expeditions over a period of about 50 years, suffering many accidents and at one period being arrested as a spy for the British India Office.]



matrimony intervened on any further scientific research; she couldn't carry on without a lab.

Edith must have left the Mount not long after my Mother had finished there. Edith felt she must go home, as their mother, Susannah, was getting on in years (she died in 1906 at the age of 87) and Gertrude's school was getting more and more successful and exacting. Edith got a job as a senior History mistress at Alexandra School, Dublin, a high school with a mainly (but not exclusively) Protestant connection. I later went through 5 years of it, 1905-10, and can vouch for it that the standard was good and some of the teaching quite excellent. Strangely, this move of Ediths' had opened up a new world for my father, by now a rising young solicitor. The Headmistress, the redoubtable Dr. Isabella Mulvany,<sup>44</sup> who deserves to be classed with other great Victorian Headmistresses (such as Miss Beale of Cheltenham,<sup>45</sup> Miss Burstall of Manchester, Miss Lawrence of Roedean (P.L.)<sup>46</sup> under whom I spend 5 years (1910-15) and Miss Buss of North London Collegiate<sup>47</sup>) and

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<sup>44</sup>[Isabella Mulvany (1854–1934) was educated at Alexandra College, and then became an assistant teacher and secretary to the founder, Anne Jellicoe from 1875. In 1880 Mrs Jellicoe died and Isabella became Head. In 1884 she was one of the first nine female graduates (five of whom were her own assistants) of the new Royal University of Ireland, and in 1904 she was the first woman to be given a degree (an honorary LLD) by Dublin University. She was Head Mistress of Alexandra for 46 years, before retiring in 1927.]

<sup>45</sup>[Dorothea Beale (1831-1906) was head of Cheltenham Ladies College from 1857 until 1906. In 1885 she founded the teachers' training college, St Hilda's College, in Cheltenham. In 1993 she was a founder of St Hilda's Hall, later College, at Oxford.]

<sup>46</sup>[The P.L. presumably refers to Penelope Lawrence, the elder of the Lawrence sisters (daughters of Philip Henry Lawrence, invalided in a climbing accident in 1881) who, with Millicent and Dorothy, began the school, then called Wimbledon House, in 1885. In 1898 it moved to its present site in Roedean Village, outside Brighton. Penelope had studied sciences at Newnham, Cambridge.]

<sup>47</sup>[Francis Mary Buss (1827-1894) was the first Principal of the North London Collegiate School when the private school in Kentish town, opened by her father Robert William Buss in 1845, moved there. Francis had assisted at her father's school, based on the ideas of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), a Swiss educator whose system was based on 'child-centred learning through discovery'. In the late 1870s, she attended evening lectures by F.D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley and Richard Chenevix Trench. In 1870 Francis handed the school to Trustees and



Torquay Meeting House. (There was nearly a terrible fiasco as the cab to take Willie and his sister Edith to catch the steamer (the Mail Boat) at Kingstown never turned up, and the train was already moving when they reached the station, but they just managed to get into the Guard's van.) They spent their honeymoon on the French Riviera, and came home to Clondillure, as related, where three years later I was born, as related. The early years of her marriage were I know difficult for my mother. In spite of her love for my father (all their lives they were extremely close to a degree where I sometimes almost felt I was neglected). But she desperately missed her work and her intelligent college friends. But her name was known to the Trinity scientists and there were a number of intellectual wives so that ultimately life was very sociable.

At that time Dublin was a splendid city, still retaining the atmosphere of a capital. Indeed, it was not much more than a century since it had ranked with Philadelphia as the second city in the Kingdom.<sup>48</sup> There were many fine Georgian houses and squares, as well as Trinity College and the Bank of Ireland (the Parliament House until 1801). There was an excellent Museum with collections of Celtic and Christian relics. Collars of gold, illuminated manuscripts, art galleries, all the Celtic crosses (mostly copies, but accurate) and for a child, not least, a careful copy of the Bayeaux Tapestry. There was also a lively cultural life with the Abbey Theatre just becoming famous, with the plays of Yeats and Synge, Boyle and others,<sup>49</sup> also two ordinary theatres

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<sup>48</sup>[This refers to the prominence of Quakers in Philadelphia, following the founding in 1681 of Pennsylvania, as a haven for Quakers, by William Penn. Penn was well known in Ireland, having moved there in 1666 to manage his father's estate in Cork.]

<sup>49</sup>[Edmund John Millington Synge (1871-1909) was, with William Buter Yeats and Augusta, Lady Gregory, a director of the Abbey Theatre. His play *The Playboy of the Western World*, caused riots when it opened at the Abbey. Roger Boyle (1621-1679), 1st Earl of Orrery, was educated at Trinity College Dublin and, as Master of the Ordinance, assisted Oliver Cromwell in his conquest of Ireland. His mansion at Broghill was later burned by Irish forces. In addition to plays, he wrote political pamphlets and poetry.]

with frequent visits of Shakespearean companies – and Bernard Shaw, an Irishman to the last, (what a row there was over *John Bull's Other Island*<sup>50</sup>). Finally, the Royal Dublin Society, with an excellent lending library and many concerts. It also ran the famous August Horseshow and the less famous Spring Show (what a row there was when the *Irish Times* correspondent wrote ‘Mrs. Jacob looked charming in a bisquit color gown’<sup>51</sup>). It was a close knit community where everyone seemed to know everyone. For the men there were (and are) two good clubs – Kildare St. (mainly ‘landed interest’) and Stephens Green (professional). My father was elected to this and made many friends there, Protestant and Catholic. Yeats was also a member. On boarding the Mail Boat to cross the Irish Sea the first thing everyone did was to sign the list of passengers which would be eagerly scanned in the *Irish Times* next day. Besides Trinity College (an Independent, mainly Protestant, old foundation) there was ‘the National’, a state supported and mainly center of the road Catholic,<sup>52</sup> a good Technical College and learned societies, especially the Statistical and Social Enquiry [Society] of Ireland ranking in age and prestige with the Royal and Manchester Societies. (My father was very proud when he was asked to write a paper for this.<sup>53</sup>)

I was too young to participate fully in all this intellectual and cultural life, but it was very much a background to our way of life.

Having explained how I came to exist and my ecology, I must now return

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<sup>50</sup>[This is a comedy about Ireland, written by George Bernard Shaw in 1904. It was commissioned by W.B. Yeats for the opening of the Abbey Theatre, but Yeats rejected it and it received its premier in London at the Royal Court Theatre.]

<sup>51</sup>[The writer was clearly making a pun based on Jacob’s famous biscuits.]

<sup>52</sup>[The Irish Universities Act, 1908 established the National University of Ireland, along with Queen’s University of Belfast, and dissolved the Royal University. The National University became a federal University based in Dublin and with three colleges: University College, Dublin; University College, Cork; and University College, Galway.]

<sup>53</sup>[On 12 December 1913 William gave a paper to the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland on ‘Commercial education in Ireland’. It was read by the Solicitor-General, Jonathan Pim. The Dublin economists John Kells Ingram and Richard Whately were earlier closely involved with the Society.]

to my early years – at Clondillure and 2 Highfield Rd. The dominant personality in my life was, (until I was nearly 4) Essie, my nannie. She was a broad-faced country girl, very affectionate and I adored her. She was experienced with young children, and a good disciplinarian in nursery hygiene. Like many nannies she waged continual war against attending to constipation, with threats that were meant to be dreadful. If I didn't perform 'on the second day you'd be dead and on the third day you'd be buried'. I pondered this forecast deeply: 'Dead' meant nothing to me, I knew nothing of death, but 'buried' (or berried as I took it to be) was more interesting. Would it be strawberries, raspberries or blackberries? And what would be my precise relation to these?

Essie, not infrequently, did things she knew that my mother would not have approved of, which would have led to a severe reprimand or even dismissed. To guard against this she invented a heinous sin called 'Contradicting'. She had absolute (and not misplaced) confidence that I would never reveal some doubtful episode if I was told that to do so would be contradicting. I remember one that she was particularly afraid of was one day she and I met unexpectedly in Rathmines some friends from the country. They felt they just must have a drink together, but what was to be done with me? They managed to smuggle me into the saloon of a well-known pub. It was a pleasant, well-furnished little room with no one there. They had their very modest drink (porter, I imagine, which was very popular in those income groups) and we escaped safely with severe admonitions about contradicting. None of Essie's escapades could possibly have done me any harm. This was probably not so true of the mountains of sweets with which she indulged me.

There was, however, one episode which must be related (although my recollections of it are slightly hazy) – it merited a super warning about contradiction. If not typical, it was known to be a practice among Catholic nannies to have their Protestant charges baptized by a priest. They just could not bear to think that if anything happened to their dear little things

they would go straight to hell. One day Essie took me to Rathgar chapel. I knew the place quite well, I was taken at Christmas to see ‘The Girls’ (a little scene of the Nativity) and at other times to be held up to kiss the toe of the Crucifix (an exercise I much disliked<sup>54</sup>). But this time we knocked and went in another door, where we were met by a kind tall man who patted me on the head. There was some conversation and then we went home. But we came back another day, obviously expected, and something took place, but here precise memory fails me. As a Friend, of course, I knew nothing of baptism and had never been baptized.

By the time I was nearly four I had pretty clearly outgrown a nannie and was to have a governess who would see to my further training. Mother was ashamed at the mirth with which my English relations greeted my brogue (which I don’t think can have been very heavy as I was always very careful to speak quite differently to Mother and to Essie). So it was decreed that I must have an English governess, Miss Simms. She was a young woman from Birmingham, one of a large and indigent (lower) middle class family. She anglicized me by teaching me to call a spool of thread – a reel of cotton, a lobby – a landing, and a press – a cupboard. But I don’t think her Birmingham accent was nearly as attractive as Essie’s brogue. She was very kind and in the end I got to like her, but never with the same feeling as for Essie.

The greatest influence on me in my young days was my Aunt Gertrude, the younger of father’s two sisters. With some difficulty after father turned them out of Clondillure, her sister Edith managed to find a very eligible early Victorian house in Frankfort Avenue, Rathgar, which runs between the Rathmines and the Rathgar roads. It had fine big rooms just right for the school, and an upper floor for living. The school flourished and must have numbered about 30 children, usually from about 4 to 11 or 12 (but the bright ones put their heads through the top by 9). Auntie took over my

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<sup>54</sup>[This act of kissing a crucifix, usually on the feet, is referred to as the ‘Veneration of the Cross’]

moral training, I am sure to the relief of my parents. She had herself a strong religious sense, but she never forced anything on us. Rather she appealed to our reason. We went straight to the New Testament and learnt a text every Sunday, and if on Monday we knew it perfectly, a text was placed in a box which each of us had. Arithmetic we started with different coloured beans – black for units, white for tens and brown for hundreds. (For long I felt that the brown ones must somehow be more valuable). The top class which she took herself was quite small, but of differing intelligences. She got over this very successfully by putting the bright children to work in their own pairs. I always feel that if I had been able to work a bit longer with George Preston (who ended up a Professor of Chemistry at Dundee and an FRS<sup>55</sup>) that my maths would have been better. (Preston died aged 79.) But she managed to conceal from us who the clever ones and who the stupid ones were. Every month in the top class we had an ... [A page is missing here, probably containing material about her time at Alexandra School.]

... made jolly little notes in tunes. A short sighted mistress was completely baffled by this. (I was a great collector of nibs. One time I had 63 in the pocket of my sailor suit, and when the string broke it was a disaster.) But my great invention was cyphers. My first experiment was just numbers. One very quickly learnt the numbers of the letters. This was safe as although<sup>56</sup> surprised at such a list they roused no comment from my mistress. But my real success was a pictorial cypher. (At that age one can remember anything almost instantly.) The shapes I used were quite random and of course we had nothing to convey or conceal. We just passed them round among my friends. But a page of these was found and led to quite a terrible row, which

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<sup>55</sup>[George Dawson Preston (1896-1972) was in fact a Professor of Physics, and was Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He was educated in a private school in Oundle between 1909 and 1914, was wounded in the leg at the start of World War I. He studied at Cambridge in 1921 and became a researcher at the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington.]

<sup>56</sup>[This was originally typed as ‘the’ but changed by hand.]

actually reached my parents ears so that I had to foreswear all cyphers.

Apart from the school course, many lessons were interesting, especially history, where we used a ‘line of time’ showing contemporaneous events in different countries. But it was all geared to Irish history, English only appearing as it impinged on Ireland. Latin was always fun, especially Virgil, translating as we went, with very little finesse of grammar or prose. The worst gap in our training was literature, which was confined to Scottish or Irish works. Scott, Maria Edgeworth was our main diet. My mother was much upset at this lacuna, and supplemented it heavily (or I should never have got to Roedean), and we saw many Shakespeare plays by good visiting companies. She also read me *The Odyssey*.<sup>57</sup> But I have never had a really strong literary sense. Both music and drawing were well taught. For music we had compulsory class singing in parts, usually an instrument (mainly piano) and if any talent was observed, Harmony – filling up chords from numbers. Drawing consisted of the then usual drill of a collection of objects on a drawing board (it was just the same at Roedean) but it was a useful drill and did teach one perspective. I did not mind this instruction as I was always drawing at home in any case.<sup>58</sup>

But the study that gave me the most interest was Botany where annual competitions were set of pressed flowers showing flower, stem, leaf and if possible, root. There was a fixed programme of Natural Orders. Three or four gradually attaining more difficult (rarer collections – such as geraniaceae, scrophulariaceae and so on<sup>59</sup>). These had to be mounted on 12×10 sheets and labelled: English name, Latin name, where found, date and natural order. It was a magnificent training, in accuracy, neat fingers and field botany.

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<sup>57</sup>[This was originally written as Oddysey. This is the second epic Greek poem, the first being the *Iliad*, attributed to Homer. It describes Odysseus’s journey home after the fall of Troy.]

<sup>58</sup>[Ursula continued to draw and paint throughout her life.]

<sup>59</sup>[Geraniaceae is a family, of about 800 species, of flowering plants, the best known of which are Geranium and Perlargonium. Scrophulariaceae, is also a family of flowering plants, containing many species of annual or perenial herbs.]



There had to be a minimum of 35 specimens, but my maximum was all that I could find, for compositae I had more than 100, somewhat to the consternation of the Professor of Botany, at Trinity, who judged the entries. I never went on an expedition without a tin over my shoulder to collect specimens. Naturally, I was aided and abetted by my Botanical mother, but the hobby was essentially my own. The Irish flora was extremely rich, but I also collected wherever I was – especially in Devonshire, and even in France in 1908. After 5 years of this discipline I was an accomplished Botanist. The Botany mistress at Roedean quickly discovered this. I was made to check all the flowers brought in for the Roedean (very inferior) competition (just putting a flower in water, with a name). This did not imply that one really had to look at the flowers, as I did. All of this was of course accompanied by gardening. My mother was an early rock garden enthusiast and we grew them in rivalry.<sup>60</sup> My infant prodigy botany was recognized and my enthusiasm sharpened by invitations from the great such as Professor Lloyd Praeger<sup>61</sup> and Professor Andrew Dixon at Trinity.<sup>62</sup> (We were great friends of the Dixons as in addition to my mother's professional interests, Mrs. Dixon was with my father one of the early Poor Law Guardians).

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<sup>60</sup>[On Ursula's attachment to gardening, J.N. Wolfe (1968) *Value, Capital, and Growth: Papers in Honour of Sir John Hicks* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p. x) reported that John Hicks was at one time responsible for laying out parts of Nuffield College gardens and, 'on one occasion he went directly from an important meeting to the gardens to supervise the planting of some new rose bushes. An eminent international trade theorist who happened to be present and who witnessed this operation earned the ire of Ursula Hicks by commenting upon the difficulty of reconciling this activity with the theory of comparative advantage'.]

<sup>61</sup>[This was originally typed as Lloyed. Robert Lloyd Praeger (1865-1953) obtained a degree in engineering at the Royal University. After museum work he was employed in the National Library in Dublin until retirement in 1923. Hence he was not a professor, but was President of the Royal Irish Academy, 1931-1934, and of the British Ecological Society, and was first President of the National Trust for Ireland on its establishment in 1947.]

<sup>62</sup>[This should in fact be Henry Horatio Dixon (1904-1949), who was Professor of Botany in Trinity College Dublin for 45 years, retiring in 1949. He became a student of TCD in 1887 and was first appointed there as an assistant in 1892. He became FSR in 1908. Ursula is clearly confusing the name with that of his brother, Andrew Francis Dixon, who was Professor of Human Anatomy.]

Like virtually all the Protestant businessmen and professionals my father voted Unionist, as it was becoming to be called (a few Protestant Home Rulers were the exception and they were sometimes called ‘The Third Sex’). After the Liberal victory of 1906 they had exceptional opportunities. My father was not politically minded but he was a keen member of the Education Committee of the Rathmines Urban District Council, where he had a strong ally in Canon Fricker, I suppose he was the ‘P[arish] P[riest]’.<sup>63</sup> The (Catholic) National Schools were primitive; we used to hear the classes recite in unison; but no doubt they were improving. All middle class children went to private schools of varying degrees of efficiency. For girls the Alexandra<sup>64</sup> was by far the best. There was a number of effectively ‘prep schools’ for English public schools of which only one, ‘Castle Park’ was residential, and completely English in outlook. It was started or rather moved from Kent, about 1906 by the husband of one of my northern Webb cousins, and was from the first a tremendous success. Most of the local day schools worked to the syllabus of the Dublin Department of Education – hence the Irish outlook followed by Alexandra. (After Independence the study of Erse<sup>65</sup> became compulsory. Although I question if there was any consistent effort to enforce its use.) There were according to my recollection four grades of public examination: preparatory, junior, middle, senior – the last providing entrance to Trinity (T.C.D.) but only the two lower functioned within the School. The higher grades belonged to Alexandra College, a sister foundation located next door, which also functioned as a sort of finishing school. (The two foundations have now been united.) T.C.D. had a very good reputation and many of the boys returned to Trinity after their English public schools.

My introduction to Politics was concerned with the 1905–6 election. We

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<sup>63</sup>[Mark Anthony Fricker was from 1882 the Parish Priest of St Mary’s Rathmines. In 1920 he witnessed the destruction of the church as a result of an electric fire.]

<sup>64</sup>[This was originally typed as Alexander.]

<sup>65</sup>[Irish Gaelic. This was originally typed as Ersc.]

took in the Westminster Gazette, then a very good paper, which as an evening paper arrived for breakfast. It was active in the Liberal cause and as so I found the Balfour/Chamberlain and Campbell-Bannerman controversy extremely interesting. But of course good Unionists did not swerve in their loyalty. This was very clear in the election. At that epoch elections occupied several weeks and day by day the Westminster graphically exhibited progress. (In many ways I think it was a better method of procedure.) In the conservative Unionist landslide an important supporter Walter Long had fallen by the wayside – but a very safe seat was still open to him in South County Dublin.<sup>66</sup> I was carefully instructed in all this, and went into the polling booth with father. Subsequently I shook hands with Mr. Long, of whom of course we were all proud at that time.

### **Keldon**

The Haywards left Kerswell and moved to Torquay to a house called Kirkthorpe on the sea between Torquay and Paignton,<sup>67</sup> as the daughters Alice and Kathleen clearly needed some society. My mother had little to do with this as she was already starting at University College. Torquay Meeting was then quite sociable, as wealthy Friends in the winter came down from the Midlands and North for the better climate. In due course Alice married one of them: Mansen Spriggs, a young man from a family firm of engineering products, (mainly I think beds and spring mattresses) near Birmingham.

I think the Haywards never really liked Kirkthorpe, and when Alice mar-

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<sup>66</sup>[Walter Hume Long, 1st Viscount Long (1854-1924) was appointed by A.J. Balfour in 1905 as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Long had strong Unionist connections through his wife's and mother's families. The Unionist government was defeated in December 1905 but, as Ursula mentions, the Unionists of South County Dublin nominated him and he defeated the nationalist opponent. However, by 1919 Long was an architect of the Government of Ireland Act, the fourth home-rule measure. In late 1911, when Balfour resigned party leadership, Long and his rival Chamberlain agreed to withdraw from the leadership election in favour of Andrew Bonar Law. He returned as President of the Local Government Board in the first coalition government in 1915. In total, he had 25 years of ministerial experience in five different state departments.]

<sup>67</sup>[This was originally typed as Paignton.]

ried they moved to what became home from home of all the grandchildren (Joseph, ten years younger than my mother was usually away at Bootham and then at Manchester University, training as an engineer). Keldon was the local (Essex) pronunciation of Kelvedon, where the manor house had been the home of many generations of Haywards. Keldon was a house of no particular architectural distinction, but of ample dimensions and, as Grandpa was always reminding us, extremely well built. Like very many Torquay houses it was rough cast in a dull pink colour, by no means unattractive. It was built on the side of a hill so that the back part, away from the road, possessed three large cellars: one was light and very attractive as it housed Racer, a splendid rocking horse which if you rocked very violently you could almost (but not quite) tip over. The second cellar was a larder/store room where one did not go, but the third was pitch-dark and consequently terrifying. One rushed past it to the friendly comfort of Racer. Keldon was situated in a quiet road in St. Marychurch,<sup>68</sup> virtually a suburb of Torquay, situated on top of a cliff, but with steep ways down to the sea to the beaches of Oddicombe, Babbacombe. There were two large churches — one Anglican, one Catholic. Naturally, we didn't attend either, but my Essie tried out the latter only to find it utterly alien, they could not make anything of her. St. Marychurch was a sizeable village, where Grandma took me to do the marketing, so I got to know the tradesmen quite well.

Keldon was a fairly large house with big rooms. On the ground floor were dining room, drawing room, 'morning room' — which my parents and I used as a sitting room. The table (which always had a baize cotton cloth) came no doubt from Great Grandfather's 'Terrace House' at Tottenham and is now the dining room table at Porch House.<sup>69</sup> The 4 chairs which go with

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<sup>68</sup>[This was originally typed as St. Mary Church here and below.]

<sup>69</sup>[After John and Ursula moved to Oxford in 1946, and John took up a Nuffield College fellowship, their main residence was Porch House in the Cotswold village of Blockley, although they also maintained a flat in Oxford. The house was bequeathed to John by his Aunt Winifred Whale. Porch House was subsequently

it, which date from the first decade of the nineteenth century are also at Porch House. Leading out of the dining room was a small conservatory which Grandma kept full of flowers. I remember particularly a pale blue flower and was not satisfied until I eventually got one of my own at Porch House. Every morning I got up early to help Grandma water the plants, an operation which I am sure delighted us both. One day a week there was a jobbing gardener, Granfield, beside whom I trotted happily, up and down the lawn as he cut it. The grown-ups were always afraid I would get in his way or bore him, but I am sure we were always the best of friends. To return to the house: upstairs in addition to the Grandparents bedroom was a big square room with a large bed with curtains, which seemed to be ever so cozy. But I had a little room on the front, with a very tiresome light just outside, and large forbidding photogravures of distinguished Directors of Pickfords, (Baxendales)<sup>70</sup> where Great Grandfather worked and nursed his sick horses. Outside on the landing stood the Grandfather clock which has descended to me. It belonged to the generation of clocks with a frame of English oak which was sent to China to be lacquered in the '30s. I had to have it repaired as the points on the little handmade wheels had worn down. By good luck I found a little clock maker in Clerkenwell – (from where it had originally come) who was able to trace the origin exactly. It now stands in Porch House. The remaining rooms on the first floor were Aunt Kathleen's bedroom and studio where she painted very competently in oils. I think her best portrait was the

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bought by Ursula, who bequeathed it, after John's life tenancy expired, to Linacre College, Oxford, where Ursula was a foundation Fellow. Her hope was that the house would be used as a quiet study environment for students to work in the country. But Linacre subsequently sold Porch House and named one of their buildings, 105 Banbury Road, after Lady Ursula Hicks.]

<sup>70</sup>[The original Pickford's company, founded as Pickford's Movers in 1756 (but with origins in the 17th century), was sold in 1817 to a partnership led by the highly energetic Joseph Baxendale (1785-1872), using funds from his wife's dowry. Baxendale built the company into a national carrier and retained control until his death, although he turned the day-to-day running over to his children in 1847. In 1920 the company was sold to Hays Warf Ltd and has changed hands several times since then.]

one, of mother and me age 6, with Mother reading ‘Treasure Island’ to me in the dining room at Keldon. (Now in Porch House.)

The two historic occasions at Keldon were Aunt Kathleen’s wedding and The Golden Wedding. At the former (which was, of course, like all those of her two elder sisters at Torquay Meeting) my cousin Will Spriggs and I were bridesmaid and page – Will in a splendid black velvet suit with white shirt and ruffles. I don’t remember my frock, I never cared for party frocks. But the two of us had a marvellous and riotous time. The Golden Wedding was nearly twenty years later and all the Hayward children and their spouses were there. As I had just passed an exam (I think it must have been Cambridge Little Go<sup>71</sup> for which Roedean had entered me more or less by mistake) I was begged off school as a very special occasion. It was rather a formal occasion but I suppose everyone enjoyed it.

At Keldon the Haywards lived a quiet life. I doubt if they ever had visitors apart from the children – grandchildren – Alice’s four, and eventually Kathleen’s three – probably once a year. I was by far the most frequent visitor. My mother in Dublin had made it a bargain on her marriage that she was to be allowed to visit her parents at least once a year. This we certainly did. Grandma’s only excursion, apart from shopping in St. Marychurch, was Torquay Meeting which she attended regularly, more for sociability, I fancy, than from anything else. It was a long hot walk down to Torquay and up the opposite hill. I cannot say I enjoyed it. They had some friends in the Meeting, particularly Dr. Cash<sup>72</sup> with several daughters not so much

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<sup>71</sup>[It is not clear if this is instead a reference to the Oxford examination, ‘Responsions’, popularly called Little Go, which was generally taken by students before matriculation. The exam consisted of questions on Latin, Greek and mathematics. In Cambridge, Little Go referred to the ‘Previous Examination’, taken a year before graduation. Alternatively, Ursula may have thought the Oxford name meant the same in Cambridge.]

<sup>72</sup>[Alfred Midgley Cash (1851-1929) trained in Edinburgh as a student of Joseph Lister, and later converted to homeopathy. Lister, a Quaker, taught numerous students who were both homeopaths and Quakers. One of Cash’s patients was Enriqueta Augustina Rylands (1843-1908) who founded the John Rylands Library

younger than her own. She always had two excellent maids (whose<sup>73</sup> boy friends sometimes worried her badly). But her big worry, I think, was what had become of Grandpa. He always steadily refused to go to Meetings, on the lame excuse that he was deaf, and so could derive no advantage from it. But he was very sociable and like to sit around in public gardens and talk to his cronies, whom we called his ‘How are yous’. But his passion<sup>74</sup> was sailing, at first at Torquay, but later on the other side of Oddicombe where the sea was on the north, along the coast, perhaps nearly as far as Lyme Regis. Sometimes he took a train, say to Teignmouth, Dawlish, or Exmouth. You never knew. He never made up his mind in advance. In fact he scarcely made up his mind which carriage in the train he would get into until the train was practically moving. He never owned a boat, but at Oddicombe beach he always had the Westonia, a little green cutter with white trimmings and a center board. One day he just happened to step on a strawberry boat returning to France, and didn’t turn up again for a couple of days. Grandma was beside herself with anxiety.

My parents were very fond of foreign travel – starting with their honeymoon on the French Riviera, and when I reached about 6 they decided that I might as well be left with the grandparents, I supposed it was usually for two weeks or so. So Grandpa was detailed to look after me most mornings, and very often we went sailing in the Westonia, with just a boatman as crew. I found this delightful, even when it was rough, but Grandpa thought I must be dreadfully bored. Sometimes we went further afield, especially to Brixham, the other side of Torquay, where one could sail in a real fishing boat (smack). It was the mackerel season and sometimes we caught a fish. One

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in Manchester (having married Rylands after the death of his first wife, to whom Enriqueta was companion). In her will, she donated substantial sums to homeopathic hospitals, as well as leaving £5,000 to Dr Cash. ]

<sup>73</sup>[This was originally typed as who.]

<sup>74</sup>[This was originally typed as passions.]

triumphant but fatal day we caught 18! What was<sup>75</sup> Grandma to do before the advent of fridges!<sup>76</sup>

From 1908 I was never left at Keldon as I was then (at 12) quite ready to join in everything in France. That year my parents and I went with Uncle Joe and Aunt Essie – a memorable trip in a little boat (cinq chevaux<sup>77</sup>) the Fishy Monster. A steamer took us to Dunkirk and we followed the canals (and canalized rivers) to Meaux, close to Paris. I was determined to speak no French (lessons in the holidays were wrong). Yet when I got home I found I could speak quite well, with a good accent. My French mistress was enchanted.

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<sup>75</sup>[This was originally typed as ‘as’.]

<sup>76</sup>[This was originally typed as frigs.]

<sup>77</sup>[‘Five horse-power’.]