

# Paul Watts

Born 6.3.1944.

Life story by Paul and his three siblings.

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*This life story was extracted in 2020, with permission, from The Watts Family Chronicle, a family history compiled by Gordon and Veronica Watts's four children: Anthony (Tony), Paul, Veronica Mary and Clare. It is one of seven life stories extracted from the same source: the others are of Gordon Watts (their father), Veronica Watts (their mother), Patrick Thompson (their stepfather) and Paul's siblings Anthony Watts, Veronica Mary Price (née Watts) and Clare Lockwood (née Watts)*

# 1. Preface

We have written this family history for our children and grandchildren, so that they can know more about their forebears, and the family of which they are a part. We have written it together, drawing upon our different memories and the various photographs and mementoes which we each possess. Veronica Mary carried out most of the research, using Ancestry and other sources; Anthony has co-ordinated the writing and selection of photographs. But we have all contributed, and have shared and approved the drafts.

The text is inevitably somewhat uneven. On our ancestors our information is often scanty, and confined to official records. We have included all of this, so that the book can be used as a source of reference. We have also leavened it where we can with some photographs and contextual detail. On more recent times we have more documents, a lot more photographs, and our own memories (increasingly erratic as they are). We regret, however, the many documents that have been destroyed, and the lost opportunities to collect family stories from our parents and grandparents. This is why we have decided to pull together what we know now, while we still can!

For the purposes of the Lives Retold website, we have split the collective family narrative into seven separate biographies. Some parts only appear in one of the biographies, but others appear in two or more, in order to make each biography as self-sufficient as possible.

The four families from which we were derived were named Watts, Goodliffe, Wells and Griffiths. We have traced back each of them in turn, drawing from parish records, census data, family mementoes, and other sources. The details are included in the biographies of our father Gordon Watts (for the Watts and Goodliffe families) and our mother Veronica Watts (for the Wells and Griffiths families), also available on this website.

From what we have learned about these families, three general conclusions can be drawn.

First, each of the four families was remarkably stable geographically, all in the south of England and in the midlands. Despite some mischievous comments from one of us (Veronica Mary) that we should recognise the Welsh roots of the Griffiths family by supporting Wales in rugby matches against England, we have been unable to find any evidence of such roots (much to the relief of her brothers). Indeed, we have not found any member of the family who was born or died outside England – or even, indeed, in the north of England.

Second, extraordinarily, the roots of the four families are in the parts of the country where each of us now lives. The Watts family came predominantly from Somerset, where Veronica Mary now lives (in Frome); the Goodliffe family from Cambridgeshire, where Anthony now lives (in Cambridge); the Wells family from

Middlesex and Kent, where Clare now lives (in Chiddingstone, Kent); and the Griffiths family from Warwickshire, where Paul now lives (in Dunchurch). This is totally accidental: our childhood was in many other locations, and each of us has moved to where we now are for a variety of reasons, that have nothing to do with our family roots – of which we were in any case largely unaware until recently. But it represents, in our view, a very happy set of coincidences.

Third, we come from good solid working-class stock – as do most English families, of course. Any hopes that we might find traces of nobility or wealth have been unfulfilled. We owe a great deal to our parents and grandparents for providing us with opportunities that would have been inconceivable to their forebears.

Our family has had some difficult times, as most if not all families have, and we have tried to be open about this, disinterring some skeletons and seeking to lay them gently to rest. But there has been much happiness too. We all feel very fortunate to be part of such a close and loving family.

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## 2. Childhood

Paul Nigel Watts was born on 6 March 1944 in Glanton, Hexham, Northumberland. Christened Nigel Paul Watts, he refused from an early age to be called Nigel!

During the early part of the Second World War, while our father Gordon was away in the Army, our mother Veronica and our grandmother Violet lived in a fifth-floor flat at 94 Palmerston Road, Southsea, on the corner of Osborne Road, over what Nesta Barton (Veronica's lifelong friend) referred to (in some notes later prepared for Veronica Mary) as 'a very high-class Sports shop', of which Violet was Manageress. The whole building was destroyed by a German bomb on 9 January 1941: Nesta noted that it 'was reduced to ashes together with all Vi's [Veronica's] possessions and wedding presents' (for a detailed description of this incident, see biography of Veronica Watts).

From January to June 1941, Veronica and Gordon lived at 17 City Road, Winchester, Hampshire (January-June 1941). They then moved successively to Gourock, Scotland (June-September 1941), to Oswestry, Shropshire (September 1941), and to Shrivenham, Berkshire (October 1941), in each case to be near Gordon's regiment. Veronica next moved to Farringdon, Berkshire (November 1941 to September 1942), while Gordon remained in Shrivenham. She then moved successively to Fairbourne, North Wales (September 1942 to August 1943), to Winchester, Hampshire (August-September 1943), to Southampton, Hampshire (September-October 1943), to Glanton, Northumberland (November 1943 to October 1944) and to Alverstoke, Gosport, Hampshire (October 1944). Some of these moves may have been linked to seeking to retain proximity to Gordon, but others may have been for other reasons, including finding relative safety from bombing.



*Veronica with Paul and Anthony in 1944*

Anthony and Paul were both born during this time: Anthony at the Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford (probably the largest hospital near Farringdon) on 29 June 1942; Paul at Glanton on 6 March 1944. Veronica's mother, Violet, lived with us for some of this period, providing companionship and support for Veronica during Gordon's regular absences on military service (including landing at Dunkirk on 13 August 1944, ten weeks after D-day). She shared a house with us when we moved to Swanston, 64 Campbell Road, Southsea, Hampshire, in November 1944. We stayed there until September 1946, when we moved to Lübbecke, Westphalia, Germany, to join Gordon who was now stationed there (see biography of Gordon Watts for his movements during the War and his role in Lübbecke).



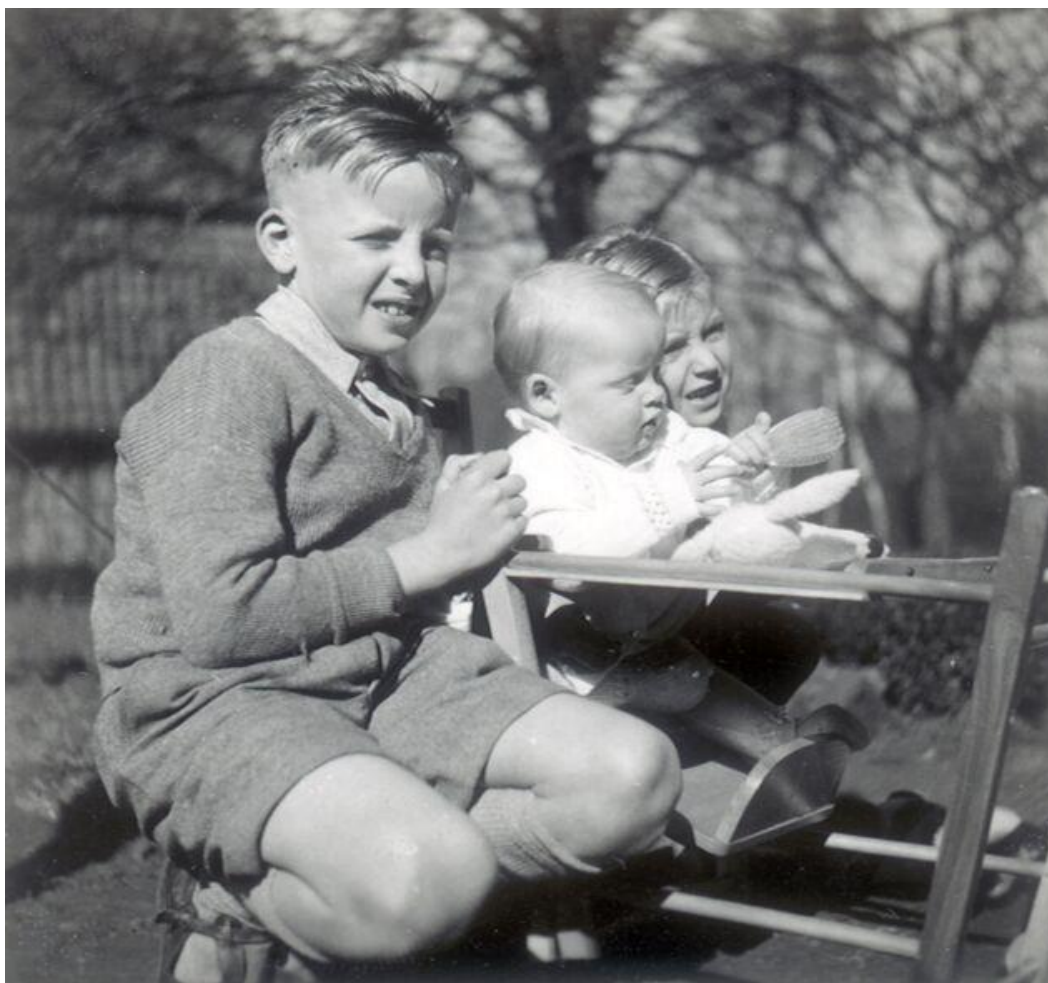
*Veronica and Gordon with Paul and Tony in 1946*

In an article on 'Our First Arrival in Germany, 1946' published in August 1955 in the Family Chronicle (see Chapter 3), Veronica wrote:

The war had been over for just 16 months when Anthony, Paul and I first arrived in Germany where we were to spend the next 4 years. We crossed from Tilbury to Cuxhaven, leaving Southsea early on Tuesday, September 24 and finally arriving at our new home in Lübbecke at teatime on September

26. It was an amazing journey and well organised in every possible detail: comfortable cabins, special nursery meals for children and ample cigarettes, sweets and magazines on the train – all free. As we passed through northern Germany via Hanover, Bückeberg and Minden we realised, however, how devastated the large towns were, and when we passed groups of Germans staring hungrily at the sight of a train complete with restaurant car, and begging for bread, chocolate and even cigarette ends we remembered that it was to an unhappy war-shattered country we had come.

Veronica Mary was born on 22 May 1949 at the BAOR Hospital in Rinteln.



*Anthony and Paul with their new baby sister 1949*

In July 1950, Veronica returned to England while Gordon was moved to Bonn in Germany. The family went through a very turbulent period. Anthony initially went to Alverstoke to stay with Nellie and Norman (Gordon's parents) for two months; while Veronica, Paul and Veronica Mary (only just over a year old) went to Fareham to stay with Violet and Teddy (Veronica's mother and stepfather). In August, Veronica Mary stayed in Fareham with Violet and Teddy, while Veronica went with Paul to Swindon, to hunt for a house.

In September, Anthony and Paul were sent to La Sagesse Convent, a Catholic orphanage near Romsey, while Veronica continued house-hunting; they stayed there

until November. It was a fairly traumatic period for both of them, as Anthony recalls:

There was a strong gang culture among the children, which – coming from a fairly protected background – bewildered and scared us. Because it was an orphanage, for children who had been abandoned by their parents or whose parents had died, the taunts from the other children led us to start wondering whether we had been abandoned too, despite all Motti's (Veronica's) reassurances to us. It was a great relief when Motti returned to take us away!

In October 1950, Veronica collected Veronica Mary from Fareham, and both went back to Swindon. Then in November 1950, all the family except Gordon – who was still in Germany – were reunited in our new house in Princes Road (probably No.27), Petersfield, Hampshire. For a short period Anthony and Paul went by bus to St Margaret's Convent School in Midhurst, Sussex – a mixed primary and girls' secondary school – before being sent in January 1951 to Prior Park Preparatory School, Cricklade, Wiltshire, a school run by the Irish Christian Brothers. Of the period in Petersfield, Anthony recalls one incident:

Paul and I used to act as servers at the Catholic Church, on some weekdays as well as on Sundays. On one occasion, coming back from Mass, we found a shilling coin in the road. We bought some comics with it, but evidently felt rather guilty because we hid them when we got home. Motti somehow found out, and lectured us very sternly, mainly on trying to hide what we had done, but also indicating that we should have put the money in a charity box rather than using it for ourselves. I got most of the blame: because I was older, I should have set a better example. Motti was rarely stern with us, so when she was, it made a big impression.

In June 1952, we moved to Cairnsmore, Nunney Road, Frome, Somerset. Meanwhile, in July 1951, Gordon was moved by the army to Manchester.

We have no clear memories of visits from Gordon during all of this period: there may have been, but he certainly never lived with us. There was however a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to which Veronica went, presumably with Gordon.

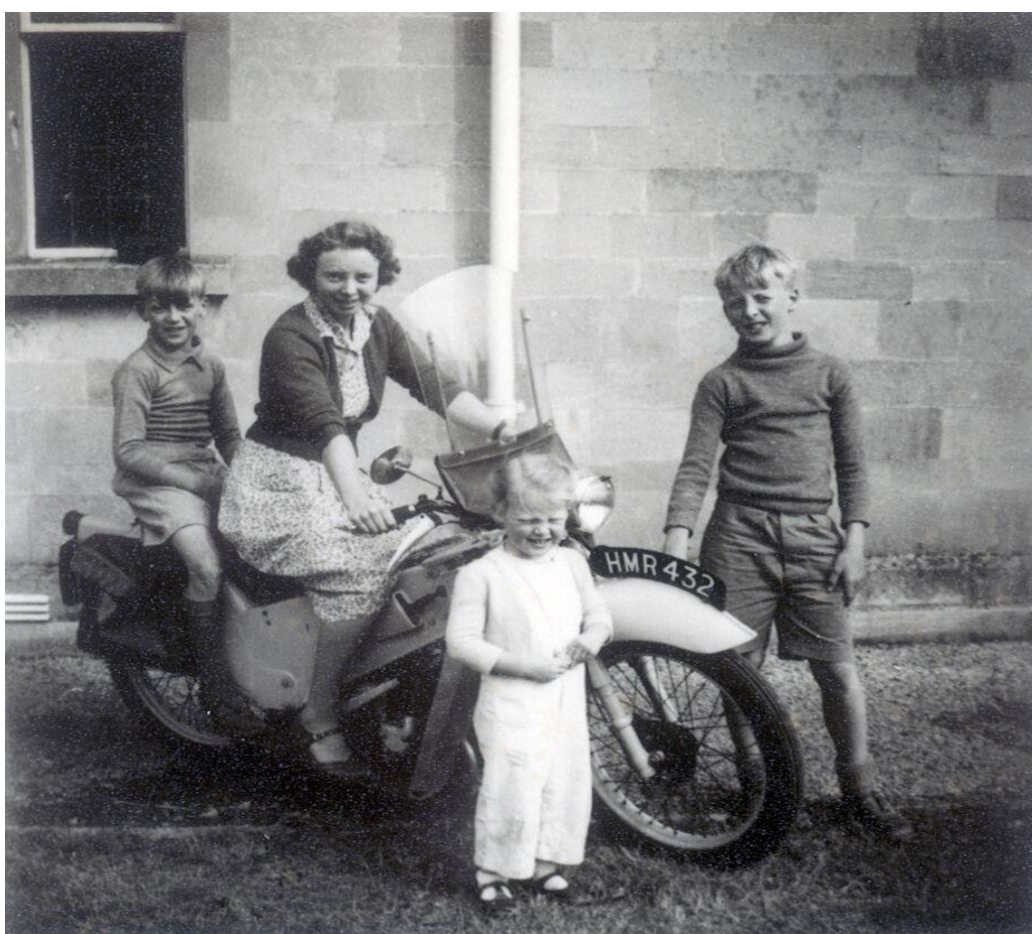
In retrospect, it seems possible that Veronica and Gordon had decided to split up, at least for a period, but then decided to try to get together again when we returned to Germany in 1954. So far as we can recall, we were never told anything about all this.

Shammy came to live with us for some of this period – certainly in Frome, and possibly in Petersfield too. She was Irish, and a close friend of Veronica's. We think they may have met in Lübbecke, and that Shammy may have worked there for SSAFA (a charity supporting Forces personnel and their families). In 1952, with our growing financial problems, Veronica decided to move to Ireland with Shammy and the children, and Anthony and Paul said their farewells at Cricklade. At this point Brother Robinson, the President of Prior Park, offered what were effectively very

generous scholarships to enable them to return to Cricklade and later to move to the senior school: Prior Park College in Bath, Somerset. This helped to persuade Veronica to abandon her plans.

Anthony writes:

Our house in Frome was rather lovely (though it was on a hill, and the garden was over the public lavatories!). Paul and I used to play cricket in the tarmac path leading to the garage – which was leased out (we had no car of our own) to a rare Terraplane (a favourite answer in future Paper Games!). We also used to go to the nearby park to play cricket and football, and come home for bread and dripping – a great treat! Father Buckley, our parish priest, was very kind to us and used to visit on his motorbike, which we found very exciting.



*Paul, Veronica, Veronica Mary and Anthony in Frome (on Father Buckley's motorbike)*

Veronica Mary remembers being able to ride her tricycle on a path all round the house. Paul recalls:

We used to make washing up more bearable (Ant was always in the loo when washing up time came!) by estimating the number of items we washed/dried. Motti would sometimes add clean pieces to help me 'win'. I never let on that I knew!



In 1954, Veronica and Gordon decided to start living together again, and we moved to Oldenburg, near Bremen in north Germany. Whereas in our earlier stay in 1946-50 we had lived in requisitioned German houses, and (like other officers' families) had German maids and boilermen, by 1954 most British families lived in specially-built enclaves, with their own amenities (e.g. NAAFI shops), separate from the German population.

We lived at 33 Hindenburgstrasse, Oldenburg, from June 1954 to September 1955. We then moved a few miles to Delmenhorst, where we lived at 25 Franz-Schubert-Strasse from September 1955 to January 1958, and at 26 Bachstrasse from January to July 1958. We subsequently moved back to England, to 52 Lidgett Lane, Roundhay, Leeds, where we lived from July 1958 to March 1959.

While in Delmenhorst Veronica pursued her love of music, particularly as a member of a group run by John Sanders that sang madrigals. Anthony has a programme of an evening of 'Songs and Sonnets', from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, which concludes with the statement: 'We wish to thank Mrs G.R. Watts for the use of her Drawing Room'. John Sanders had been organ scholar at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, and was doing his National Service in Daddy's regiment. He was later a distinguished organist, conductor, choir trainer and composer, including being organist of Gloucester Cathedral from 1967 to 1994, and director of the Three Choirs Festival from 1968 to 1994.

During this period Anthony and Paul continued as boarders at Prior Park, coming home by boat and train in the school holidays (see Chapter 3).

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### 3. Adolescence: The Family Chronicle

*The Chronicle of the Watts Family* was started by Anthony in August 1954 and continued until September 1958 (it was retitled *The Family Chronicle* in December 1957).

The Chronicle provides a detailed picture of our family life during the years 1954-58. It contained family and school news, articles (on topics like current affairs, sport, hobbies, the makes of local cars, etc.), results of family games (reported in great detail), and book and film reviews. Much of it was written by Anthony, with plaintive appeals for others to contribute:

Again I must ask for support. It is regretted that if this support is not given the Chronicle will have to be disbanded. This is the last plea. Please help. (2 April 1955)

This eventually bore some fruit, the first article being by Paul (on Amoeba!) (16 April 1955). Anthony could barely contain his excitement:

During the last three weeks this Chronicle has been slowly improving in both size and, we hope, quality... Now we have reached the climax with the excellent article on 'Amoeba' written above. We would therefore like to thank the author for beginning what we hope will be an endless series of articles by other writers. (16 April 1955)

It was indeed followed very quickly with a further article by Paul, this time on 'Hydra'! But this flurry of activity did not last:

As can be seen, this Chronicle is without any articles at all this week. I have run out of stuff to write about, and anyway, I think it would be unfair to write everything myself. Unless support is forthcoming the Chronicle will have to cease. So please let us have your support. (6 August 1955)

Later, however, other members of the family did contribute, including Veronica, Paul and Veronica Mary.

We used to have occasional Family Councils. The record of one stated:

Mummy took over all offices (chairman, president and secretary) and 'didn't bother about any minutes'. (9 April 1955)

Paul did not always do well academically at school:

When Daddy came home on Friday he brought with him the reports. Anthony came first out of 36 in Lower V and Paul 19<sup>th</sup> out of 22 in the (Lower) Upper Third. The latter did, however, improve, especially in the 'remarks'. Let us hope for even better ones during the following term. (26 April 1955)

The Chronicle tended always to welcome such ‘improvements’ by Paul and to seek to justify any shortcomings:

He mainly concentrated on General Science during the term, but despite this the remark on the report spoke of ‘not enough work’. This is surely an ample illustration of the unfairness of the masters’ comments. (18 August 1956)

In view of what Paul achieved later (including a 2:1 at Cambridge and becoming Director of the GEC Management College) his temporary under-achievement was clearly his way of distinguishing himself from an irritatingly achieving brother.

Not that Anthony was always a model to emulate. He referred to ‘my constant underhand battles with Brother Owens, the house-master of St Peter’s’:

The games began well for me: I had two possible positions I could play in, and I looked a ‘probable possible’ for a place in the Under 14 team. Then, on account of my cheek to him on the rugger field, I was dropped. I thought at first that this was because of my play not coming up to standard, but when I was also dropped from the Under 13 team I dismissed this from my mind. Eventually, after about two months, I was forgiven and played in the last two games. (5 January 1954)

Every holiday, Anthony and Paul would travel to Germany from Bath, via London, by train and boat (from Harwich to the Hook of Holland). Initially they were taken across London by a friend of the family or by Universal Aunts; the rest of the journey they undertook on their own, with some military surveillance. In July 1955 the Chronicle stated:

The boys returned from school on Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup>. They had a calm crossing and a nice journey, However, Anthony left their passport in his desk at school and he only remembered just after arriving at Paddington. But luckily Shammy, who met the boys, managed to arrange for the document to be put on an afternoon train which they met. In the course of the afternoon Shammy took Anthony and Paul to Westminster Abbey and the Oval (to watch Surrey play the South African touring team). (23 July 1955)

There are lots of details of family games, which Gordon in particular loved to play. They were very diverse: Rummy; Knock-Out Whist; Solo Whist; Table Tennis; Bezique; Lexicon; Ballyna Cricket; Monopoly; Totopoly; Canasta; Pit; L’Attaque; Fland; Pelmanism; Spillikins; Scoop; Scrabble; Wembley; Flutter; and, of course, The Paper Game (which has continued to be a favourite game across our family). Anthony and Paul also played a lot of cricket, sometimes with Veronica Mary (though she claims that, disgracefully, she was never allowed to bat!).



*Anthony, Paul and Veronica Mary playing cricket in the garden at Oldenburg*

Gordon was not so keen on family outings, but Bill Delvin – a subaltern in a regiment that shared the same barracks as Gordon’s regiment – used to take us out a lot: especially swimming in the sea at Brake in Holland (where the water was always excruciatingly cold) and to fairs:

On Easter Monday Bill took us to the Fair at the Pferdemarkt [horse market], and we had a smashing time shooting, going on the dodgems, on the ghost train, and on two very fast and bumpy ‘roundabouts’. (16 April 1955)

Veronica established her own small school:

Mummy has decided to open her own school. On Friday the Brigadier gave her permission, so all is now ready. She has asked Mother Patricia of St Louis High School, Frome, Somerset for old books etc. A bus has been procured to bring the children and to take them home. School hours will be roughly 9.30 to 12.30. So far three children are certain and one possible. (4 September 1954)



*A family outing to Brake in 1955*

At the end of the school year she had to withdraw:

Mummy is to continue her school up to the end of next week, as she won't be able to take a school next term because of the move to Delmenhorst which is now definitely 'coming off'. (23 July 1955)

But evidently the school continued:

Mummy's school ended on Thursday. The new teacher is to be Mrs Husband. Mummy is now able to get much more rest and more time for knitting, etc. (30 July 1955)

Veronica was by this time several months pregnant, so the knitting was presumably for the new baby (Clare) – who was referred to in the same issue:

It now seems fairly definite that the family will go to England over Christmas with the baby. (30 July 1955)

We never had a television at home until well into the 1960s. But one was installed at Prior Park in 1955:

One of the greatest events [of the term] was the installation of the TV set in St Paul's. The set is worked on a projector basis, and became very popular. My personal views are that radio still retains its superiority all-round, but television is certainly improving and the sport programmes are especially stimulating. (30 July 1955)

We had a dog, Antje:

Antje has been 'on heat' for the past week and despite precautionary measures she has managed to get out three times. As she has been out with mongrels or dogs of a different breed she will have to have an injection to prevent her from getting puppies of a mongrel type. (30 July 1955)



*Paul and Anthony on the lake at Oldenburg in the mid-1950s*

Our house in Oldenburg (33 Hindenburgstrasse) was a large house, with five bedrooms, a study, a living room, a dining room and a playroom (15 August 1954). In autumn 1955 we moved to 25 Franz-Schubert-Strasse in Delmenhorst:

It seems very cosy and much more like 'home'. The rooms are, of course, much smaller, but 'no loss'.... The BFES school is only twenty yards away and it is proposed to send Vim [Veronica Mary] there next term. (6 August 1955)

Around this time Paul decided that some competition was needed:

We welcome the arrival of a new family journal – 'Family News' – which is under the editorship of Paul. Unlike the present magazine, it is a daily, and its main feature is 'News of the Day'. Book reviews appear from time to time, and there has also been an article on 'Our Stamps' by Anthony. So here is another magazine asking for your help and assistance: let both it and us have it! (20 August 1955)

This clearly was mainly intended as a symbolic gesture, because soon this comment appears:

What has happened to the 'Daily News'? A week or two ago it was flourishing, now it seems to have ceased publication. What's wrong, Paul? (3 September 1955).

It was subsequently reported (14 April 1956) as having been revived as a weekly – 'News of the Week' – but then a merger seems to have been arranged, because Volume 4 of the Chronicle (1956-57) was initially edited jointly by Tony and Paul.

Meanwhile, Veronica at last contributed an article, on 'Our First Arrival in Germany, 1946' (see Chapter 2).



*Prior Park College, with its elegant Georgian buildings overlooking Bath*

Anthony wrote an article on 'A Typical Day at Prior Park' which refers to the senior house, St Paul's:

At Prior Park each day provides new entertainment and thrills, but the basic components remain the same. At 6.40 we get up and (sometimes) wash. Mass is at 7.15, but on Mondays and Wednesdays we get a sleep-in. Breakfast follows immediately after and we are permitted to go out immediately we finish. After a short break in which we make our beds and get our books ready, we have assembly and then go up to our classroom to begin the morning's work. We have one short break, from 11.00 to 11.15, and then we go back into class for the final lesson and Religious Instruction.

Lunch is the next item on the agenda, and after this important meal we rest and read or play table tennis until class resumes at 1.45. Of course, we don't have a full day's class every day, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays we have games in the afternoon. In this case we have tea at 4.15 and study at 5.00. On Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays, however, class ends at 3.45 and we immediately go into tea and dash up the field for games, which last until 5.25. Immediately we are changed study begins, and this lasts until 7.00. After the supper which follows, we have night prayers which consist of the rosary, a litany, a few prayers and a hymn. We then have a break until 8.30 when we have a further 70 minutes study, and then, weary and tired, we retire to our peaceful slumbers. (27 August 1955)

The final issue for the summer holidays of 1955 stated:

No one can deny that it has been very happy, the only trouble being that we were unable to go camping.... We wish Mummy all the best of luck [for the birth] of Peter Russell [presumably what Clare would have been called had she been a boy] and hope that Vim will enjoy herself at BFES school. Don't cry on the station. Think of the happy things: P.R., Christmas, etc. Big hug and kisses from us both. Have a nice time at Delmenhorst. Good-bye to you all: Mummy, Vim, Antje, Daddy, Bill. – Ant and Paulo. (14 September 1955)

The next issue was just before Christmas:

We are in England this time: Mummy, Vim and Clare at 59 Serpentine Road, Fareham; and Daddy, Paul and Anthony at 'Alfortville', Gosport. (24 December 1955)

It noted that during the term:

The main event was the birth of Clare Alecia on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November. She is a lovely baby and very good. (24 December 1955)

One of the main features of this holiday was our first experience of domestic television:

These holidays the family is having the opportunity of watching television on the lovely set which Uncle made himself. (24 December 1955)

Another notable event was Gordon taking Anthony and Paul to Fratton Park to watch Portsmouth beat Grimsby 3-1 in an FA Cup 3<sup>rd</sup> Round tie. The Pompey team included five international players, of whom the famous Jimmy Dickinson scored one of the goals. (14 January 1956)

Veronica's close friend Shammy (see Chapter 2) came to visit us:



Shammy came down on Monday... On Wednesday she took Vim, Paul and Anthony to see 'Red Riding Hood', a pantomime on at the Empire Theatre, Portsmouth. Shammy's friend, Michael, is the manager of the theatre, and he allowed us to sit in a box. (14 January 1956)

There continued to be fairly regular references to correspondence with Shammy in subsequent issues of the Chronicle, through to late 1958. Some included references to her going to cricket matches in London: she was keen on cricket. She also, for example, met Anthony and Paul as they were passing through London in December 1957 on the way to Germany, and took them to the cinema and to a Lyons' Corner House.

Bill Delvin, too, visited us during the Christmas holidays of 1955/56:

Daddy went over to Penzance to see Bill from Monday to Thursday, and Bill brought him back in his car. We were thus able to see Bill, though unfortunately only for a much-too-short half-hour. (7 January 1956)

References to Bill were regularly accompanied by indications of the extent to which we missed him when he was not with us: in many respects he had become, in effect, an honorary member of the family.

The first issue of the 1956 Easter holidays included comments on 'the girls':

Clare is much more fun these holidays – laughing, talking, and crying rumbustiously – and had her first Rusk on Friday for tea. She has Farex regularly. Veronica Mary gets worse and worse every holidays. Last week she phoned up Mrs Matthews to say that Daddy wouldn't get up! However, she honoured the boys by refusing an invitation to a birthday party on Thursday. (31 March 1956)

Veronica Mary provided some 'news' for the Chronicle (adroitly taken from her English book at school). Entries included:

June 4<sup>th</sup>. It is my birthday party today and I am going to have ten children at it, which counting myself makes eleven. We are going to have lots of fun.

June 12<sup>th</sup>. I took my baby [doll?] for a walk when I came back from school and she laughed because she loves it. Afterwards I helped Mummy do Clare.

July 6<sup>th</sup>. It is sixteen years since my mother and father were married, and so this morning I dressed myself and went down stairs into the garden and picked some flowers for them. (28 July 1956).

We had a maid and a putzfrau (cleaning lady), which could cause problems:

Crystal, our maid... has been sacked for various inefficiencies and because of an incident which we cannot recount here. During the past week, Erika has

been helping Margaret, the 'Putzfrau', but it will probably be some time before a permanent arrangement is arrived at. (14 April 1956)

The summer saw a visit from the Blondels:

Within the next few days Paul and Suzette Blondel, two old French friends of Daddy's, are due to be coming to stay with us, although they will actually live in their caravan... They have two daughters, Micheline and Francine, and thus their visit should be very enjoyable as well as educational for purposes of learning French. (28 July 1956)

Towards the end of the holidays, the Suez crisis had a big impact:

Daddy is thinking that war is imminent on account of the Suez incident, and thus in the evening a family council was held. It was decided that we will move to England if possible in the near future because of our proximity to East Germany at present and also because of Daddy's fear that he will not pass his next medical because of his deafness. But perhaps we were unduly pessimistic. (1 September 1956)

Anxieties about this threat receded, but a later comment favoured a return to England for financial and other reasons:

The incessant parties and similar social necessities and activities cost a lot of money and tend to become monotonous and even irksome. (12 January 1957)

The social activities were sometimes over-intrusive:

In the afternoon Mr Fulcher came unexpectedly, and thus frustrated another attempt at having a quiet afternoon writing and sewing. How impossible this apparently simple aim seems in practice – something always seems to prevent it. (24 August 1957)

We craved more time on our own:

We had an absolutely lovely time this afternoon in the garden. Mummy did some sewing while Paul and Anthony played football, and then the whole family played on the slide etc. In fact, a real family afternoon. (7 September 1957)

Being in Germany seemed less pleasant than it had in the family's earlier stay there:

We had enjoyed a very happy stay in Lübbecke from 1946 to 1950... But this part of Germany is most unpicturesque [and] unhealthy. (12 January 1957)

Also, our relations with local German people seemed more distant and less friendly:

On the whole their attitude to the British is one of mild antagonism... The reason ... is the conspicuous lack on both sides of enthusiastic attempts to overcome the harm caused by misunderstandings, memories of war, and our veiled envy of their fantastically swift return to power and prosperity. (4 May 1957)

There was also concern about defence cuts and particularly

... the announcement that five thousand officers, mainly majors and lieutenant-colonels, are to be disbanded from the army. Daddy suspects that he will be one of the unfortunate victims. (20 April 1957)

In August 1957, however, there was more promising news:

Daddy has now received the extension to April 1957 of his commission... which makes it fairly definite that he will get his pension. He can still get 'the axe', but this is now improbable, and even if he did he would get a pension and a gratuity, so in many ways we hope that he is affected by the 'cuts'. (3 August 1957)

Meanwhile, Veronica provided a note about her mother Violet (Nanna Vi):

Nanna Vi is going to Birmingham this month to see the members of her family who are living there, including Marion and Auntie Bertha. When she returns she has got to visit the Eye and Ear Hospital in Portsmouth for a specialist's examination. In connection with this it may be of interest to note that the present Eye and Ear Hospital is situated in the same building where Mummy was educated: the former Convent of the Cross. Nanna hasn't been there since she took Mummy as a small girl of seven years old looking very bewildered in a navy frock and an enormous panama hat: the school uniform. (1 September 1956)

In September 1956, Bill Delvin took all of the family apart from Gordon to a nostalgic visit to Lübbecke:

We saw all the three houses we inhabited during our stay in the town from 1946 to 1950, the YMCA, the Toc H, the club (which is now an Officers' Mess), the lovely little church, and the BFES school where Anthony and Paul were first educated. We also visited Herr Bökamper, Mummy's old music teacher, and his wife. (15 September 1956)

When Anthony and Paul travelled to Germany for Christmas 1956, they had an eventful journey. Bureaucratic complications had produced some uncertainties about the tickets, so they travelled first to Violet and Teddy in Fareham, who lent them £10 with which to buy their tickets in London. They then travelled by train in the morning to London via Portsmouth:

But due to fog our train was so late that we missed the connection in Portsmouth and hence the boat train [from London]. Having discovered this we sent off telegrams to anybody meeting us at the Hook [of Holland] and to Nanna Vi, and then proceeded to browse around Foyle's bookshop for the remainder of the morning. We had lunch at Lyons' Corner Shop and in the afternoon watched a Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin film entitled *Hollywood or Bust* at the Astoria in Tottenham Court Road [seeing it through twice!]. Finally, having had a meal back at the station [Liverpool Street], we settled down in the waiting-room for the night, but around eight o'clock were aroused by a military and a civilian policeman, who were both very kind and fixed us up for the night at the Union Jack Club near Waterloo Station... We caught the boat the next morning, stayed the next night at the transit camp in the Hook of Holland, and finally succeeded in reaching home at about 7.15 on Friday evening. (22 December 1956)

The policemen arrived because the telegram sent by Anthony and Paul to Violet had triggered off a flurry of anxious communications between her, Veronica and the military authorities, which had resulted in regular appeals over the loudspeakers at Liverpool Street station for Anthony and Paul to make themselves known – this while they were sitting, blissfully unaware, in the cinema. Anthony was 14; Paul was 12.



*Paul and Anthony at Prior Park*

In January 1957 there was a visit from Maria and Margaret Ahrens – 'our best German friends in Oldenburg'. (12 January 1957)

A letter from Veronica later in January 1957 referred to a job application she had made:

I am feeling a bit deflated as I haven't got the Radio Bremen job. My voice wasn't any good because for one thing I had a sore throat and it came through the microphone very huskily. Secondly I was so terribly nervous that you could hear that too. It is a bit disappointing but there you are – you will never know your Mother now as a Radio Star! (13 April 1957)

A subsequent letter from Veronica on 8 February 1957 reported:

Clare took three steps quite alone the other day and then the excitement was too much for her and she collapsed on the floor in laughter. (13 April 1957)

Soon after this, Anthony reported:

Clare has now been walking for two or three months, and is always up to some mischief. Mummy declares that she is the worst of the four babies she has had – she is sweet but naughty. 'Issy' is her name for Veronica Mary, derived, Mummy tells me, from her saying 'Where is she?' (4 May 1957)

In July 1957, on their way home, Anthony and Paul went to Lord's to watch a day of the annual Gentlemen v. Players match. The account of the play in the Chronicle mentions May, Trueman, Compton, Sheppard, Insole, Cowdrey, Dexter, Evans, Laker and Tyson, among others.

Alongside Bill Delvin, there were increasing references to visits from another young officer in Gordon's regiment, Colin Gordon-Maclean. In August 1957 he took Anthony and Paul to the Harz Mountains with his Troop Camp, introducing them to the rigours of army tinned rations.

There were quite a lot of family arguments:

Why is it that at nearly every meal in this family there is either an argument, a quarrel, or an 'upset' of some kind or another? (24 August 1957)

These sometimes involved Bill Delvin:

Bill departed in a huff, demanding an apology from Daddy for his part in causing the quarrel... [On the next day] the quarrel with Bill was quickly and effectively healed. (24 August 1957)

Later:

We have all now taken a vow to try to minimise the number of arguments in the household. (31 August 1957)

Anthony and Paul both acted regularly as servers in church, both at school and at home. They also taught two other boys from army families how to serve at Mass. (17 August 1957)

Veronica Mary contributed several short stories to the Chronicle, and an account of a school visit to Bremerhaven and Brake which ended:

When we got back we said: 'Thank you for taking us, teachers: it was very interesting.' Then we went home and I said to my mother: 'It was very nice on our trip but I would rather have stayed at home'. (31 August 1957)

This was followed by a note about 'Corn Flakes':

It will be remembered that Veronica Mary used to call Corn Flakes: 'cumfits'. Clare now calls them 'tooth-ache'!! But Anthony and Paul sensibly called them simply Corn Flakes! (4 January 1958)

Veronica compiled, with Anthony, a list of 'Places Where We Have Lived' (24 August 1957). She also contributed an article to the 7 September 1957 issue on 'The Night that We Were Bombed' (see her separate biography).

In September 1957, before going back to school, Anthony and Paul stayed with our grandparents, alternating between them. There had been a reference in an earlier issue to some tensions between the two sets of grandparents:

Nanna and Uncle [Violet and Teddy] are both obviously feeling rather angry, because their friendship with Nanna and Grandpa [Nellie and Norman] seems to have disintegrated, and Mrs Culliford [Uncle's mother, presumably] 'said it seems quite incomprehensible to her after all the years of supposed friendship'. (3 August 1957)

Presumably the relationship had subsequently been patched up, to some extent at least (it was to disintegrate terminally when Veronica left Gordon in 1959).

Around this time (autumn 1958) Violet found a house in Lee-on-Solent for us to move to, but Gordon decided not to go ahead: Paul wrote an article for the Chronicle describing 'The House We Missed' (21 December 1957). The reasons were explained by Veronica in a letter to Anthony and Paul:

23<sup>rd</sup> October... We had agreed to accept and then the very day that the formal agreement arrived Daddy was told that he would be here for at least 12 months and in the Army for a minimum of 18 months, and possibly for 2½ years, and that he can't get a posting to England until 35 Regt. disbands next autumn. The General of the Royal Artillery was here and fully confirmed this news. Daddy thought and thought what was best to do but just felt he couldn't face 12 months here alone, and especially as the house cost so much, so very much. Daddy made this decision himself, which is only

right, and I do see his point. I've been terribly torn, and hate terribly the disappointment this will be to you and to Nanna. (4 January 1958)

Clare's vocabulary was growing:

Clare has been rather ill this week with measles, but now has recovered her usual mischievousness and buoyancy. Some of her new words include 'Bello' (her new name for virtually anybody and everybody), and 'no' which she uses invariably when asked a question, whether the negative or the affirmative is meant. (20 July 1957)

She missed her brothers when they returned to school. Veronica recorded in a letter to them on 16 September 1957:

Clare cried as the train went out and all the way back until she fell asleep she said 'Where's Paul, where's Anthony?' and it must be almost a hundred times she's asked it since you went – even when I went in to her at 2am yesterday. (28 December 1957)

The nature of the regular trip made by Anthony and Paul every term from Bath to Delmenhorst and then back was described in an article in the Chronicle:

The first stage is from Bath to Paddington Station. The train which we usually catch is the 2.08pm, a fast train which usually arrives in Paddington around 4.30pm. Then we immediately cross by underground to Liverpool Street Station, where we wait until the Harwich Continental Boat Train departs. The time of departure used to be 7.30, but for some reason these holidays it was 8 o'clock... Having ultimately arrived at Parkeston Quay, we proceed through the customs quickly and on the whole unhindered, and embark. The first thing we do on the boat is to go to our cabin and deposit our rather heavy baggage, after which we proceed to the ship restaurant, and have the inevitable egg and chips [This was also the regular 'treat' at home on the first and last day of the holidays.] ... At about 5.30 the next morning we have to get up, and disembark at some time around 6.15. Now through the Dutch customs, and thence to the spotless restaurant-cum-waiting-room on the Hook of Holland station, where we have coffee and toast. Around 8 o'clock we go to the army offices for documentation, before boarding the train, which leaves at about 8.45am now, whereas previously it used to leave an hour later. This, the third stage of the journey, is the longest... Now [probably late afternoon: the train journey took 7-8 hours] we are there: home at last. Dismounting at a small village just outside Bremen, we meet Daddy and Vim, then board the Volkswagon provided [we never had a car of our own], and then enter the portals of 25 Frans-Schubert-Strasse. The long and tedious journey from Bath to Delmenhorst is over, and we aren't sorry! (27 July 1957)

Veronica had fairly regular periods when she was unwell, but also some happy times – including some social occasions:

26<sup>th</sup> September... Even though yesterday was my first day up, I feel wonderfully better – perhaps because I had such a very happy day. For one thing the sun shone and it was as warm as summer and delicious outside. It was the famous ‘Maude’s Day’... I was able to go to the Parade, Cocktails, Buffet Lunch, etc., and I even went to the Ball in the evening, and instead of having an awful relapse, I feel wonderful, I enjoyed it all so much (28 December 1957).

There was some social contact with German people, especially the von Wallenburg family:

7<sup>th</sup> October... Last night Daddy and I went to Frau von Wallenburg’s birthday party in Bremen. It was very interesting to go to a 100% German party. (28 December 1957)

On 23 December 1957, there is the first reference to Patrick (see Chapter 4):

Mummy and the children went to NAAFI in the morning, and were brought back by Father Thompson, the RC chaplain at Verden, who had come over to Delmenhorst to hear confessions as Father Callan, our own Chaplain, is away on compassionate leave. He had coffee and heard confessions in the house before leaving. (28 December 1957)

Was this the first time Veronica met Patrick?

By now the Army was beginning to reduce its presence in Germany, linked to the general defence cuts:

Delmenhorst Garrison is now diminishing rapidly, and soon only 35 Regt. at Adelheide will remain, as 77 Regt. and 30 Regt. are returning to England to disband. It appears probable that 35 Regt. will be doing likewise in October – we hope so – but this has not been officially confirmed yet. (28 December 1957)

The first issue of 1958 contained a plaintive and rather poignant editorial:

The family’s life since its inception in 1940 has been unsettled, nomadic but happy. However, the lack of a settled home, of ‘roots’, has created in many of us a desire for these things. We want to settle down in England, to have a real home, to have a stable environment. Let us hope that, through the grace of God, 1958 will see these hopes realised. (4 January 1958)

Before this, however, we were moving into a new house in Bachstrasse, just round the corner, which gained general approval:

It is one of four new houses recently built ostensibly for colonels, and the proposal that we should apply for one [presumably because we were such a



large family] was suggested some months ago. It was, however, shelved, as we felt we might well be moving in the near future. But after the decision to remain in Delmenhorst, Daddy applied, and 26 Bachstrasse is the result... We are all very ecstatic about it. (4 January 1958)

The move went well, although:

Clare was rather frightened by it all: it's a new experience for her – but not for us! (4 January 1958)

Paul provided an article describing the new house in detail (11 January 1958).



*Veronica Mary, Anthony, Paul and Clare around 1957-8*

In January 1958, Bill Hills (another officer in Gordon's regiment) and Colin Gordon-Maclean took Anthony and Paul to dinner at the Ratskeller in Bremen, as a Christmas present. It included 'the famous whispering pillars whereby if one whispers in pillar A a person standing by pillar B can hear you quite clearly' (11 January 1958).

During the 1958 Easter holidays news arrived at last of a posting back to England:

At last Daddy has been posted – as adjutant to a TA regiment in Leeds. For over a year now we have been expecting a posting, and for much longer than that we have been longing to go back to England. From most points-of-view, Yorkshire is the worst possible county we could go to: it is at the opposite end of England to all our relatives and friends, the country is not so picturesque [sic!], and we will be a long way from the boys' school. But on the other hand, as Daddy points out, there will be much more likelihood of his getting a good job in the north than in the south after his probable 'retirement' from the army in 1961. (26 April 1958)

For the first time, a detailed diary was provided by Veronica, covering the period from 15 January 1958 to 23 April 1958, with almost daily entries. It includes eight references to visits from Father Thompson, one adding 'talked for three hours'. It also covered lots of social engagements and family activities, including the following entries:

January 24<sup>th</sup>. First organ lesson with John (Sanders) – very confusing and complicated.

February 16<sup>th</sup>. Went... in afternoon with John (Sanders) to Maria (Ahrens) for tea, and then to opera – *Tristan and Isolde* – which was wonderful. Back to Maria's for supper.

March 12<sup>th</sup>. Went to Colin's birthday party in Mess. Buffet supper. Great fun but another very late night.

March 26<sup>th</sup>. Gordon took children and I to Bremen for shopping and bought me new tweed suit – loose line – and a blue hat: both very nice indeed.

March 30<sup>th</sup>. Gave Veronica Mary first cookery lesson. David called, and then John, and then two other subalterns.

April 4<sup>th</sup>. In evening heard St Matthew Passion on radio. Magnificent. (26 April 1958)

And then, on April 23<sup>rd</sup>:

Clare put on her 'best' coat and decided to go to school to see Issy [Veronica Mary]. She was round the corner before Paul caught her. (26 April 1958)

At the time of this early independent expedition, Clare was under 2½ years old! The Chronicle also records a family visit to the opera house in Oldenburg on 26 April 1958 to see Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*.

The next issue of the Chronicle announced the family's arrival in Leeds:

At long last, after four long years, the family has returned permanently to England. Our enthusiasm at this long-looked-forward-to event was somewhat dampened when we saw the filthy conditions of our new house in Lidgett Lane, Leeds 8. But the whole family has set to work with a will, and now it is beginning to look clean, attractive and ours... It is furnished, but the junk left behind by the last occupants – and what a lot of it there was! – has been thrown out, and the more hideous of the furnishings have been removed into the attic. (27 August 1958)

A couple of weeks later, the Chronicle reported:

The first few weeks of our stay in Leeds are over and we can be justly proud of our achievements. The house has been thoroughly cleaned and reorganised, our own belongings have been unpacked and put tidily away, the kitchen has been transformed by a few tins of red and white paint from the ugliest room in the house (always excluding the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' next to the dining room) to the prettiest, the garden has received a surprising amount of attention – the flower beds have been weeded and dug up, and the lawns mowed regularly – and supper times are now actually approaching the ever-elusive daily time of 7.30. Achievements indeed! (13 September 1958)

Prior to this, Anthony and Paul had spent three weeks in Fareham, alternating between the two sets of grandparents. This included joint visits to Portsmouth and Southsea for Putting (a favourite activity) and to see a day of Hampshire's cricket match against Middlesex.

The family had now acquired a gramophone, and a few records, including *My Fair Lady*.

Veronica Mary's schooling was a matter of concern, but a solution was found:

A very fortunate solution to the problem – its difficulty aggravated by the fact that Shammy, Veronica Mary's godmother, has provided a considerable sum of money for her future education at a *Catholic* school – was provided by the offer by the nuns of St Gemma's to educate her on half-fees provided that Mummy is available to do occasional teaching in case of emergency. So once again, just as with Brother Robinson at Prior Park six years ago, our education problems have been almost miraculously solved. (7 September 1958)

We also had a new *au pair* girl:

At Easter we mentioned the possibility of Maria Holm, a young Greenland girl living in Copenhagen, coming to England with us to learn English and in return to help with housework. This finally materialised, and very fortunately so, for, as Mummy says, she doesn't know where she would have been without her. She has worked extremely hard and uncomplainingly, and with her unfailing good nature and humour has befriended us all. But we hope she is also learning some English! (7 September 1958)

In addition, there was an article about a visit to the Yorkshire countryside with Mr and Mrs Cribb, which removed some negative stereotypes:

What beautiful countryside it is: high hills, deep valleys, long views of rustic quiet and grandeur, wide expanses of cultivated fields, the harvest ruined but beautiful still. (13 September 1958)

This was the final full issue of the Chronicle. There was a very brief issue in January 1959, but it contained only family sport results.

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## 4. Our Family in Transition

Like many couples during the War, Veronica and Gordon married when they were very young, and probably before they knew themselves or each other very well. During the traumas of the War they lived very separate lives, Gordon in the Army and Veronica raising very small children. When they joined up in Germany after the War, there were difficulties between them, exacerbated by the fact that Gordon drank a lot (mainly gin) and smoked a lot (around 40 cigarettes a day). This was not uncommon in the Armed Services at the time: both were accessible very cheaply, initially at least. Gordon had a strong temper, particularly when he had been drinking. He and Veronica had other relationship problems. While, as the Family Chronicle indicates, there were many happy times during this period, it is clear, in retrospect, that there continued to be underlying tensions between them.

Throughout the 1950s Veronica had severe financial worries. She kept detailed accounts of every transaction, and was always looking for ways to economise. A visit to a shop near our house in Frome to buy ice-creams was a great 'treat'. The worries continued when we reunited with Gordon in Germany. In addition to the school fees, Gordon's expenditure on drink and cigarettes was a significant drain on financial resources.

Veronica's faith was an enormous support to her in all her struggles. Her belief in God was strong and deep. She prayed a great deal, and always tried to do what was right and good.

It is clear from the many letters we have to Veronica from Patrick that they had fallen deeply in love with one another and were beginning to plan a life together before the events that led to Gordon's court-martial in June 1959 (for details of this and of our subsequent relationship with our father, see separate biography of Gordon Watts). They had even started to write some short stories together, to provide a possible future source of income. The court-martial was, in a sense, a final straw in the breakdown of the relationship between Veronica and Gordon, but it also provided a rationale for Veronica to commit herself to what she was already wanting to do.

When Veronica decided to leave Gordon in March 1959, she wrote a series of letters about the court-martial to which there were replies that she kept as mementos. Two were from Prior Park: one from Brother Dalton, the President, assuring her that 'Prior Park will not let you down'; the second from Brother Beattie, the Housemaster of St Paul's (the senior house), stating that 'We all sympathise with you in your great trouble' and making practical suggestions about approaching Somerset County Council for help with the school fees.

Some time in March/April 1959 Veronica must have found the house at 53 Kimberley Road, Southsea, to which we then moved, with financial support from Patrick.

Patrick provided great support to Veronica, both emotionally and financially, when she made the decision to leave Gordon and move to Southsea. He had for some time been experiencing doubts about his vocation as a priest, chiefly on the issue of

contraception, on which he struggled to accept the Church's teaching. Eventually he decided to leave the priesthood and came to live with us, in Southsea. We all accepted him, without any question: we never doubted that our mother Veronica would do what was right and best for all of us. He changed his surname by deed poll to Watts, to reduce the chances of scandal (this was still a morally repressive time in England). We thereafter always called him Poppa.

In 1962 the family moved to Miller's Cottage, Rustington, Sussex. It was here that Veronica and Patrick set up Arun Tutors, to provide individual tuition for a small number of students, often with personal as well as learning problems. They soon decided that they needed a larger house to house the students as boarders, so they moved to Hurstbourne Tarrant in Hampshire – first to The Rookery (1964-66) and then to Dole's Lodge at the entry to a manor estate, where the students were lodged at the manor (1966-67) – and thence to The Manor at Linkenholt nearby.



*Paul, Clare, Veronica Mary and Anthony at The Rookery*



*Paul taking Clare for an outing from her convent school in Littlehampton in 1964*

## 5. Education

As outlined in Chapter 2, Paul initially went to a BFES school in Germany, and then briefly to schools in Romsey and Midhurst before going on to Prior Park Preparatory School, Cricklade, Wiltshire, in 1951. From 1955 to 1962 he was at Prior Park College, Bath, where he achieved 7 O-levels and 2 A-levels (Biology and Chemistry). He also played 1<sup>st</sup> XV rugby, 1<sup>st</sup> XI hockey and 1<sup>st</sup> XI cricket (which he captained), despite an otherwise somewhat chequered school career!

During his gap year Paul went to France, with the aim of writing his first blockbuster novel and some poetry, but returned less than two weeks later (just as his money was about to run out), a little mortified by his loss of confidence in his writing ability! He then taught at Belmont Hall College, Cheshire, whilst trying to decide what to do: this took 18 months!

From 1964 to 1967 Paul attended Portsmouth College of Education, achieving a Pass with Distinction and the Best Teacher Award.

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## 6. Royal Army Education Corps

After leaving college, Paul decided to join the Royal Army Educational Corps (RAEC), and was commissioned in September 1967, initially as a Second Lieutenant. From 1967 to 1970 he worked at the Army Education Centre at Bulford, Wiltshire, as a Lieutenant. He then taught at the Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover, Kent, as an Acting Captain from 1970 to 1973. During this period he completed a BA degree in Social Sciences at the Open University.



*Paul meeting the Queen at the RAEC Jubilee garden party in July 1970*

Paul was supported by the Army to attend St Catharine's College in Cambridge (Anthony's former college), from 1973 to 1976, achieving a BA (2:1) in Economics, which became an MA in 1978. From 1976 to 1978 he worked as a Captain in the Officer Development Wing of the Army School of Education, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire; before proceeding to the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, where he worked from 1978 to 1980 as an Officer Instructor, being promoted to Major. From 1980 to 1982 he worked in the Ministry of Defence at Empress State Building, London, as a Staff Officer; and from 1982 to 1984 was Senior Education Officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps in Mytchett, Surrey.



In 1984-85 Paul was sent by the Army to the London School of Economics, achieving an MSc with Distinction in Sociology. From 1985 to 1989 he was a Senior Lecturer at the Royal Military Academy of Science, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1989-90 he became Commander Education for the Eastern District.

During his time in the Army Paul was Captain of RAEC Cricket from 1980 to 1990, and also Captain of United Services Cricket on Salisbury Plain. He established Combined Services Real Tennis, and from 1981 to 1990 ran the annual Combined Services Real Tennis tournament at the Queen's Club in London. He was founder of the British Military Studies Group.

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## 7. GEC and Marconi

In 1990 Paul resigned from the Army. He looked set for promotion to Brigadier and a good pension if he stayed in to age 55. One of his responsibilities as Commander Education for the Eastern District was Officers' Resettlement. His CV was submitted as part of an exercise to test the services provided by a recruitment agency. As a result of this accidental application he was offered the post of Deputy Director of the GEC Management College in Dunchurch, Warwickshire, which he accepted! He was appointed Managing Director eight months later, with additional responsibility for developing senior management in the global GEC. During this period he also became a Board Member of the Engineering Industry Training Board.



*Paul at his desk as Managing Director of the GEC Management College, Dunchurch, in 1991*

Paul was then appointed Director of Education (UK) in Marconi plc, remaining in this post until he retired in April 2002. Other activities during this period included chairing a working party for Lord Sainsbury to promote more interest in engineering in schools, being responsible for a report on further and higher education for Gordon Brown's Productivity Panel in Tony Blair's Government, and being a member of Blair's working party for Educational Broadband in Africa.

Paul writes:

Going to Dunchurch was initially a huge risk, as my knowledge of running a company was nil and there was an ongoing threat from Lord Weinstock to close the College as a loss-making activity. The first challenge was to turn

the loss into a profit, which we did by cutting wasteful activities. This involved some redundancies (always painful), and refocusing the business, initially through my meeting all the Managing Directors of GEC (about 140!) and finding how we could help their companies grow. There were opportunities through the UK Government Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Know-How Fund, and also through our defence companies' offset obligations, plus showing how we could share intelligence/knowledge across GEC through cross-company workshops on individual territories and product links. Increasingly this involved me in travelling around the world (including Australia – primarily motivated by my desire to see Piers and Bronwyn [see below]!) and liaising with foreign governments and our companies to set some new directions.

Latterly I played a key role in initiating a new type of undergraduate degree with Warwick and Nottingham Universities, where over 50% of the syllabus was taught on our company sites by company managers. I was also involved in developing the Marconi Masters' Degree. This involved dealings with over 20 universities in UK, Italy and the USA to provide core modules tailored to our company needs and accredited by the awarding institution, which in the UK was Warwick and in the USA Carnegie Mellon University.

Dunchurch was exciting, challenging, hugely rewarding and, I think, very successful. When the company (GEC) was split, the new Telecoms business wanted a modern approach and to deliver programmes 'virtually'. My role then changed primarily to liaison with Government and Government agencies; this was also leading-edge work, and very demanding and satisfying.

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## 8. Jane

Meanwhile, Paul had married Jane Eva Watts (née Peters) on 31 December 1966 at St Marie's Church, Rugby, Warwickshire. Jane was born in Rugby, Warwickshire, on 23 March 1944. She attended Eastlands Primary School, Rugby, and Rugby High School for Girls, where she was House Captain, a prefect, winner of English and History prizes, choir member and county hockey player. She achieved 7 O-levels and 2 A-levels, and was guided to teacher training at Portsmouth College of Education, where she met Paul. Paul writes:

I met Jane in my first week at Portsmouth College of Education in 1964. She was very pretty and also, when we were introduced, she offered me a cigarette! Unsurprisingly I was smitten. Jane was already a rugby 'groupie' and came to all our matches home and away plus the post-match beerfests. Surviving these trials and with one or two hiccups along the way we got engaged in 1966 and married in December that year. We moved immediately into a flat in Nightingale Road, Southsea, which also happened to be the road that Motti had lived in when she was courted by Daddy!



*Paul and Jane's wedding at Rugby in December 1966, with our family and Jane's parents*

On Paul's decision to enter the Army, Jane writes:

We visited Nanna and Grandpa at Kiln Road, and Daddy in London, quite regularly. Daddy was very involved in discussions during 1965 and 1966 about the appropriate career for Paulo, and keen on the Army. The Educational Corps seemed appropriate. Once we knew Patrick was on the way, however, it was really a question of salary. Paul had been invited to join the staff of Havant Grammar School during his final teaching practice. However, our weekly housekeeping bill was £11, and his net weekly salary as a second lieutenant would be £13, so the Army won. But Paul was only 23 and the Army did not recognise officers as being married until they were 25, so we received a reduced marriage allowance and no quartering entitlement!

Following her Certificate in Education at Portsmouth College of Education, Jane later completed a BA in Educational Studies and Sociology at the Open University. In the course of her teaching career – to take account of the many moves required by Paul's career – she taught in 16 schools, including primary, middle and secondary schools, in both the state and independent sectors, in addition to some supply teaching. Her longest stays were at St John's College Choir School, Cambridge (1973-78), and at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Aldershot, Hampshire (1979-86). She retired from teaching in 1996.



*Jane and Paul skiing at Bell Plagne, France, in 2004*

Paul and Jane have lived in many houses: 13 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Hampshire (1967); 53 Lawrence Road, Rugby, Warwickshire (late 1967) (while Paul was doing military training at the Army School of Education, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire); The Manor, Linkenholt, Hampshire (with Motti and Poppa) (1967-68) (while Paul was completing his training); Blagden Cottage, Wildhern, near Andover, Hampshire (1968); Cranham, 61 Barlows Lane, Andover, Hampshire (1968-70); 14 Meadway, Shrewton, Wiltshire (1970); Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover, Kent (1970-73); 11 Hobart Road, Cambridge (1973-75) (bought for £6,500); 130 Shelford Road, Trumpington, Cambridge (1975-78) (bought for £10,500); 8 King's Crescent, Camberley, Surrey (1978-80); 3 Stephenson Road, Arborfield, Berkshire (1980-83); Keogh Close, Mytchett, Surrey (1983-86); 156 Alexandra Road, Farnborough, Surrey (1986-88); Belvedere, Rectory Road, Wivenhoe, Essex (1989-90); and The Estate House, The Green, Dunchurch, Rugby, Warwickshire (since 1990). In 1999-2000 they also purchased 15 Yengarie Way, Ocean Shores, NSW 2483, Australia, and Apts 411/413 Turquoise, Belle Plagne, Macot 73210, Haute Savoie, France.



*Paul and Jane in Italy in 2012*

In recent years Paul and Jane have experienced virtually perpetual summer by dividing their time between Dunchurch and Ocean Shores, with a few weeks of winter skiing in Belle Plagne. They both enjoy music (especially chamber music), wine and reading; Paul also enjoys gardening. In July 2005, Jane had a bad fall down the stairs at Patrick's and Emma's house in Clowne, Derbyshire, damaging

her spinal cord. She was hospitalised for two months, initially at Bassetlaw Hospital in Worksop, and then at St Cross Hospital in Rugby where she spent six weeks in a rehabilitation ward. The accident has constrained her outdoor activities. Paul continues to spend a lot of time playing golf, surfing and skiing.



*Paul (third from right) with fellow-surfers at Byron Bay, Australia, in 2014*

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## 9. Children and Grandchildren

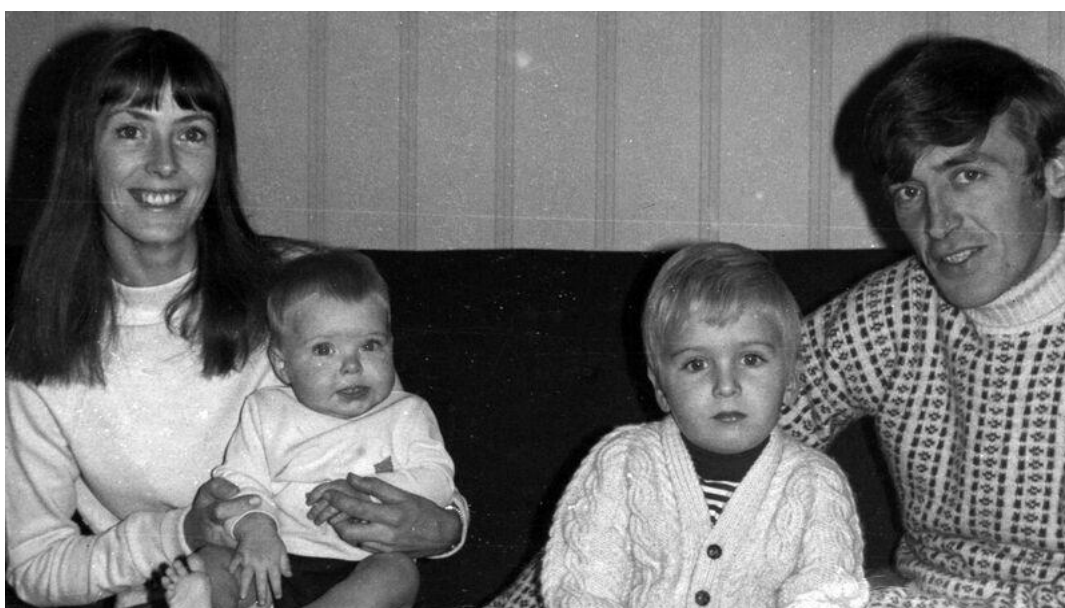
Paul and Jane have two sons: Patrick and Piers.

**Patrick Anthony Francis Watts** (Pat to many of his friends; Packet to some in the family) was born at Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth, on 10 June 1967.



*Paul and Jane at Patrick's baptism in Eastney, Hampshire, in June 1967*

When Patrick was 3½ he went to a Montessori school in Dover run by nuns, and by the time the family moved to Cambridge he was a year ahead of his peer group.



*Jane, Piers, Patrick and Paul at Dover in 1970*



Patrick went to St John's College Choir School in Cambridge, where Jane taught, winning the Jubilee prize for his contribution to school life. He then won the top Music Scholarship to Radley College, Oxfordshire, when he was 12: he returned to his own age-group, learning from Anthony's experience (see biography of Tony Watts). He was involved at both schools in sports, music (violin, piano, organ and choir) and drama. At Radley he ran the bookshop and the general knowledge quiz, and was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> rugby XV and 3<sup>rd</sup> cricket XI, as well having all his musical commitments as a scholar.



*Jane, Patrick and Piers playing music at Cambridge in 1975*

After leaving Radley, Patrick was given a monetary award for university, for his contribution to school life. He went to the City University to study International Finance, sponsored by Midland Bank. His future best man and still close friend, Roy Hammond, had the same sponsorship. They had to work in the bank for a year before going to university.

Patrick joined the City University Air Squadron (UAS), and for three years spent every weekend and vacation at RAF Abingdon: his aerobatic flying skills helped City beat Southampton and Cardiff in a UAS flying competition. On graduation he joined the RAF, leaving after 16 years to become a commercial pilot. His military flying highlight was a three-year exchange with the Royal Australian Air Force,

during which he was a member of the RAAF equivalent of the Red Arrows, the Roulettes. To date he has been licensed to fly 16 different aircraft types. Currently he is flying the Airbus 320 for DragonAir (the short-haul arm of Cathay Pacific) out of Hong Kong. He was awarded a medal for his service in the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACs) flights during the Bosnian War.



*Patrick in his RAF kit in 1993*



*Patrick flying with the Roulettes in Australia (his plane is second from right)*



*Emma and Patrick in 1992*

Patrick met Emma at the Bath and West Show in Shepton Mallet on 28 May 1992, fronting an RAF static display while wearing his flying suit! **Emma Katherine Louise Watts (née Slater)** is the second of four children. She spent her childhood in Copse Cottage, Brent Knoll, Somerset. When she and Patrick met, she was living in her own flat in Highbridge and working as a nanny. They became engaged on New Year's Eve 1992, and married on 22 May 1993 at St Marie's Church in Rugby (the same church where Paul and Jane had married), with their reception at Dunchurch Lodge. Their wedding included a water pistol fight followed by a 30-a-side family cricket match umpired by Paul, which ended in a diplomatic draw!



*Patrick and Emma at their wedding in May 1993 at Dunchurch Lodge*

Before the wedding, in February 1993, Emma came to live with Paul and Jane in Dunchurch and embarked on an Open University degree. Her choice of study was Art History. Paul remembers her asking him (then an OU tutor/counsellor) to comment on her first essay, having not written one for a very long time. In 1999, two children, two moves, two dogs, a cat, and 6 credits/years later, she was awarded her BA degree in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. By 2002, when Emma, Patrick and the children went to Australia on Patrick's three-year exchange with the RAAF, Emma also had a Master's degree and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, and was teaching adult education for the Yorkshire Workers' Educational Association. All her courses – including such titles as Victorian Art, Renaissance and Reformation, and Art in the City – were conceived, designed, researched and resourced by Emma.

When Patrick and Emma returned from Australia in 2005, Emma was appointed to the Humanities Department at De Montfort University, Leicester. An even bigger move was to come in 2008, to Hong Kong, leaving the children as boarders in England. Meanwhile Emma had been encouraged to continue her studies by her MA tutor at the University of York (she did research for him while choosing her thesis topic). In October 2012 she successfully submitted her thesis, entitled *Reception and Response: the Impact of British Art in Late Nineteenth Century Melbourne*. The first holder of a doctorate in the family, she became Assistant Professor in the Academy of Visual Arts at Hong Kong Baptist University.

In 2015, Patrick and Emma purchased Orchard Cottage in Mark Causeway, Somerset, with 13 acres of land and a large garden, plus an outbuilding which they have now converted into a successful Airbnb. Emma, having recovered well from her kidney illness, worked as Head of the School of Film and Media at the University of Lincoln in 2018-19. She now manages the Somerset property, with support from Patrick during the 90 days he is allowed in the UK, alongside his duties in Hong Kong as an A320 Captain for CathayDragon.



*Patrick and Emma in 2020*

**Piers Gordon Paul Watts** was born at Tidworth Military Hospital, Wiltshire, on 20 February 1970. He went to a nursery school in Cambridge, and then to St John's College Choir School, where he was awarded a choristership by George Guest when he was 8; he did not take to boarding, however, so did not take it up. When he was 13 he was awarded a choral scholarship to Radley, singing the solo voice at the opening of the Radley carol service in 1983. He also played cello, piano and percussion. He was taught cello by Dori Dawes, a pupil of Paul Tortelier and once principal cellist of the London Bach Orchestra. When he was 15, Piers left Radley to attend St Joseph's and All Hallows' Schools in Aldershot, and then Wavell High School in Farnborough; when Paul and Jane moved to Wivenhoe, Piers stayed in the area to attend Farnborough College.

Piers was still undecided about his future, and after trying many jobs went to the Lake District, where he was working when he met his future wife, Bronnie, an Australian girl doing an extended Grand Tour of Europe. They decided to live in Australia, but had to live together in the UK for 2 years while Piers's visa application was being processed. When his visa was granted, they left the UK on 6 January 1993. Piers became an Australian citizen on 17 September 1998, and proposed to Bronnie on the terraces of Sydney Opera House on Millennium Eve, a few seconds before the biggest Sydney firework display of all time! They were married in the Blue Mountains on her parents' wedding anniversary, 11 November 2000. Piers studied Civil Engineering for a couple of years while working, but could not find a company to support his studies, and the demands of financing family life meant that he had to discontinue his course.

Piers became the General Manager of Elizabeth Richards School Supplies, a small company supplying teaching aids and equipment to almost every school in Australia – and to some schools in China as well. In 2019 he bought his own packaging business, AJM Packaging, with a staff of six. He has found his metier, later than his brother, but now feels similarly fulfilled.



*Piers and Bronnie in the UK in 1992*

**Bronwyn Anne Watts (née Morgan)** (Bronnie) spent most of her childhood living at 30 Alan Street, Cammeray, North Sydney. She went to Cammeray Public School and Cremorne Girls High School. She has three siblings. After completing courses in Catering Management at Sydney College of Advanced Education and Meadowbank TAFE she became a chef, and by 1990 was working in corporate catering. She and her sister-in-law decided to visit Europe. The Lake District was on her ‘bucket list’, and it was here that she and Piers met. Later they moved to work in The Swan Hotel in Goring-on-Thames, and in January 1993 Bronnie returned to Australia, with extra baggage! She returned to corporate catering for the next 8 years, this time with Harper Collins, where she was the in-house caterer from the board room to the staff canteen. When their daughter Heather (see below) started high school, Bronnie decided to study pre-school education at the local TAFE (technical and further education) college. She completed a diploma and has since spent 8 years working in pre-school and day-care centres while studying part-time for a degree at Charles Sturt University in Sydney. Throughout these studies she achieved distinctions for every assignment, and in June 2016 was presented with an Award for Outstanding Achievement in External Education. In 2020 she successfully completed her studies for an external degree in Early Learning.



*Bronnie and Piers at their wedding in the Blue Mountains, Australia, in 2000*

Paul and Jane write:

Piers's departure was very hard for us both. Meeting Bronnie was to transform not only his life, but ours as well. When we went to Heathrow with them in January 1993, we had no idea how long it would be before we saw Piers again, whether he would find employment, or whether their relationship would survive. Later we discovered that Piers was so determined to embrace this opportunity that their plan included changing into brand new clothes in the Arrivals Hall at Sydney and putting all he was wearing into a handy waste bin. In May 1994 and July 1996 we visited, each time for two weeks, the first time to Sydney, Melbourne and Daylesford to meet Bronnie's family, and the second for a holiday in Cairns. In 1998 Piers and Bronnie came to the UK for a 'fatted calf' party organised by Paul and Jane. By now Paul was secure enough with GEC to know he could finance a property in Oz. He had a global business trip in February 1999, and during a six-day stopover in Sydney went house-hunting with Piers and Bronnie in Byron Bay. Since 2002 we have spent half of each year in Australia, and will always be grateful to Bronnie for the wonderful experiences we have had, the friends we have made, and the places we have visited. Latterly Patrick's move to Hong Kong has expanded our horizons even further.



*Piers and Bronnie in 2000*

Patrick and Emma have two children: Ella and Kit.



*Kit and Ella in 2005*



*Kit, Jane and Ella at Mount St Mary's School in 2011*

**Gabrielle Emma Jane Watts** (Ella) was born in Lincoln Hospital on 15 January 1994. She went to school in Linton-on-Ouse, Yorkshire; to Gippsland Grammar School in Sale, Victoria, Australia; to Mount St Mary's College in Yorkshire; and to King's College, Taunton, Somerset. She read Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at



Cambridge, where she attended the same college as Anthony and Paul: St Catharine's College. She graduated in 2015 with a 2:1.



*Ella graduating at Cambridge in 2015, with Patrick, Emma and Kit*

Throughout her life she has written poetry and stories. She also loves speech and drama, and played Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Mount St Mary's – as well as singing in the choir, playing the violin and being a cross-country runner. At Cambridge she performed in Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* at the ADC and directed a production in Queens' College of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. In her second and third years she had her own weekly programme called *Biscuit* on CamFM radio. After various jobs in Sawston (with *Cambridge Edition*), Bristol, Warwick and Coventry, she completed an MA in Radio Journalism at Goldsmiths, University of London. She subsequently joined BBC Studios as a Podcast Producer, alongside other freelance work, and is planning a part-time PhD on podcast audio drama, a field in which she is already establishing a strong reputation. She currently shares a flat in Bushey, Hertfordshire.



*Ella in 2019*



*Kit at his graduation lunch in 2017*

**Christopher Patrick Joseph Watts (Kit)** was born in Lincoln Hospital on 21 February 1996. He too went to school in Linton-on-Ouse, Yorkshire, to Gippstand Grammar School in Sale, Victoria, Australia, and to Mount St Mary's College in Yorkshire. He completed a degree in Criticism, Culture and Curation at Central St Martin's, the London University of Art, achieving a 2:2. He played rugby in the university side, after being in the Mount St Mary's 1<sup>st</sup> XV for over two seasons. He has been a talented trumpeter and didgeridoo (!) player and is an excellent skier.

After graduation Kit had various jobs in Hong Kong, including teaching sailing, and then returned to London to join Twenty, a recruitment consultancy. The Covid pandemic put a temporary halt to this and he is currently based in Somerset, helping his parents on their property and working with his cousin George on various jobs for local farmers.



*Bronnie, Piers and Heather at Sydney Harbour Bridge in 2012*

Piers and Bronnie have one daughter, **Heather Kate Morgan Watts**, who was born in Sydney, Australia, on 10 April 2002. She went to Cammeray Public School in Sydney, where she played flute in the band and sang in the choir, and then to Mosman High School in Sydney. Her main current interest is dancing: she has been doing jazz ballet classes for several years, going to classes several times a week, and every day for a week during the school breaks in March, July and September. Her other great interest is surfing, although she only does that when visiting Paul and Jane in Byron Shire. She and Paul (Gramps) have managed to surf the same wave on several occasions! In late 2020 Heather is embarking on a college course in Medivac and Nursing which she hopes will lead to a degree course at Monash University in Ballarat.



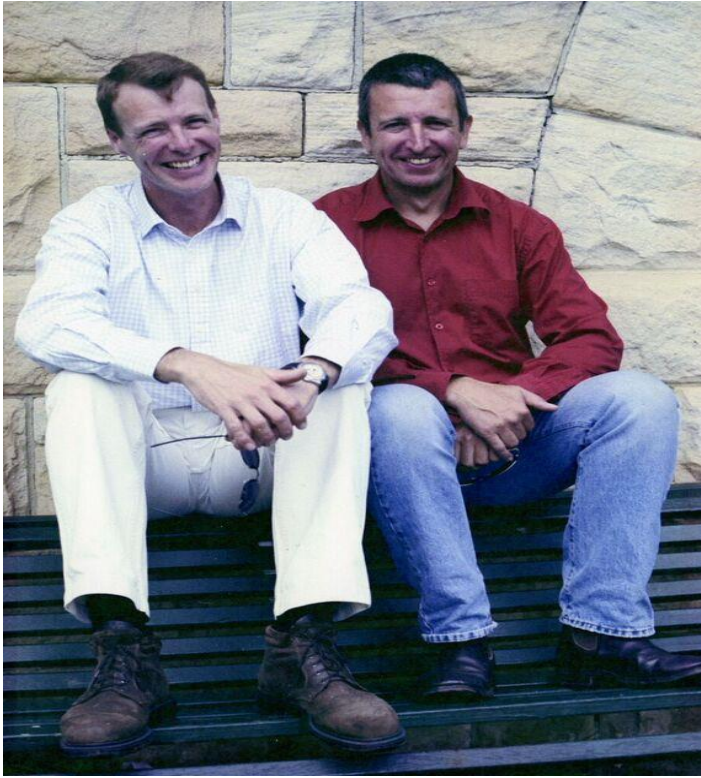
*Paul surfing on the same wave as Heather in 2014*



*Paul with his grand-daughter Heather in 2012*



*Heather in 2019*



*Piers and Patrick in Australia in 2009*



*Piers, Paul, Jane and Patrick playing for the much-coveted 3Ps golf trophy at Ocean Shores, Australia, in 2011*

# 10. Epilogue

Paul writes:

The 'Lives Retold' exercise on which the family has been engaged, at Ant's prompting and with his expert co-ordination, has reminded me of just how central my brother and sisters have been to my life and to Jane's and my own family.

Motti was an extraordinary woman in the loyalty and love she inspired in so many who knew her. Our relationship as siblings owes so much to the foundation she established, but it would never have flourished without our elder brother being such an extraordinary man. The 'Family Chronicle' was his; at times in our lives when there were threats to the family he was the rock on which we all leaned and which held us together in that wonderful bond of love that has continued to flourish and grow.

I remember the week I spent near Sevenoaks hospital with Vinski, when Clare was so ill that I'd had to come back from Hong Kong whilst en route for Australia. It was of course a dreadful time, with Clare fighting for her life, but from this I think we found a very special profound love as a family. It is precious beyond words.

I am so grateful that this 'Lives Retold' exercise has given me an opportunity to realise my exceptional good fortune to be part of our family.

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