

92 pages 28,877 words

# Rolling Up

## Lithography, 1950-1965

### Setting the Scene

My story begins just after NATO was formed: when the Attlee Government took the country to war in Korea, Churchill regaining the premiership a year later, and three-quarters of all house building was by local authorities. It starts in the middle of a ten-year period – a period begun at the end of the war till the Macmillan government came to power, a golden age of local government power – parks, road verges and municipal gardens restored to pre-war standards; social mores returned - presented a solid foundation from which the war torn populace settled into civilian life. When Macmillan declared ‘you have never had it so good’, did he really know how right he was?

The present consumer driven economy started in 1955 - it was the start to the television boom, gradually overtaking all other forms of popular entertainment. The writing spans a period when the Conservatives held approximately twice the length in government - over Labour. This was the start to the free-world industrial power exerted by the integrated circuit, proposed by G W A Dunner...an invention to have profound effects on all careers.

I started work as an apprentice artist - in a printing house, learning about a method of reproduction discovered at the turn of the nineteenth century... no sooner was I trained than the craft was superseded by photography – later, film-masking which in turn gave way to electronic scanning, finally, the whole page was capable of being

designed including pictures and type matter It was a forty-five year revolution in pre-printing technology.

Here are some of the cultural changes, which affected me, particularly those of the Trade Union. The period has seen enormous progress towards women's liberation – to the position where few work places not served. These social changes affected physical and metaphysical sex, children, marriage, flexible working and consumer choice... how could I not be affected...?

The period covers a land where few ventured abroad, some, not out of their town or village. Within these years few have not flown, owned a car, had their kitchen designed or shopped at a supermarket... Britain was buying more than it was selling, 'proclaimed The Times', and Communism causing great anxiety - to the western world - particularly America. The general election in February registered a decline in Labour's popularity. Later that year, the outbreak of war in Korea brought another economic crisis. It was a serious situation... prompted the following year by dissolution and subsequent election of Churchill, and the Conservatives. The death of George VI and coronation of Elizabeth II re-established Britain's place in the world. These great events dwarfed my 'going out to work, for the first time'. Industrially and economically, the country, through the media, admitted its consumer culture... well before Mrs Thatcher! The fifties were the start of many strikes - unofficial... in particular: the printing industry, coalmines and dockworkers. I was there, at the start, experiencing the effects it was having. Even for me - at such a young age - lacked working experience, it was unsettling! The negotiations between management and worker's representatives became an annual event based upon 'the cost of living' as much as, 'improving terms and conditions'. It took until the end of my National Service and final year of apprenticeship, to appreciate the seriousness of my position - I was now a skilled worker, in a redundant craft... In a technically changing industry that was in turmoil... I was coping with my sexuality and the effects of my upbringing. If that wasn't enough... there was now industrial and social confusion. As with most, I married in my twenties and started out in a furnished flat... saving hard for a deposit whilst

storing things away in our 'bottom drawer'. It was the beginning of modern industrial life – information technology... and the disease of retraining each step taking me further away from handcraft to computer...! I hated its interruption... to 'planning ahead'. I wanted to concentrate on my life not be continually plagued by a changing world about me. What an impossible thing to desire...! As with most marriages children arrived that added to the complications. My own upbringing directed how I should behave - plan for their futures... Now I could put into practice how I thought children, should be raised... in company with my wife's thinking and Doctor Spock's theories. Our long-term plans for the children were based upon the educational system then in place, plus a 1950s youth culture struggling with pre-war standards of social behaviour... 'This was also a new age 'of women's rights'. Their employment soaked-up vacancies in certain sectors of commerce and industry. By the beginning of the 60s, popular daily newspapers were printed and bought at the rate of two per household... indoctrinated by left wing theories.

I began working life in 1950, just before my fifteenth birthday... on a wage of thirty-seven shillings and sixpence. That I should stay on at school not considered worthwhile... my father, believing his children should bring money into the home as soon as possible, did not give the idea a moments thought. My brother and I, in ignorance, acquiesced – not fully understanding that an improved education could lead to greater choice - of jobs. The excitement of feeling 'grown up' – being a worker along with everyone else - having money in our pocket, obscured the fast approaching technical innovations. Even if my brother and I had decided to follow the path of education, my father would not have wanted us to do so. Many of the attitudes and lifestyles of friends and neighbours were somewhat similar. It was a working class environment - the emphasis was on 'working', and the money earned. It was a preordained way of life based upon a pre-war culture ... For my father it was a culture of discipline, hard work and principles and I suspect a fair dollop of 'knowing ones place'.

Naturally, the complications of life - personal and social - sometimes recognisable, become compounded - the older one gets. I was an

innocent of fifteen years, unbothered by choices – of my own or my parents, poorly educated, and socialised by five years attendances at Boys Brigade activities. My parents did not associate or link current issues of the day - affecting industrial and social changes, with their own experiences. Technical advances - commercial and industrial, gathered apace... to my parents, unrecognised – beyond their understanding. My father read a newspaper everyday... he scorned worker's disputes, seen by him as ignorant follies.

There is no reason to suppose that the way they chose to bring up a family was any better than the way their parents tried. Each generation thinks they have the answer until faced with the realities of life - which are not forgiving. Children turn on their parents in every generation few escape criticism. With the divorce rate nearing fifty percent – including remarriages, there are going to be very many discontented children casting aspersions on their parents efforts - backs will have to be very strong! The only ones to escape will be those who have small families or no children at all.

Post war union struggles to improve worker conditions were threatened, by foreign competition and escalating cost of raw materials. These reasons not always recognised by office workers and housewives, but obvious to factory and manufacturing managers and workers.

Prime Minister Attlee's Second Ministry coincided with the Korean War - the Communist northern state invaded South Korea on the 25<sup>th</sup>. June 1950, the Berlin blockade - which lasted almost a year, only just been defeated in May 1949 by the Anglo-American airlift, and the forming of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Each, in turn, added further to our national debt.

The period 1950 – 1965 was in the main governed by the Conservative party under Churchill and Macmillan. In 1951, meat, butter, tea and sugar were still rationed. Rents were controlled and holidays abroad for the masses were out of the question. However, for those few who were lucky enough to have sufficient funds and could go abroad there was a fifty-pound limit - on what you could take out of the country. The wage restraint still working in 1950 was lowly relaxed...

At the start of the nineteen fifties, the average rate of inflation was nearly four per cent... fifteen years later over five. The growing power of the unions, particularly the various printing unions within newspaper houses - characterized the period. All the country's powerful unions, involving: the generation of power, imports, exports, and industrial manufacturing, played an enormous part in shaping Britain's economic future. The government, looking ahead, was greatly occupied with the nation's economic structures - planning national performance figures and influencing social services - education, health, and benefits. However, out of town - in rural areas, the war had forced greater productivity - new machinery, and land use. This had not appreciably changed the character of the people. The pace was still slower than the town. The extra labour used during the war had left... water meadows, steep hillsides and difficult field boundaries reverted-back - to pre-war usages. The demobbed, did not all want to go back 'to the land' - they had learned new skills and wanted a part to play in 'the industrial age'. The war had been for Britain an economic disaster and would eventually cause the country to fall under the economic dominance of those countries they had previously fought... for they had the goad and goal - achieving something from nothing. The Marshal plan, which was an effort by the USA to stop Communism and to make aided countries beholden, enabled those past enemies to reconstruct new factories, which could incorporate new technological innovations. Their worker's organisations, initially, concentrated on work and profit before conditions. Britain not only had to provide for the Korean War but also had to maintain the Welfare State, which took money away from investing in industrial expansion, renewal of outdated machinery and new technologies. There was student unrest, which stemmed from the Vietnam War... continued right through this period. It was an argument about consumerism [still with us today], the profit motive in big business and over production. Mass entertainment outside the home was from the motion picture industry exported from America. These films depicted the American way of life - behaviour, language, living conditions and expectations - new forms of dress and transport. It was only natural that we, in Britain, should aspire - to those new

freedoms of expression and consumer objects. Educating Archie the most popular pre-television radio programme... this was the end of radio's golden age. TV began to take a hold even forcing the weekly visit to the cinema to decline in popularity... theatres lost audiences becoming uneconomic... pulled down... never to be rebuilt. At weekends, the towns and cities pulsated with the desires of an expanded population - eager to improve their living standard. The arbiter being 'The Media', and in particular, the latest fad promoted by the glossies.

## CHAPTER I

### CHAPTER I

#### Starting Work

Train to work – North Harrow to Neasden – Chromoworks, Printing House – Frank Oppenheimer – Lithographic Printers – Artists Studio – Working on stone - Transferors – Hand drawn Posters - Festival of Great Britain – Lyons Tea Shops - Apprenticeship - London School of Printing – Boulton Court – Harrow Art School – Evening Classes – Life Drawing Classes – The Boy's Brigade - Dancing lessons.

*It did not take long to get into the swing of working life... Up, out of bed, a quick wash and a snatched breakfast... then, a quick dash down the road, to reach the station in time to catch the seven o'clock train for Wembley Park...*

In 1950 there were still steam trains running on the brown liveried Metropolitan Line. The slam-door carriages held a dozen passengers all intent upon trying to read their newspapers whilst packed together like sardines. My journey lasted thirteen minutes,

stopping at three stations..., at the fourth, the doors opened to disgorge half the passengers... myself amongst them. Not stopping for breath, I, and the other mackintoshed paper carrying passengers, forced a way over to the other side of the platform. We pushed our way into the underground train - already waiting at the platform... not needing to be reminded 'to mind-the-gap'..., as the doors slid shut...

Gasping for breath, I attempted to glance at the Daily Mail - to check the printing vacancies, clinging, as I did so, to the overhead strap. The passengers, hundreds of other expressionless workers, swayed to the hypnotic clackerty-clack, as the train travelled along the track towards Neasden. This was the start, to a lifetime of travelling up to London. A habit-forming ritual, as I, and every other passenger, fought for space and isolation engrossed in their books or reading for the umpteenth time the advertising streamers.

My destination - Neasden, was a rather dingy outreach of Willesden Green a place where trolley buses ran - receiving their power from overhead lines. Neasden's most important employer was British Rail who operated its railway sidings. Reputed to be one of Britain's largest goods yards, work went on round the clock... railway enthusiasts could always see great activity and register numerous working engine numbers. Obviously, the sidings importance were internationally known, for numerous Nazi hit and run raids damaged the tracks and further defaced the Victorian terraced houses that lined the perimeter fence.

It had never been a place of any pretence or elegance, even when first built... languishing as it did so between Blackbird Cross and Willesden High Road. The rows of terraced housing - three up two down were purpose built for railway workers and their families.

Along with hundreds of others, I joined the stream of hurrying workers marching up the stairs, like the march of the troglodytes, past the booking hall out onto the street, there, to turn right onto the pavement leading down the hill past the railings... Trying to walk on the pavement was a feat in itself... ducking in and out, now one foot in the gutter the other on the kerb, jostling with the rest of the early birds...down the hill – as the human tide surged about me. Sheltering behind the hoardings - from the wind, I strode on, past British Thompson Houston and Dalmyers optical works to Chromoworks, perched on the Willesden Road, behind some unimposing iron railings, which corralled the car park. Opposite, the showroom windows of coach-builders Park Ward, reflected and distorted the polished Rolls-Royce cars that lent an aura of respectability to the whole neighbourhood... Just along the road, a forlorn café perched next to a paper shop – a rather seedy establishment that sold sweets and cigarettes. It was here that I bought my cigarettes in packets of five with a book of matches. When times were extra hard, which was almost weekly, the cheapest brands, Weights, Woodbines or Turf, could be purchased one at a time... to become my saviour - from depression, boredom, and at times, shattered confidence - when jobs went wrong.

Reaching the gate, I braced myself before entering, remembering that 'I must order the men's cheese rolls and dinner choice... early'. With that thought in mind, I passed by the canteen.

I was usually the first to clock in. Inserting the card, I jerked down the handle... 7.50 in purple ink. I started off, down the long corridor... past the warehouse, printing shop and stairs, leading up to the grainers... past the lavatory, turn left and there on the right the sliding door surrounded by large printing plates

propped handily against each wall. Hardly an imposing entrance or welcoming sight, nevertheless it was the firm's Artist's Studio.

The smell of turps and printing ink greeted me as I made my way into the large airy room... I headed for the store cupboard to fetch out the enamel plate and stick of ink. Rubbing the ink stick on the plate, I splashed a small amount of water in and started to rub my finger round and round to mix-up the ink - into a creamy, opaque mixture... I wondered how many times apprentices had gone through a similar induction to their working day...?

Just outside the room.... along the corridor, the machine shop burst into life. The machine assistants fetched tins of ink from the store. The machine minders opened the tins and troweled some onto their mixing slabs. There, they worked the ink, oil and driers together to form the correct consistency... as the inking slabs resounded to the slap of palette knives - that pummelled and squeezed out the ink...

The printing plates, wrapped round the plate-cylinder, were damped over - with a water-soaked sponge that also removed the gum layer. The brakes squealed, as they stopped the cylinder turning. The machine minder scraped the mixed-ink into the inking duct, and laid on a palette knife - full of ink, to the rollers... Then the warning bell rang, as power was switch on. The cylinders revolved and the sheeting lever released, as the vacuum pumps 'puffed and sucked' - opening and closing the sheet feeders. The hiss of the ink-coated rollers - as they came in contact with each other, and the 'click' of the gripper's release gear - letting go the paper..., the stack began to grow...

The warehouse girls, feeding in the paper, burst into song, 'Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered'?... as they positioned the next sheet against the lay-bars. The minder rushed round to the front of the machine to extract a sheet to check the register and

colour... This was the scene at all printing firms throughout the country.

I loved the activity, the rhythmic sounds and evocative smells... being in the company of others, skilled workers all contributing to creating, what I thought to be, a work of art... part of an age-old printing industry, with skills and routines that had hardly changed from its conception - a hundred years before.

Lithographic printing is 'a chemical process' – using a surface image rather than raised - for letterpress, or sunken, for engraving. The lithographic process was discovered in 1798, by fortuitous accident. Alois Senefelder, a book and music publisher, of Munich, grasped the significance of a dampened non-image area, which repelled greasy black ink.

Hand drawn colour lithographs – printed from stones or metal plates, is the only commercial reproduction method to simulate drawing with a brush, crayon or pencil. Both the production of letterpress blocks and engraved plates are stilted mechanical processes - which lacked artistic freedom. The hand-drawn lithographic reproduction has a random chalk image that does not rely upon a mechanical screened image - to show gradations of tone.

The first lithographic printing surface was that of a smoothed, locally hewn, limestone, which retained its quality - remained damp when water applied. Later... grained aluminium and zinc plates took the place of stone – a surface medium able to wrap round a printing cylinder.

Kelheim limestones are cut in the quarry three to four inches thick - for various machine sizes... then, given rounded edges and corners. The stones then either polished or grained depending on the size of the 'run' and the 'quality' required.

Initially, Senefelder used a smooth ungrained surface to write his music. When illustrating his work he produced tonework with a pen and ink – to produce stipple work [dots], or scraped away a solid patch - to give a line, crosshatched or woodblock effect. Later, for commercial jobs, the stone's surface grained - to allow crayon-work to be used – to give a pencil tint. Graining also increases the surface area - allows the dampening effect of water to last longer – allowing a greater number of prints to be made.

The stone's grained surface is produced by rotating a levigator, [trade name for a hand spun metal wheel... mimicked a corn mill], or, spinning two stones in contact - grained two stones simultaneously. Both these methods used graded qualities of silica sand - as aggregate, plus copious amounts of water [old work removed by the same process]. Steel straight edges provided an accurate level. When graining metal printing plates the same principle applied - a graining machine oscillates – as a rotating bed, using various sizes of metal or glass marbles - depending on the finished grain size required. Whether stone or metal plate, the final grained surface is washed and prepared using a very weak acetic acid – cleans the surface by removing any grease particles – giving the surface an even greater grease receptiveness.

The lithographic hand press uses both the principles of a letterpress screw press – for pressure, the engravers reciprocating press – to produce a larger print size and the operation of a scraper bar on the tympan - greater, directed, pressure. The first hand press, using the same principle as a clothes mangle, plus a scraper blade, instead of a wooden roller, was built at the turn of the eighteenth century – just after the discovery of the process. Fifty years later, in the 1850s, lithography became the premier printing process for monotone and colour. My work as an

apprentice and during training used exactly the same type and age of hand press.

The artist's studio – my responsibility to keep tidy, had a high ceiling strung with suspended fluorescent lights. The tall, metal framed, windows - glazed with wired, hammered, safety glass, let in a filtered, glittering light, still clothed - to the higher panes, with a criss-cross of sticky brown paper - there to guard against shattering – caused by London's blitz. The walls, painted a light mustard colour, gave a mellow look to the otherwise harsh interior. Painted below the dado-line - braking up the expanse of tobacco stained wall colour – mid-grey... those areas that could be seen, unbroken by racks of zinc printing plates propped against the walls.

The stained and uneven floorboards – raised, where the nails and hard polished knots protected the surface, defied continual wear... smelt of turps and benzene. The planked surface blackened with chalk shavings, cigarette burns, and scratched by the edges of hundreds of metal plates dragged over them, testified to many years of service. The large wooden benches - massive legs capable of supporting heavy stones, arranged to give access to all sides... their owner, protected by dark grey warehouse coat... stretched across their surface - attending to a chalked tint or penned letter. The atmosphere smells and rustles, the same as years gone by - when the process discovered...

In 1822, it was demonstrated that 'by overprinting several colours' the lithographic process could make a reasonable reproduction of a coloured original, even though the number of copies limited.

Commercially, the chromolithographic process began in 1850. Previously, all printing work had been in a black and white line image [monochrome]. The public anticipated colour so did

the advertisers. To some extent, hand-colouring prints did produce the desired effect, but only 'for limited editions' - not for 'the mass market'. Letterpress and lithography both vied with each other to produce many copies of a commercially acceptable coloured reproduction - which matched the artwork. Chromolithography won... but not for long!

The changes that did come about to the lithographic and letterpress processes in the first hundred years, concerned mechanics, not principle - the use of metal rather than wood- in the construction of the press and the type. Later, the use of rotary action rather than reciprocation further advanced each process until, finally... conversion - of the coloured continuous tone picture, by the photographic halftone principle. The photographic reproduction of coloured originals had a relatively short life span. Eventually, in the 1980s, the electronic revolution began by introducing colour scanners... ink and laser jet printing.

1. When a new job estimated, for a hand drawn lithographic reproduction, a decision of how many colours required is the first consideration. Obviously if the job is for a cinema poster the number of colours would be less than for a facsimile of a fine art reproduction. The average number for a commercial reproduction is eight: buff, yellow, flesh, blue, red, black, pink, and grey.
2. A swatch or tab of each colour to be printed is stuck onto a piece of card to remind the artist exactly what colour he is working to, and give the printer a guide - when mixing his colours.
3. Multi-colour printings must register on the sheet of paper. The artist needs an accurate tracing to use as a guide to reproduce the original. To achieve this, the artist traces an outline guide. This guide, called 'the key', gives an exact position of each colour,

shape, shade, brush stroke, shadow, and highlight. To position this correctly on the paper, register marks added for the printer.

4. The guideline, on each stone or plate, has to be non-greasy. Either the original tracing has to be retraced onto as many plates and stones that are to be used, using a non-greasy setoff powder, or the Keyline traced in conte crayon and rubbed down. Commercially, a key stone or plate is drawn, a black ink pull taken, the wet ink line dusted with purple setoff powder and the key pressed onto as many stones or plates as necessary.

5. Each printing stone or machine plate, with its faint purple line-image, can now be 'drawn-up' in black ink or crayon - to represent the weight of colour to be printed. The artist will use: pen line and stippling, Ben Day tinting mediums, splatter-work, airbrushing, flat crayoning and finger tinting, jumper work, sharpened crayon, sponge and stump work.

6. Incorrect work on the plate can be removed using blotting paper soaked in benzene for both ink or crayon work, and an etcho-stick [chalkstone] on a wet stone or plate when proving. Care taken, not to remove the grain, especially on a zinc plate, for that might create a scum of half-removed work when printing. No method is perfect or wholly reliable on metal plates, for utmost cleanliness is essential at all times. The limestone, being relatively soft, allows its surface to be engraved, scraped, carved, or etched.

7. Before starting to draw each colour, all non-image areas should be painted with gum Arabic - to desensitize the stone's surface. This prevents dirt, dust, finger marks, or stray grease affecting the clean paper areas.

## **Proving the image**

When the printing stone or plate had been drawn - ready for printing, the image should be 'proved' - to secure the work and to make sure that what is on the printing surface is what is wanted. There are three reasons why 'proving' the image has to take place:

- i. The artists drawing ink and crayon, does not contain a 'sufficiently greasy content', to ensure a permanent image – a more grease receptive image has replace the drawn one.
- ii. Before printing, the printing surface has to be scrupulously clean - showing only that which is to be printed.
- iii. The printing image must be capable of producing multiple impressions.

### **Preparing the image for proving.**

- The completed ink and chalkwork drawing is dusted with French chalk – using a shaker and cotton wool puff. This prevents the work smudging when gummed-up.
- The stone or plate is 'gummed up' - using a sponge soaked-in a gum arabic solution - to cover the whole plate surface. To prevent smearing or interfering with the image in any way, dab over the dusted work, do not rub.
- Gum Arabic crystals melt in water - to make a thin creamy consistency [test for 'tack' between finger and thumb]... applying gum arabic desensitizes the non-image areas - makes the non-image areas 'water receptive'. If the gum-Arabic solution is too watery, there is the danger that you will remove some of the fine chalkwork. Similarly too thick the solution will scrub the image. You do not add any acid to the first application of gum solution

for the same reason. The solution will be useable for a few weeks steadily becoming acidic which will have an etching effect.

- When the Gum Arabic solution applied to the printing surface, the excess is blotted-away - using newspaper. This reduced the gum to a thin layer. The surface is then fanned dry. The Gum Arabic will only adhere to the non-image area.
- The artist's ink and chalkwork is now removed with turpentine using a pad of bound felt. When that has been achieved, remove the excess turpentine with a cloth, which leaves a ghost image, and fan dry.
- The ghost image-area is now fortified with 'washout' asphaltum - a thin greasy tar solution that has a greater ability to attract grease [transfer or black printing ink reduced slightly with linseed oil can take the place of washout]. Excess removed and the surface fanned dry.
- The printing surface dampened with water - using a sponge. The drawn image now replaced by ink - using an ink-charged nap-roller - applied in a number of directions to ensure even coverage. Unwanted work can now be removed with an etcho-stick..., the plate or stone fanned dry and dusted with French chalk.
- If the plate or stone is not to be used, it is gummed over with gum-etch [gum Arabic and much-diluted nitric acid. *Remember to only add acid to water*], this keeps the surface clean. The printing plate can now be stored to await proving or printing.

- When ‘machine proving’, prepare a suitable amount of transfer or black printing ink on your rolling up slab. Charge a composition-rubber hand-roller. Dampen the printing surface - with a water soaked sponge. Roll-up the image uniformly in a number of directions using the ink charged roller... whilst continuing to keep the non-image areas damp...

- Finally, prove the work – by taking an impression on paper. The rolled-up printing stone or plate, transferred to the press, dampened, and re-rolled using a composition roller charged with black printing ink. *All ink rollers whether composition or nap should be stored on a rack, not left lying on the ink slab.*

- Place a sheet of paper on the stone. Lay-on additional sheets as ‘backing-sheets’ – this finely adjusts the pressure on the plate or stone by the scraper bar. Lower the tympan - a thin sheet of tin held in a frame hinged to the middle of the machine, which the scraper-bar runs over. The stone – resting on the ‘bed’ of the press, now raised-up to meet the scraper-bar using a jacking lever. Using the cranking handle, the bed wound by ratchet on a track, beneath the scraper bar, previously adjusted for pressure by the screw. The bar or lever dropped back into place - to take the pressure off, and the bed run-back. The tympan raised and packing sheets and ‘proof’ removed. The resulting proof is a ‘direct’ impression - straight from stone or plate. This reverses the image on the plate.

To make the image ‘right reading’ the image either has, to be drawn in reverse, or, transferred – using two ‘damp-proof transfer-papers’ and another printing surface. It was not until

1905 that a rubber blanket used to transfer an image from stone to blanket, then from blanket to paper – to produce an indirect, ‘offset’ reproduction.

The 1880s saw photographs reproduced. The photographic prints, with their continuous tone image, converted using a ‘halftone screen’. Ten years later, this halftone process applied to coloured photographs.

A coloured artwork is photographed three times using three separate films. Each separate exposure made through a primary light filter to make three separation negatives – one through the red filter, one through the blue and the final one through the green filter. These three negatives are now converted to a positive image and screened by contact or camera. The result from this action is to reverse the image from negative to positive and reverses the colour separation from primary filter colour to positive secondary colour. Each of these now positive images are made into three separate printing plates. Each plate now represents a positive image for its secondary light colour. There is a plate for the cyan printer, a plate for the yellow printer and one for the magenta printer. We can now print each one of these on top of each other [to overprint] to reconstruct the original artwork.

By 1900, lithographic printing was well established. The industry now saw the introduction of the cylinder press. Rotary printing, and the wrap-round rubber blanket - transferring the image to the paper ‘right reading’, took a further five years.

It was discovered, at about the same time, that if a stone were to be grained [given a slightly rough surface] a wax crayon could be used to draw with to represent tonework – much like pencilling. The result, when printed was a crayoned effect similar

to a pencil image... the wax crayon producing an image that could be 'rolled up' and proved, in exactly the same manner as the solid ink line-work. This transformed the chromolithographic industry. Oil paintings and watercolours were now capable of being reproduced - using fewer printings - to achieve the same result... All the Commercial Artist's work was now capable of being reproduced, including the lettering.

Artists appreciated that they too - could produce their own work - to make fine art prints. They were not able to show the same expertise in application. Their work, depicting a free unrestrained quality, became autolithographs.

To reproduce an oil painting needed twelve or more printings, plus an engraved stone for canvas texture, brush strokes and impasto work, faithfully copied - using an embossing technique. For every day reproductions - advertising theatre productions, greeting cards and packaging labels, fewer colours were needed.

Colour printing technology and type composition improved over the years... that allowed faster production, increased the length of the machine run and improved quality.

I was fortunate, not by foresight but by chance, to be working for a lithographic printing house... at a time when drawn lithographs - the process used by advertisers, agencies and poster designers, used for poster production - for hoardings, tea houses and railway platforms. It was also the time when lithography was about to overtake the letterpress industry as the 'printing process for the jobbing printer'.

A reasonable colour reproduction on paper was only possible a few years before the First World War... a number of inventions and discoveries came about together to make this possible. Hand drawn reproduction techniques only lasted fifty

years, before giving way to photographic processes. My apprenticeship came right at the end of this fifty-year period.

By 1955, colour corrected, separated film sets, now patched together with typematter, onto clear plastic foils - in page and sheet position. This transformed the platemaking industry. It was a far simpler method to create a printing plate for multi image production. These innovations made lithography preferable to letterpress. A few years later, the same thing happened to the photogravure industry casting many workers aside – when faster and cheaper lithographic plates and platemaking made the process acceptable - for fast, long runs with the ability to make quick changes to plate content.

My three-month trial period disappeared in a flash. To be indentured as an apprentice, the union members had to vote whether I was suitable... the management also had a say in the matter...

At the following month's union meeting, I was asked to 'stand outside', while they discussed my future... Thankfully, I was accepted. The indenture was then legally drawn-up, for me to sign, as did the Directors, and the seal applied – guaranteed the training, conditions and scale of payment.

For one hundred years, the Lithographic Artist considered the premier skill of the printing trades... from 1950 onwards, steeply in decline. The baton then taken up by the photographic retoucher, camera operator and film planner... handing it on ten years later - to the scanner operator.

My pay was, linked to that of a journeyman's rate, two guineas a week, for forty-eight and a half hours, plus two weeks holiday. I had to attend The London School of Printing, on a one

day a week Lithographic Artists course. A set of drawing equipment bought at Cornellisons was my first job and the men gave me various tools to start.

The Festival of Britain, held in 1951, was supposed to herald Britain's recovery. However, we still had enormous repayments to make to America... a fact the media did not explain clearly to the population. Britain was now a second-class power still operating as if nothing had changed. British industry in general still spent heavily on research and development. This was a spill over from the war effort particularly into aircraft manufacture and allied industries – radio communication, radar and electronic engineering. Two thirds of all exports were science-based much of the development work coming from America. The pre-printing industry used much development work from American film companies particularly Kodak who were manufacturing their new polyester backing for films. Colour correction for the printing tri-colours used the Kodak double-overlay masking soon to be replaced by the Tri-mask system.

During my apprenticeship taught the craft... working on my own reproductions... continually repeat any technique not mastered. Lettering was another challenge. One of my tasks was to draw the letter 'C' with a circumference of two feet - to draw the curves by hand. The foreman would get on his hands and knees following the curve round, the slightest bump or cavity I had to do it all again. When I had done this five or six times, I became very careful not to make the mistake again. All the members of staff checked all my jobs in turn so that I would have a total understanding of every technique. My fingers became hardened by gripping the snapped off chalk, especially when having to crayon large areas of tint... the ends of my fingers, at first, worn down, gradually they grew hard skin.

Doing all these elementary tasks over a protracted period made me respect what they meant by doing a job perfectly. I was expected to do a job better than a journeyman - I had more time... They were working commercially – quickly, doing the job, ‘right first time’. When an artist told to copy something, it had to be exactly like the original... no excuses accepted. Some of the work for Lyons had been drawn by the artist onto printing plates... these are called autolithographs. The trained artist often viewed the work produced by such artists as crude – lacking in drawing technique and unfinished. The trained man took a delight in producing work of fine quality copying the artwork in every detail he was skilled. The autolithographer used many drawing techniques to obtain the expression desired. Quite often, these techniques were inappropriate for reproduction and caused many problems for the prover and machine minder.

One of my tasks was to draw a ‘key’, tracing with pen and Indian ink on Kodatrace, of a Lyons Tea Shop artwork. This was one of a series first introduced three years before... this being the first of a second issue. They were, introduced by Lyons to cheer up their teashops giving them framed lithographic prints, in bright colours, to hang on their walls.

I had to take particular care to see that every shape recorded. The resulting keyline drawing exposed, in contact with a light sensitive coating, to a zinc plate. The light hardened the coating of the non-image areas to allow the softer parts to be replaced with a greasy ink. When rolled up the plate became the ‘key plate’ to make transfers for each colour, to be drawn mostly in eight colours.

These quality prints were much sought after, and proved a favourite with the public. We all enjoyed spending time on these as a change from working on large posters. Not only were the

subjects well drawn and painted but the impasto brush strokes had to be reproduced as well.

I had to address the men respectfully... they were my teachers... half the department not long been demobbed. Even so, they still demanded respect, for they had gone through a similar tough apprenticeship. An exception, not made for me, for they had every intension to make sure I 'was up to the mark' - not let the department down.

Chromoworks took its name from 'a small reproduction of a coloured original' – of an oil painting or other artists medium. The history of printing shows a challenge exists, between all the processes – which can produce the cheapest work with the longest run. As all businesses, price of product always the ultimate determinate.

Letterpress continued to be the main producer of books and newspapers well into the nineteen eighties when the cheap production of the lithographic plate and photographic page planning changed the whole industry. Photogravure still printed the radio and TV times and women's magazines... the massive 'runs' of several million copies. Within a few years, they too gave way to the lithographic process.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **National Service**

RM Volunteer – Moorgate – Commando Course – Bickley - Weekend Camps –  
Snowdon – National Service - Lymstone – Sea Service – Whale Island –  
Illustrious – Home Fleet - Corporal of the Gangplank – Ships band - Dingy sailing –

Amphibious Wing – Landing craft – Stoker - Beach Control Unit – Signalling – Map making – Beach Survey Unit – Poole Harbour.

In 1948, the government decreed all men over the age of eighteen were to take part in two years National Service, in one of the three services. These years, could be, deferred – ensuring apprenticeships and training schemes completed before entering. I elected to do my National Service during my apprenticeship and serve an extra year to make up for the two years lost. That meant I would be ‘out of my time’ by the time I was twenty-one. The three years spent as an apprentice soon past by.

A group of us lads - in The Boys Brigade, decided to join the Royal Marine Forces Volunteer Reserve [RMFVR] based at Moorgate in London. I think it was only the thrill of the challenge and the uniform, which drove us on. By signing on allowed our National Service time to be spent in a unit that normally would not take two-year entrants. Meanwhile, my best friend David Villers left North London Polytechnic to start a job with a northern-based newspaper as a trainee sports correspondent.

The Royal Marines formed in the middle of the seventeenth century to be part of the compliment onboard capital ships... they were mainly to act as guardians to the captain and officers... accommodated on mess decks that separated officers from men. Their secondary job was to guard the officer’s quarters, gangways, embarkation entries, quarterdecks, cells and gunnery decks. During battle, they not only guarded those spaces but platforms in the ships rigging - to kill opposing sharpshooters and to maim the directing officers of opposing ships. In many instances, they provided shore going raiding parties - acting as Special Forces. The Corps of Royal Marines divided into three Wings: Sea Service, previously described, Commando and Amphibious.

The term commando originated from the Boar War. They were mounted light infantry commanded to hit and run as armed raiding parties. Their task was not to be bogged down by conventional warfare situations by holding positions awaiting backup troops and provisions but to be flexible in approach. Churchill ordered the forming of Commandos Units during The Second World War with a similar job in mind.

It was not long before splinter groups – Special Forces, began to be formed which attended to specific demands. All these groups: Landing Craft for Infantry and Tanks, Small Boat Raiding Craft, Special Boat Section, Beach Control Parties, Boom Defence, underwater swimmers, divers and shoreline specialists were amalgamated into the Amphibious Section Royal Marines at Poole.

As soon as we were kitted we had to attend lectures on the history of the corps and to fall-in for basic drill. It was all very informal and friendly, great emphases made that the detachment was a large family. It expected that we would attend as many lecture nights and informal occasions as possible. It did not take many weeks before we were considered fit to march in public and wear the uniform on every occasion.

Now most of my weekends were booked for rifle shooting. We all arrived at the Moorgate drill hall where a Royal Navy truck took us to one of the two ranges, Bickley or Pirbright. Our Saturday nights were spent in the huts close to the rifle range. Now, even my reading time taken over, evenings and weekends filled.

The commando training took place on the Welsh hills where camping out was normally held during the winter. Route and speed marches organized for groups and pairs. Map reading and survival training were all part of the experience. I do not remember anyone dropping out or questioning what we were

instructed to do. We were given, basic infantry training with a modicum of unarmed combat, cliff climbing, rope work plus the usual assault courses. After attending regularly for over nine months and passing a set series of commando exercises in the Welsh hills, route marches and target practice, we finally climbed Snowdon, which earned our green beret.

Every year, in November, the Royal Marines Volunteer Reserve invited to contribute a contingent towards the Lord Mayor's inaugural show. A squad, including myself, practised drill and marching on the Honourable Artillery Company's drill square, which was just next door, for weeks before the event. There was also a regular monthly dance, attended in walking out uniform; the canteen bar was always open which provided a decorative backdrop to the occasion. It was without doubt an excellent convivial company without any stress or bad feelings generated from any quarter. Everyone was a volunteer and wanted to be there and to take part in all the activities.

The year was up... It was now 1953, I was eighteen, Mrs Dale's Diary the most successful radio soap, gave the life of a doctors wife, that was distinctly upper-middle class in content. Fifty percent of all children went to Sunday school and about the same percentage of boys enrolled in a youth organization. Although I did not recognise the fact the consumer society was about to gather momentum.

My call-up papers arrived and off I went off to Lympstone, Devon, to do my infantry training, which was to take seventeen weeks. I became one of the 843 squad. During our training we had instruction on personal hygiene - how to wash and iron, how to clean our teeth, what to wear, how to wear it and how to clean it. Corps history was emphasised reinforced by a simple written test, contraception matters and a medical with its

attendant jabs and inoculations. We had the pleasure to make up a concert party for the annual Christmas party.

Most people would think that the training would follow how things done in the conventional army - after all, it was infantry training? There was a concerted effort by RM Instructors to be different from the Army. I never heard a swear word used by our company sergeant major during drill nor by our small arms instructor. In fact, swearing never adopted by any of the staff. The raised voice too was something frowned upon. All commands made only loud enough for those men under instruction to hear. There was no exaggerated stamping of feet. These changes from Army habit to Royal Marine difference was recognised and emphases made – it was instilled in us to be different not just for differences sake but because it was considered to be a better way. Every man who passed the entrance inspections was accepted whatever his height. There was a further emphasis on initiative, freedom of movement - to achieve the objective and sometimes choice of weapons carried. The *esprit de corps* – engendered a dedication... not to let down the squad or section - to those around him, who were to be considered a close-knit family.

My ten-week infantry training started October 1953. I arrived at Waterloo Station and travelled down to Lypstone in Devon in company with some other lads who were joining up. I had to leave my uniform behind, to be re-issued when I got there. We were to make up the compliment of 843 squad for basic training, led by Colour Sergeant Snowden... There was about fifty of us split into two huts, with a Corporal in charge of each.

We started our training... a more complete version of what we volunteers had been doing for the past year. Towards the end of our ten-weeks – Christmas 1953, the squad enrolled in a Christmas concert party to sing two songs... Marbella Margarita

and Little David trained and conducted by the Surgeon Lieutenant. Two days later, we went home on leave to start our next assignment when we arrived back - to continue training in our chosen Wing.

After our initial training, we had to make a choice between the three Wings: 45 Commando, who were in Malaya, Amphibious Section at Poole Harbour and Sea Service. Having been in the Commandos I elected to go into Sea Service fancying a trip round the world with sunshine, grass skirted native girls, the sound of Hawaiian chants and the sun glittering of the wave tops around Gibraltar, Singapore and Barbados. What a shock I was going to have!

I was detached and sent to Whale Island Gunnery School, Portsmouth, with a small group to attend a gunnery course, scheduled to last four weeks. Here all recruits had to double to all lectures, demonstrations and practices. It was freezing cold being in mid winter and it snowed most of the time I was there. The practices completed firing the four point seven guns - the standard gunnery piece. All the equipment was old and much used evident by the amount of paint that had been built up on the carriage. The four training weeks went by quickly - found the squad hanging round the Company notice board to see what ship allotted.

At last, my name appeared telling me to present myself to Portsmouth Harbour where HMS *Illustrious*, a large [by British standards] aircraft carrier, was taking in stores and additional crew. Built by Vickers Armstrong and launched on April 5<sup>th</sup> 1939, commissioned a year later at Barrow, to carry fifty-two aircraft ... the ship was now nearly twenty years old. I was one of a half dozen Royal Marines who had to present ourselves to the Officer of the Watch, get ourselves new kit, be introduced to the

hammock - be shown our mess deck... where I slung mine and ate there, for just over a year.

It would be nice to be able to say that for all that time I spent onboard I learnt valuable lessons, was introduced to new exciting experiences, prepared myself for taking an active life in modern Britain and be shown how efficient and up-to-date our military might was. However, I cannot say that. We were a training ship for aircrews and sailed out into mainly coastal waters to fly-off and land-on planes. At action stations, my post was on the island operating one of the seventeen-bofor guns.

The ship was leaking to the extent that the pumps could hardly control the inflow of water. Most of the equipment was out of date and extensively used. There were many crashes and frequent ditching of written off planes. Whereas the ship's naval crew were fully occupied running the ship and the Fleet Air Arm fully engaged with their aircraft we The Royal Marines were monstrously scrubbing decks, standing guard and operating some of the guns. There was absolutely no point in us being there - firing the guns to give the aircrews a taste of attacking through simulated ack-ack fire - this practice firing could have been performed equally well by naval ratings. As for scrubbing decks these, we had to make-do with hand scrubbers only and take up water with cloths - long handled brooms and squeegees banned. At one stage, we took onboard some new replacement Royal Marines who had flown back to the UK after having just come out of the jungles of Malaya fighting terrorists. Now it was their turn to scrub decks and paint ship. What a waste of experienced fighting men by the military planners.

Whilst onboard I struck up a friendship with another Marine who had his coxswain's ticket for dinghy sailing he asked me if I would crew for him. Thereafter, wherever HMS Illustrious entered port - if suitable harbour facilities - we would

launch a General Purpose [GP] 14 dingy and have a sail. This we did on many occasions becoming quite expert at launching and coming into position to be hoisted inboard.

To launch we had to arrange for a forklift driver to carry the boat out of the hanger onto the lift and deposit it under the crane. Then the crane driver would drop the boat over the side and we would pick it up after guiding it under the gangway ladder.

Anything under a force five wind which was not about to increase we could sail. If a gale was imminent, a cone hoisted. This warning had to be obeyed - return onboard immediately. On one occasion in Belfast, we went out on a lovely day in a force three wind and sailed for over an hour testing ourselves on going about and close hauling into the wind. By this time, we were quite some way from the ship and did not notice that the wind was rising. When we thought we ought to return we looked to the ship and saw that they had hoisted a cone. We set about returning onboard only to discover the wind and tide against us, coming onshore - into Belfast Bay, and the sea starting to get up, making a return trip more lengthy. We started tacking furiously trying to make headway. By this time, even we could see that the waves were beginning to be considerably fiercer and I do not think we needed to look at each other to realise that we had ourselves into quite a pickle.

At last we began to get sufficiently near to the ship to see that she was streaming before the wind and tide, which did not allow us any lee to shelter - we could then sail to either side for hoisting inboard. The officer of the watch was there as well as the guards and duty crane driver. The side of an aircraft carrier is I suppose as high as a five-floor block of flats, the sides curve upwards and outwards - overhanging anything beneath... all accentuating height, weight and mass... is intimidating!

This was all becoming decidedly embarrassing and we knew that the flight deck personnel would be attending the steam catapult gear for repairs for they had been there when we left. There were times in my life when I wished I were many miles away from where I was at that moment and this was one of them. What was needed now was a very slick pickup of the hook and speedy exit from our embarrassment.

As we came up to the extended boom which was projecting out from the ships side, [these booms, perhaps two or more on either side of the ship, had trailing ropes for small boats to tie-up to and rope ladders for boat exit and entry], we got into a position for the crane driver to lower the pulley and hook. We could see that the choppiness of the water which by this time had a four to five foot rise and fall.

Now, if you can imagine the scene: a large pulley block and hook about the size of a small car wheel and weighing about a hundredweight, with four pieces of spliced wire each with their spliced eyelet - for attaching to the dinghy, and all swaying about above your head - whilst you are rising and sinking with the waves.

Now all that is bad enough if there is just you, your mate, and the crane driver in attendance. In this case, all our antics observed with great interest by a gathering group of well-wishers and an even greater group of loafers who had had up to then a boring day - wanting to be entertained - watch somebody else in trouble.

It was very difficult to stay up with the trailing rope ladder - to grab hold of it without being plucked-out of the dinghy. For the umpteenth time we tacked into position only to be forced back. At onetime we ended up with our mast under the boom and as the wave jerked us up the mast caught under the boom and released it from its cradle. [These booms were about twenty

feet long and over two feet in circumference]. It swung round and smashed against the ships side that bought a muted cheer from the onlookers. I say muted because that crash heralded the irate face of the Commander peering over the side and a stream of shouts emanating from his now reddening face.

We had to make our way to the next forward boom with a trailing group of watchers, both official and some, frankly, stirrers of the spilling pot. Here the trailing rope and rope ladder were adjacent. I managed to mount the ladder whilst this time holding onto the bowline. With this, I could let it out or pull it in so that the pulley was directly over the dinghy. My friend shackled on and the crane took up the weight. Now he and the boat hoisted up onto the deck with a loud cheer from all the faces filling the portholes all along the ships side. We were ever so careful after that.

During my time aboard ship, The Captain of Marines asked me what my job was before joining up. When he heard I was a trained artist, he lost no time in asking for a picture of his wife to be sketched. This soon brought in many other requests which although bought me in much wanted cash it prevented me from going ashore. However, what it did do is to have me transferred to the painting stores section where I placed under the chief petty officer whose part time job was painting ships crests. These ships crest is made of moulded, painted and gilded Plaster of Paris, ordered by the ships captain to present to visiting dignitaries or similar officials, when the ship put into dock home or ports abroad. Our presentation plaques were extremely well made and finely decorated – no expense was spared to ensure that they were perfectly produced. Any gilt was in gold leaf and the final operation was a coating of varnish. The rest of my time spent aboard served in the paint store except when detailed off for watch keeping - corporal-of-the-gangway; first making sure that a

store of plaques had been put by - ready for issue. My other call to fame was when the ship called at Trondheim, Norway, and a ships band was called for. As I had been a drummer in the Boys Brigade, I found myself roped into this scratch band to augment the ships Royal Marine buglers who were also drummers. Thankfully, this was a one off and my skills were not called for again.

During one of my leaves from the National service, my father's lodge held its annual dance. He invited me along. Therefore, making up a party of three, including my mother, we made our way to the Kensington Lodge where we met up with my father's friends, Nobby Clarke his wife and daughter at whose table we sat at. Naturally, I danced with the daughter who told me that she worked as a legal secretary in London. How I came to pluck up sufficient courage to ask her out I do not know, but I did and so a relationship blossomed even after her telling me that she was unofficially engaged to a chap who was in Australia.

That year Stan got married to Jean after courting her for over a year. He was twenty and Jean 18 - the marriage conducted at the Methodist Church, North Harrow. Stan was not sure that getting married at such an early age was both sensible and wise but continued with the inevitable course. I was the best man and to match the groom remember buying my first charcoal grey suit. They both settled down to married life in rented accommodation, in walking distance from his old home. I was still doing my National Service and Derek was twelve. My relationship with Barbara continued for a few more months. I mentioned to her about getting engaged - trying to put a more committed basis into our friendship. I am sure my brother's wedding and my mentioning 'engagement', prompted Barbara to make a choice. Within a short period, she broke off the friendship saying that she was going to marry the chap she was engaged to...

I was so annoyed and could not believe that someone could be so deceitful - being led to believe that the other fellow was but a memory. We were so near to announcing our engagement. I think the Clarke's were upset and annoyed with their daughter. I remember being so miffed that I told my mother and that her reply was that I should not to let it upset me... a fat lot of good that was for I was hopping mad!

My second flirt with the opposite sex occurred later when I went out with a girl that I had met at the dance studio in Wembley. Janet lived in Sudbury Hill and was a local beauty queen. We went out together for some months and over Christmas, invited to our family's festivities. She wanted to dance and through a total lack of understanding on my part, I thought it silly to dance in our front room. I was still utterly unsophisticated - lacking social graces - subtleties of courtship - showing romantic feelings and desire.

Once again, my dealings with the opposite sex were short lived, plagued by misunderstandings and lacking sexual awareness - regarding what to do and when to do it! I had to do a lot better than this or I was going to be destined for the shelf ...?

In 1954, after a visit to Aberdeen in June *Illustrious* was taken out of service – destined for the breakers yard! Again, I had to choose where I would like to go within the Corp. A chance offered to go to the Amphibious Wing in Poole, Dorset, which was now the main school for Infantry Landing Craft, Breach Control, Small Boat Section and Raiding Parties. My request was accepted and so off I went to Poole to do a Landing Craft Stokers Course, the aim of which was to produce engine room mechanics. I learnt all about Ford Marine Engines trained to occupy the engine compartment, maintain the engines and drive the craft. The stoker of an infantry landing craft sits between these two in line engines with the two propeller shafts spinning

either side of you, two levers engage the drive for forward and reverse and the throttles connected to the carburettors determine the revolutions. The telegraphs are placed on the bulkhead either side of the armoured door in front of you which is clamped shut during a landing so too the round hatch above your head. Its top speed was about eleven knots. However, the craft was extremely active in rough water and because of its slab-side easily affected by a strong wind blowing on the crafts quarters during a landing. I suppose that as an analogy you might imagine going to sea in a tin bath. It was not something you would wish to be in when landing on an enemy shore covered by well dug in heavy machine guns when occupied kedging off whilst worrying about the thirty or so troops waiting to land. It was equally difficult to disembark or embark troops from a heaving troopship, which towers above your head with a choppy sea running.

With just four months - before demobbed, I was asked to present myself to the Beach Control Section - to join their small team. Now all my days taken up signalling, sorting out beach signs and learning how to set up a beach landing position on an enemy shore. These were probably my most interesting days spent during my national service. Days were spent discussing various beach conditions which might have to be dealt with - to allow 'entry over', trying to visualise for every possible attack. Eventually my time was up and I had to report to Eastney Barracks for discharge.

Joining the Royal Marines had been a serious mistake... I was not considering the corps as a full-time career. I should have completed my apprenticeship, and City and Guilds course. My knowledge of the industry - other processes and trades, unknown to me; I was ignorant of the advances taking place in technology...

I should have instead, applied to join the Royal Engineers, who had within their service, a mapping section – the Survey Section catered for all the army’s printing and pre-printing processes. It was an allied trade - would help me in civilian life - keep me in touch with other printing trades and techniques.

After leaving my National Service, I had to do a further six years in the volunteer reserves. After the first camp - a two-week camp in Malta, on landing craft, I did not show my face again until I handed in my kit five years later.

About 160,000 men were called up each year beginning in 1948. By the time I served the Malaya conflict was the main drain on these resources. The NS was much to do with social control as to provide a defence force. It broke up family links, disrupted apprenticeships, imposed harsh anti social training and became a political tool. NS preserved the status quo for a martial, class ridden, society.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Reaching Twenty-One**

Final year of Apprenticeship – Journeyman – Motor Cycling – AJS – Dancing ay Wembley Town Hall - Courting – Lacrosse - Engagement – Bottom drawer – Vicar - Marriage – Honeymoon, Isle of White - Harrow Road Flat –In-laws – Pinner –

Pregnancy – Ford Van - Harbury – Home Improvements – The end of hand drawn lithography - Colour retouching.

It was quite a shock to go back to my old job in 1956, after two years National Service. There had been many changes to the printing industry since my departure mainly to do with technical innovations within the film industry. Three main factors transformed the printing of colour and type for all printing requirements. First: the manufacture of large size studio camera, Second: the ability of film manufacturers to produce larger areas of film with a stable backing, Third: colour correction, by overlay masking, to compensate for the spectral deficiencies in the tri-process inks. From this time photography ousted hand drawn reproductions. This was the end to fine art posters and autolithographs for coffee houses.

Customer preferences, in a now film obsessed advertising world - where hand drawn methods were 'old hat', wanted the latest high tech. methods. Advertising Agencies, sold space to clients on the use of 'the latest technology' that sold hording space using, 'keep-up, with all that's new'. It was *di rigour* - as a sales gimmick, but not always 'best practice or advice'. The object was... as always, to reduce the number of printings needed. Hand drawn methods could not compete with the range of tone produced by the photographic halftone screen. Immediate post war publishers relied upon letterpress to produce the bulk of general print work. This includes newspaper and book production. Print runs for popular magazines became the prerogative of gravure printing simply because the gravure cylinder retained the image longer without changing. Lithography produced greetings cards, wrapping papers, labels and posters. Whilst Screen Process [Silk Screen] concentrated on signs and shop counter goods and packaging.

It did not take long for all this to change, as new technologies came into being and working practices adapted to suite. The first process to feel the pinch was letterpress whose hand set type, superseded by hot metal production, gave way to photographic typesetting practices. Patched up and planned film, incorporating halftone pictures and lettering, exposed onto light sensitive coated, flexible metal plates, enabled the lithographic processes to take over much of the work previously printed letterpress.

I had to finish my apprenticeship by completing one more year. I was not to return to College or evening classes. Within a short time I found all the old skills retuning... able to copy everything a fully trained journeyman asked to do. I was now paid nineteen pounds for a forty-five hour week with two weeks holiday.

Before my NS, there had been very few union disputes. Men were returning home from the war and life returning to how they had been pre-war. Houses had to be repaired, furniture brought up-to-date and children catered for. Now, five years later, in 1955, the unions were conscience that wages had to keep pace with the cost of living and workers had greater expectations – an improving life style.

The dockers were complaining about age old methods of unloading ships; the Transport and general's 'closed shop' arrangement was being challenged by the Dock Labour Board. The Electrical Trades Union refused to maintain the newspaper printing presses; the Locomotive Engineers demanded a wage increase from the Transport Commission. It was constant friction throughout the 50s... spelt the eventual demise of Britain's industrial sector over this twenty year period... from which it never returned...!

The spirit of England had changed since the Suez Crisis in 1956. I was about to be called up to serve in landing craft. In one week the tone of the country altered when it was called 'the aggressor' by the Americans. The whole campaign was viewed as gunboat politics. I thanked god... that it all died down and the troops returned home...

Back to reality and normal life: after work, my journey home was from Neasden Station... a seven-minute walk from Chromoworks. On many occasions, Ken, who had attended the same school, gave me a lift in his new Ford Popular – a car bought for him by his father, for the price of just under £500. Ken worked in the drawing office at British Tompson Houston - an electrical engineering firm dealing in switchgear. We gave up many of our Friday evening's to the Wembley Town Hall dances which were always well attended and engaged first class bands - Ted Heath, Ken Macintosh, Eric Delany, Johnny Dankworth and Lou Stone. Most Saturdays we went to the pictures... for he was good company, we chattered away covering most subjects, enjoying similar things. Film goers reached a peak in 1946 when one third of the population was going at least once a week. The Korean War, Malaya and National Service reduced audiences steadily until the effects of television - consistently lowered the graph...

Trevor, another artist working in the same studio, had a motor bike Not only did he understood its mechanics but followed motor cycle racing. His girl friend Gladys was engaged to him for five years, spending most of their time together planning their new home. He refused to marry her until he could buy a house, which he eventually did, furnishing it... finally building his own garage, with his father.

Through his interest, and lots of prompting, I bought myself a black, ridged framed, single cylinder, 350cc AJS, from

Pinks of Harrow. This faithful steed took me to work in all weathers. I kept this for a couple of years, stripping it down and polishing it... believing I was increasing its speed with every change of oil. Unfortunately, this never happened for it only ever went at sixty miles per hour with my head down, throttle fully opened and a following wind...

I began to take on more and more difficult tasks at work. Eventually after that first year after coming out of national service, I was able to take my place with the rest of the studio. For some reason, that I am grateful for, I was never 'banged out'. This is an age-old method of celebrating the completion of an apprenticeship. The departing apprentice carried around the firm on the backs of his onetime fellows whilst ink, soot and feathers, thrown at him...

All the artists were worried about their future employment. During my two years absence the industry had undergone enormous change. Advertisers believed that adopting the latest means of picture reproduction would help sell their wares. Colour reproduction was now going to be a photographic operation... hand drawn work phased out.

Printing was not the only industry to suffer from being out-of-date – lagging behind emerging Far East companies. Car and motorbike production boomed, as did the manufacture of components and accessories... but not for long... Hire purchase business doubled and house building soared. Television competed with radio and the cinema... and won. Independent television began in 1954 extended ten years later - increased its membership. There was large-scale immigration from the West Indies quickly absorbed by the railways. Overtime, by the nation's workforce, was an accepted way of raising ones living standard...

Wembley Town Hall was the unlikely venue... where I met Sally... my future wife. Ken and I went to a dance there just

before Christmas 1955 having arranged the meeting the previous week. He picked me up at home as usual, in his car. As we mounted the wide steps to the Town Hall, we decided to have a drink first, take in the competition, survey the land - plan our evening.

The dance floor was certainly the largest in the vicinity - as a venue it lacked an intimate atmosphere. The floor was so large that before the next dance there was this enormous void in the centre of the floor, which, to find a partner, had to be negotiated. When one did pluck up enough courage to strike across the floor... towards a likely girl, always concerned that one's fly buttons undone or some other personal defect visible... what does one do with one's arms. Swing them or should I put my hands in my pocket and saunter over feigning confidence. Did I always walk with a limp, I wondered, or is it these damn shoes slipping on the floor? It was equally daunting when being refused a dance by the girl using one of the stock phrases: "Sorry, I'm waiting for my partner, I'm sitting this one out", or, "I promised this one to someone else." The poor rejected soul had to either creep away, ask somebody else nearby, which never produced a good result, or carry on walking to the bar as if that had been his original idea in the first place. There was a distinct advantage to leaping to one's feet as soon as the next dance, introduced by the Master of Ceremonies - so that the choice of partner secured - at its highest point. The girls who were the prettiest and could dance well were always the most sought after. Without prior intelligence work, you might be fooled - make the wrong choice, then you had to stagger around the room with someone who had two left legs, had little or no conversation, or worse still just did not want to dance with you. The whole object of the exercise... to find a girl... who would be a good companion!

At the end of all dances, the 'last waltz' announced. To be left without a girl to take home was the worst thing possible. I looked around and spotted someone in the crowd who I thought might be suitable. However, my request granted... missing the fact that she was with a friend... we took the floor... It seemed to go quite well she danced easily... we chatted about the band, the choice of music and her preferences for dances. It was the best dance of the evening and I asked if I could see her home. At this she replied that her friend with her and that they had come together and it would not be right to leave her alone. I immediately asked if she would go with me to a Christmas Eve dance above the Regal Cinema in Sudbury. At this, she said she would – the date fixed, for meeting her there...

The evening was a success. It was my greatest worry that we might not get on - conversation stilted and time drag... However, it was not any of those things, it was enjoyable and for the first time I felt at ease and more sure of myself. I walked her home, which was over a mile away; time quickly passed. The parting kisses were a delight and I said goodnight arranging to meet her in a few days time - after Christmas she had her days planned long before. I walked back home over Harrow Hill along the Ridgeway, whistling a happy tune... at peace with the world...

It did not take me long to appreciate that this friendship was different. Our interests and feelings of togetherness were appreciably less stressful than my previous relationships. I do not think that it was because I was becoming more adept, although getting older in itself would naturally do that, it was obviously... the more experienced girl... She was interesting and interested and made the relationship natural and exciting.

From that time, we saw each other at least twice a week and gradually I grew to know her parents and her brother Roger.

It was comfortable - so easy for me to be included into the family circle - to take part in their home life. They lived next to the Wilson's - Colonel Wilson had been my father's Corps Commander - in the Home Guard.

Sally was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1932 to Harry and Rita Morgan at a nursing home in Chicester. Sally's father, born in 1899, served, during the First World War, in Mesopotamia in the signal corp. Harry appears in my memory as being slightly taller than I. Therefore, he was all of six foot - weighing twelve and a half stone. He was a Welshman, born and bred in Neath, South Wales. A head of thick, grey, wiry hair combed in a neat, central parting. A grey moustache set off a cheerful, lined, weather-beaten face... more often than not, wreathed in a smile. He was an inveterate smoker of Balkan Sobranie cigarettes, which he inhaled with relish letting the smoke, pass out through his teeth. This habit perfectly conjures up how he viewed life, particularly away from his work - for him, a chore - he tried to be enthusiastic about all that he did - had distinct views, of most aspects of life, which he propounded... looking over the rim of his glasses and The Times newspaper. It was this paper's crossword which gave his main form of relaxation.

Harry was a rugby fanatic, especially Welsh rugby... at Cardiff Arms Park. Having been born in Neath, South Wales, he never ceased to extol the virtues of either the country or its citizens. To him Dylan Thomas was its chief bard - he often recited Under Milk Wood many times the Welsh Anthem and Men of Harlech his first choice of tunes. The harp was the only instrument worth listening to and the Welsh flag the only flag worth flying. He was a Welshman through and through.

When I first knew him, he was the manager of Lloyds Bank, Greenford and considered his staff to be his main concern over all others. Throughout all his years, working his way up

from cashier to manager, he had been a dedicated member of staff. Harry was disenchanted with modern banking methods - head office required goals to be set for taking on new clients - continually increased the targets of how much money the bank processed... he wanted to retire. This took away contact with main clients... he considered his friends. He was a member of the local Rotary Club and participated in their charity work but could not wait to retire from the bank so that he could watch cricket at Lords, westerns on the television and go cycling...

He was not a practical man; but proud, when he had wired up an electric plug or mended a puncture. He was literate and enjoyed going to the theatre. Financially prudent, he appreciated and planned for, a simple life the delights of the English countryside and good company... He mostly wore light grey suits and striped shirts and to my memory never wore a hat, nor ever wanted to. He was not somebody who would knowingly harm you, swear at you, raise his voice... but be gentle in all things...

His wife Rita, nee Hutchence, hailed from Woking where the family ran a Coal Merchants. They had met whilst Harry Chief Cashier at the Chichester Branch of Lloyds Bank. Rita worked at the County Library as Librarian; they both had an interest in Gilbert and Sullivan Operas and the theatre in general. Her father, moving out of the family home when she was young, forced the mother to raise the girls! This event had a great influence on her sister Grace [Paicie] who thought little of her father for deserting her mother and children, for another woman. Brenda [Bren] still lived in Woking. It was not until much later that her son Raymond, who worked for the local authority, married Valerie and continued to reside near the family home.

Rita had been a star pupil at school winning numerous prizes, which also upset her sister who tried much harder in her work but did not receive due reward or recognition. She was only

about five feet four inches tall and slight of frame but very strong willed, determined and resolute - totally believed in woman's liberation. She was perceptive, relished testing other people's opinions and reactions, and once set on a task she persevered until finished. Rita was a homebuilder and delighted in keeping up with the latest fashions. Not popular mass market fashions but accepted appearances of good taste. The home at Sudbury Hill was always immaculate. The furniture was mostly of polished wood and the chairs had loose plain covers. Her favourite colour was green which showed in the colour of the carpets and drapery. Most of the curtains she made- up herself, taking great pains to ensure that the hanging lengths were perfect.

Tea laid in the dining room, arranged to a uniform setting. Small iced cakes, tarts and flapjacks home made and a bought almond cake was the usual fare. Rita at one end of the table with Harry served cups of tea facing her at the other. He relished fruit loaf, which is a particular favourite of mine too, so that was always on offer. In the evenings, I would stand by Rita as she played the piano, turning and sorting out the next piece of music. Being raised on Sullivan's music, and other turn of the century pieces, we got on famously. I knew that my father played the piano well but Rita more accomplished - gave greater feeling in her translation. Sally played the piano too - passing five exams, but disliked playing in front of anybody, not receiving the same pleasure from playing - as her mother ...

Rita played the piano to a high standard, accompanying the local light opera company and attending their concerts. She often remarked that she had been set to follow a music career... had she not met Harry. I got the impression that she would have preferred the life of a musician rather than being a librarian, which she later became. Although there was a certain amount of romantic longing, rather than practical reality about her feelings,

she imagined in her daydreams a bohemian lifestyle – not one of a staid bank manager’s wife. She often spoke about past loves and losses with regret. In later life, she took up the cello, achieving a sufficiently high enough standard to be a member of the Wembley Orchestra. Her involvement with a local string quartet and recorder group gave her a busy out of home life, which complimented her later schoolwork.

The atmosphere of gentile orderliness and the attention paid to form, quality and style captivated me. These were all things foreign. Everything was decided by the relationship of one object or colour balancing with another - which picture should balance with a piece of furniture - sympathetic to the overall general decor and mood; this consideration was a revelation... made total sense! Rita thought all things through, giving an educated appraisal of the impression required. She was undoubtedly artistic, literate and thoughtful. I think she believed she had wasted her talents and for most part, she probably had - although for a woman it would have been difficult to have penetrated a-mans-world at that time.

Priory Gardens is a road of semi-detached houses, which runs up from Harrow Road... close to Harrow on the Hill. They were houses built about the same time as those in Cumberland Road but to a higher standard, being on a larger plot of land. The windows were latticed set in bay windows to the front. The garden neat but unremarkable, with a small number of fruit trees at the bottom of the garden... The french doors looked out onto the back lawn... The grass, mowed by Harry - a task he never looked forward to, became one of mine...!

Sally’s brother Roger, went to boarding school - St. Paul’s, for the first year... when I came to know the family. He had been a chorister at Kings College, Cambridge - winning a scholarship. Rita had decided to have him educated away from home. Roger

remained in a boarding environment throughout his whole education. Rita believed this would make him more independent from the family. He was, and remained a convivial [hail-fellow well met] individual. His smile was inviting and genuine. He always had time to talk and had a generous personality. Roger could always be relied on... his keenness to please sometimes got in the way of positive action. He proved to be a good friend.

Sally had attended Haberdashers Aske Girls School and because of her inclination - to make each subject a challenge, kept in top class positions for most subjects. Her best subjects were Literature, English, Latin and Modern Languages. Sports of all type were perfect for her longing to succeed and she belonged to all the School's First Team. Sally had strong views, which she declared forcefully, and was out to win especially at games. She was also very upset when her mother compared her with a near neighbour Jennifer pointing out how helpful and considerate she was to her mother... believing her mother never gave her full credit for anything...!

Many Saturdays saw me taking Sally to a lacrosse match in Gunnersbury Park - she sitting on the back of my trusty AJS, the evenings spent occupying the back seats of the local picture house. During the week, we usually just went for walks. Come the summer we arranged to spend a week at a Warners holiday camp on the Isle of White. Before we set off Sally's father made me promise that I would look after her, which I said I would. I found this loving gesture most kind and thoughtful and just typical of the man.

It was planned to sleep in separate chalets - next to each other. In the event we slept together in one bed without engaging in intercourse, being quite content to save the experience for marriage which by then we expected to take place. It was during this holiday we became unofficially engaged, buying a marquissette

ring at a jeweller's in Shanklin, which Sally immediately put on. I felt full of the joys of spring and most sophisticated in my light tweed hacking jacket and dark grey trousers.

At last, I felt confident - I could concentrate on my job, the future look after itself... The holiday proved a great success, having any stress removed by compatible companionship; we were going to share the future together – no hurry to prove our love for each other – time would do that...

It was a glorious summer holiday with not a spot of rain in sight. Our walks together along the beach and exploring the countryside about the camp - taking the bus further into the heart of the Island, were unforgettable. I became badly sunburned, which took quite a while to heal.

It was on our return home that I asked Sally's father, when we were together alone in the sitting room, if he would agree to us getting marriage. He said that we had his blessing...! We announced a date for the following year... not sure of the timing.

I was twenty-two and Sally twenty-five. We were both excited, by the thought of being together, started to plan for the coming year. First I had to attend a Royal Marine camp in Malta - to last a fortnight, as a Z class reservist.

I flew out with the rest of the party in a Short Sunderland flying boat from Southampton to Gibraltar. For a fortnight we trained hard beaching and drawing off, circling the island many times...

Sally sent me an airmail letter every day, many written with 'I love you' covering the pages, which was eagerly looked forward to. The rest of the squad looked at me with envious eyes as they started to be delivered. Sally had started to knit a brown background fair-isle jumper with an extremely complicated pattern. This took all of Sally's patience and spare time - night after night knitting away trying to keep an even tension on the

different coloured wool so that the pattern did not have one strand that pulled.

The Morgan's did not have a television set - by choice, nor did they own a car. Rita practised the piano and cello most evenings in the dining room or bedroom to prepare her-self for the forthcoming concert. Harry continued reading... filling in his crosswords whilst attending monthly Round Table and Rotary evenings. They both decided that they would not buy a television, until Harry retired...

They took Sally and I to the theatre on a number of occasions to see Sandy Wilson's musicals, *Salad Days*, *The Boy Friend* and *The Buccaneer* performed at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

At this time, Sally was working part time at a local greengrocer's, earning sufficient money to pay for her way through a Secretarial Course for typing and shorthand at the Pitman College. Previously she had worked at The Bank of England a position her father had obtained for her which was not at all suitable for her - enclosed in a large institution was not something Sally would ever have liked. Having to use the underground railway was also something she disliked doing - was a fear, which has never gone away. She dislikes banks, banking and officialdom. All these fears and dislikes ended any hopes her father might have had in that direction. This decision did not go down well with either of her parents.

We met when Sally was undergoing a Pitman's Secretarial Course. She finished her training and passed the examination to give her all the skills she needed. A vacancy for a medical secretary becoming vacant at Wembley Hospital... Sally applied and passed the interview. It did not take her very long to understand and apply medical terminology to the letters transposed from audio recordings; typing-up letters from

shorthand notes - which she was not so keen on doing. As the hospital was, only two miles from her home in Sudbury Hill Sally cycled there every day.

National Service had upset the normal course of an age old custom, linked to my apprenticeship... This I considered fortunate, I missed the 'banging out' ceremony - heralds the completion of an apprenticeship - reaching journeyman status. However, I did not get away without having to stand the firm a drink - over at the local pub - for both my engagement to Sally, and my new position...!

In 1956, industrial production in Japan achieved pre-war levels and West Germany, helped by three million refugees from the East, surpassed Britain's car production figures. The printing industry, controlled by the newspaper industry - whose workers always the most militant... annually demanded better working conditions. The men composing type - the compositors, held the newspaper proprietors to ransom... usually getting their way! This had a knock-on effect... onto the other printing processes, forcing up their wages... improving their conditions.

Most other industrial workers looked to the militant to hitch their coattails. The printing industry was not the only powerful group. The dockers - controlled the import of food, and the miners - controlled the power. The whole country rode on this era of increased affluence. Employment figures were up and there were not enough skilled workers trained to develop many new production techniques originally designed pre-war but now being introduced.

From this time onwards home produced cars and motor bikes lost out to the more reliable Japanese models. Eventually Britain's car, truck and motorbike industry failed to foreign competitors whose products were less rust prone, had higher component specifications and mounted later engine designs.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> October that year, Britain, France and Israel attacked Egypt. The loss of the war, by retiring from Egypt before a satisfactory completion - caused by American pressure, lost the country valuable industrial production and exports but it also interrupted vital oil supplies. All these taken together created a run on sterling and caused a loss of credibility and prestige. Macmillan had the job of putting a break on rising prices and maintaining the value of the pound. That year there was a destructive printing strike, which went on for weeks and caused much bitterness and strife. Its net result made a number of firms move out from London and caused others to close down altogether.

Prefabricated houses were built during the war, to house bombed out survivors. They were ready-made, easily erected, single floor bungalows, very much like a large caravan. Tower blocks were, now replacing these iconic, utilitarian homes. City and town 'bombed out areas' were completely changed from their original Victorian buildings by new slab sided easily constructed offices. Concrete framed picture windows, stairs and landings steel tubing that replaced brick; individual windows panes, stained glass, wrought iron railings and moulded brickwork anathema. It was the turn of minimalism, easy fix and pre-construction. It was thought, by the then consultant architects, that what people wanted was high rise blocks to house the maximum number of families so that more space around would compensate for the lack of gardens. Every part of the country had there own soulless creations the repeated a sameness of not only the social outcome of disaffected youths with nothing to do but a soulless conformity - lacking in individualism.

The massive increase in industrial competition from the beaten axis countries, helped by the Marshal Plan to ward off communism, started to prove too much for Britain's outdated,

worn-out factories and machinery. It was very much easier to start- up a modern system of production when starting from scratch rather than cobbling on the latest innovation onto the old previous model.

Foreign Governments subsidised the building of modern factories, which could undercut British prices; our trade unions demanded one man for one job, which was inflexible and anachronistic. Work gradually went abroad especially when, it seemed to be more often than not, there was industrial action here to increase wages and reduce the working week. In the printing industry, particularly in the pre-printing side of the industry, typesetting and picture reproduction was now computer generated... the writing was on the wall... labour was going to be replaced by machines. Fixed-size presses superseded rotary book presses – standardization became an important factor in pricing. The rapid development of photographic typesetting to assemble a complete page continued apace. It was clear that letterpress typesetting and block making was in decline. It was a question of how fast would the print house owners change their equipment and come to terms with what was clearly going to happen. Fortunately, for the workers, this did not come about as fast as predicted...

Society expected you to get a job immediately on leaving school, a percentage paid over to your mother - to help with the housekeeping. It was expected that you would get married after a reasonable period of engagement, of say two years, then, when in your early to middle twenties, you got married in a church; you rented a flat either furnished or unfurnished to allow you to save hard - for a deposit to take out a mortgage – to buy your first home. Children were to be the result of that marriage after a reasonable period taken to gather basic furniture together.

It was late in 1956 when there was a lengthy printing strike, which created great bitterness between the management and workers. The Works Director of Chromoworks could not deal with Frank Clements, SLADE&PW union representative. He was a confirmed Socialist very interested in social reform. He would not accept that the management could not increase the workers wages. There was talk of a walk out leading to strike action. Eventually, asked to step down as Father of the Chapel.

As usual, the workers demand was for a reduction in working hours, longer holidays and more money. Eventually the bosses concluded a deal and we all went back to work. However, the eventual outcome was the closing down of the artist studio over a period of a year. One man retired, two men went as trainee retouchers to Sun Gravure Works, two men retrained at Chromoworks as retouchers and two of us went to Wood Rozalar and Wilks, Willesden. Shortly afterwards Chromoworks closed down their Neasden factory and went to Nottingham becoming part of The British Printing Corporation [BPC]. This firm was also a general printer similar in size to Chromoworks, what was more welcoming, intended to retain their artist studio in the hope that they would pick up work from firms closing their studio.

My fiancé and I had not discussed having children before we were married. It was not a subject shunned because it was embarrassing just denied importance. We had not even discussed where we would eventually buy a house or how we would furnish it and certainly, not what style nor period of decoration we preferred. It was almost as if life would just follow on what had taken place before only now we would do it together.

Our marriage, planned for the third week in March 1957, timed to take full advantage of the end of tax year rebate. This rather clinical regard for a tax rebate was worth planning for and

used by most couples thinking of getting married. We took ourselves off to see the vicar of St. Andrews, Sudbury, to inquire about what the marriage procedure was - about when the banns read. We had very little money and had to save like mad not only for the wedding and honeymoon but also for the flat on Harrow Road and essentials.

The wedding breakfast held at Priory Gardens. Harry and Rita Morgan had explained to Sally and me that we had a choice, a wedding with all the trimmings or a simple event plus a cheque for five hundred pounds. As I have explained - we were very hard up, took the kind offer with gratitude.

For the occasion, I had had a new suit and Sally had a fitted costume with an 'A' line light blue topcoat and hat, which she soon discarded - never liking such accessories. Round her throat hung a single string of pearls and pinned to her coat a posy. Sally hated dressing up and never ever got used to doing so. Such formalities and rites were anathema to her. She was all for sporting gear and casual wear.

I rolled up to the church by bus - from Harrow - dropping me off at the bottom of the road. I walked, in plenty of time, to the church... up the aisle, before the altar. There I mused, 'was I doing the right thing?' My doubts vanquished by finality and completeness... no more disruptions; I must 'get on with life'.

It was a fine spring day, warm and sunny, heralding a new life about to begin. Eventually the main guests arrived including Vera my godmother, up from Somerset, and Roger, Sally's brother, my 'best man'.

Sally drove to the church in a hire car and walked up the aisle with her father. It was a simple affair - no choir or bells rung, although there was an organist. The hymns we had both chosen, enthusiastically endorsed by Sally's parents, sung with

enthusiasm. It was a lovely happy occasion with the minimum of ceremony and fuss.

After the ceremony Sally and I waited in the wedding car for all the guests to make their own way back to Priory Gardens, which was only five minutes walk away, and then we drove up in the car. Harry and Rita had laid on a fine selection of ready-made sandwiches, cakes and biscuits. A fine toast by Sally's father preceded champagne and cutting the wedding cake. From now on I was to call them Dad and Mum. They never asked me to do so, and I was never embarrassed using the familiar terms - it just seemed natural to do so. I became part of their extended family, from that day on... never needing better.

When we eventually arrived at Waterloo station, via the dreaded underground railway, Sally hated going underground, we boarded the main line train to Portsmouth, which would take us to the pier where we were to catch the ferry to the island. A taxi took us to the hotel where all of the guests, we discovered, were on their honeymoon too.

The honeymoon was booked at Cliff Top Hotel, Shanklin, and Isle of White. Our marriage state obvious, for who else would go on holiday in March... cold, wet and windy... The hotel was full of such couples - all on their honeymoon.

Our week was soon over. I have read that these events are not always easy affairs and ours was certainly not the most relaxed - we were in fact embarrassed which was silly because we had spent the previous summer together on holiday sharing the same bed. Perhaps we should have talked the matter through, but we did not, both being unsure and inexperienced. We were not the world's greatest lovers and the run up to the wedding and aftermath caused its own stress. There is something to be said for trial marriages - understanding all that is involved about making love with all the expectations that should follow. By itself, the

hotel was fine and the Isle of Wight provided the necessary backdrop to the start of married life.

However, we survived to find ourselves outside the Harrow Road furnished flat - we rented... my motor bike, propped up in the road. Arriving back home, with forty pounds in the bank and a lot of hard saving look forward to...!

The owners were a funny lot because what ever they did they made a lot of noise about it. There was an amazing amount of banging and crashing with shouts and screams, which reverberated from one side of the house to the other. This was our nightly entertainment, which did not make our love making any more accomplished, in fact put Sally right off. At one time, I am sure the man threw a chair that bounced from one wall in their kitchen to the other.

Our rooms were sparsely furnished and the kitchen positively barren. The bed creaked and the floors echoed. Sally was homesick to the extent that she spent all her time back at Priory Gardens. It was all quite hopeless and no way to carry on. This lasted about a month before Father-in-Law decided that we had to have a better situation that might prove to be more encouraging.

An unfurnished flat - number eight Meadow Road became available in Pinner. A Lloyds Bank employee had occupied it. We had a chance to fill it, which we did with much rejoicing after paying a deposit. Now we could use all the things we had both collected to stock our bottom drawer... moving in May 1957, after its total redecoration.

We furnished the flat with a kitchen table with two chairs, double divan bed, light green carpet square, two Cintique arm chairs, a 'G' Plan wardrobe and chest of drawers and all the other bits and pieces needed to make up an on going home. With those and an orange box covered over with a tablecloth that supported

the black and white TV... we were all set to start our married life together in our own unfurnished flat.

My in-laws kindly bought us a magnificent Mason's tea service made in the Strathmore design, which became our pride and joy. It was always a pleasure to use but as with all most precious things, with a large family, accidents took their toll...!

My motor cycle, I kept down the side passage, to wheel out every day, to take me to work come rain or shine. It was not long before I wanted a larger machine. I discussed this with Trevor - a work colleague. He advised buying a bike such as his - being familiar with its construction and servicing his own machine knew that it was reliable... recommend his BSA, 500cc twin. With that advice, I looked around the various local showrooms and eventually found one at Slocums in Neasden. What a difference it made compared to my AJS... the BSA was a pleasure to ride...

Sally continued to work at Wembley Hospital and cycled there every day cum wet or shine. Her pushbike with the wicker basket on the front often with the day's shopping inside had to negotiate Harrow Hill that Sally used as a challenge to get up without stopping to push.

The house we shared with the Turners, who lived on the ground floor. Mrs Turner and her daughter 'did' housework for local people and her son worked for the council. Living with a family below was a strain particularly when Sally repeatedly cleared her throat at night. The result would be a tremendous banging on the ceiling below with a broom handle and frosty glances during the day. Mrs Turners was always a few centimetres away from the drawn net curtains that twitched every time we went out.

It was not long after being married that Chromoworks shut down their artist's studio. The management gave three months

warning saying that they could retrain half the staff to be lithographic colour retouchers – those who had been with the firm the longest.

The three of us - who had to leave, asked by the management what we intended to do? George Clements said he would retire. Fred and I to fill positions within a local printing house called Wood Rozlaar & Wilks, Willesden. Everyone was satisfied... that the best had been done to see their future catered for...

The firm kept my wages at the same level, which, considering my new married state was very welcomed. It did not take me long to fit in with what the other men were doing. My previous skills stood me in good stead and Cambell Gilbert, detailed off as my instructor, was an adept tutor interested in the job and open-minded about new technical methods. There was an enormous amount of handwork still to do on both the continuous tone negatives and screened positives. Because so much time was devoted to masking out the negatives, I had a chance to take in what was going on around me and to adapt quickly to the new working environment and skills I had to acquire.

When first married, ten years after the war, the nation's conventions - behaviour and habits, based on pre-war patterns, that had evolved over generations. My marriage was the culmination of my longing to settle down and plan for a better life – to share goals, interests and outcomes. We had not discussed whether we were going to have children or how we would bring them up if we had. Getting together - courting... our engagement, marriage, and early life together, all followed conventional behavioural patterns... This conformity spilled over into shared tasks within the home and, from overheard

conversations, sexual behaviour too... Having children was included in our forward thinking, although not spoken about... Although individual childhoods are not all the same - within a social class, life-styles patterns are. The changing culture of Britain promoted 'the welfare interests of children'. This was to play an important part in the future consideration of married partners. Sally and I continued to live in Pinner, throughout my year of re-training, and subsequently... when I moved on... to a job with Sun Litho at Ruislip. I applied for the position as a fully trained retoucher, although the work considerably more advanced. At least five of us at Wood Rozalar, from different departments, went to Sun Litho - a relatively new plate makers and provers who were taking advantage of the boom in litho - taking over from letterpress.

The latest Kodak Tri-colour masking methods were used which ensured less handwork and retouchers had to do their own page planning. The Roland flat bed proving machines, three in all, were the latest design - all new. Planners took the separate pages to plan into sheet position ready for plate making...

Sun Litho was a plate-making firm for the lithographic printing industry and as such had to make a profit from only that source. This competition, from independent colour separation studios, plate makers, film planners and provers, became an inherent part of the printing industry, and over time created faster and cheaper techniques... Competition became fierce.

For all book production, whatever the printing process, films, showing typematter and [screened] halftone pictures, cut, patched and planned to form pages. These pages in sheet position are now ready for printing. The position of a page on the plate is relative: to the size of printing machine, number of pages in the book and method of cutting, folding and gathering.

Planning separate films – both screened pictures and typematter in page position, onto a clear plastic foil - both stable to heat and cold conditions, was a considerable improvement on letterpress having to set type and picture blocks into a forme.

The surface of the aluminium printing plate was coated with a light sensitive emulsion which hardened, when exposed to light. The opaque black 'image areas' held back the light leaving those areas capable of being removed – replaced - made ink receptive.

Within a very short period, many letterpress workers were made redundant. To absorb these workers – keep them in the printing industry and in the same union, apprenticeships were curtailed and a retraining programme instigated. It was not many years before the photogravure industry followed the letterpress industry's downturn. All this was the start to a massive restructuring of the printing industry, which is still going on today, driven by electronic image generation.

Throughout this period the trades union held legal strength. As previously explained it was not just in the printing industry that it resulted in poor growth. The obvious restrictive practices stifled the growth of productivity - put off firms seeking greater profits - investing in new machines. Unions were always trying to improve the conditions of their members because this was their main task. Therefore, the pressure on the economy increased. Management's did not stand a chance to resist having all that political power against them. In the coming, years when Labour in office there was a marked increase in the growth of public sector employment. This spiral of wage claims, strikes, inflation relying on restraint to curb an ever-increasing enactment of the position was destined to fail.

To maintain, perhaps increase, my living standard employers had to be progressive - be efficient - use the latest

technology. This meant that I had to move firms every two to three years – move to progressive firms, keeping abreast of new techniques. It was no good staying at the same place out of sentimentality because wages would not keep pace with the cost of living. Most platemaking firms paid precisely the same rate to all employees believing that there would be no industrial friction between skills if all paid the same rate... not so...!

This was neither economical nor in the best interest of production however much it pandered to social engineering and the rights of workers. That meant that you could not seek a raise for greater productivity because that would mean that others would feel threatened – it would show that greater productivity could be made by admitting that this one man was better at his job than another. Who was going to be the judge, if a wage-rise given then that man should have all the most difficult work to do?

In some instances workers agreed amongst them - to accept the same rate – and ensure total transparency. Working in such an environment one quickly became aware that some men were better than others. Some slowed the work-rate down – so that others could keep up others sat back... The common denominator: for the slowest speed to be the norm - working at the same rate - for the same pay. This is patent nonsense... even if the standard of final work was the same, which never happened... quality and quantity gradually declined... However, new methods and machines came into production faster than human's change behaviour - adapt.

There was general belief by Labour Government's - of Clement Attlee's 1945 – 51 and Harold Wilson's, 1964 – 70, that the Trades Unions and various social welfare groups, should plan events in favour of so called underprivileged groups - workers who were less skilled. It is as well that in the early 60's there was a

great post war boom - driven by cheap energy. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan attributed saying, “you have never had it so good”. From 1951 to 1963, sandwiched between two Labour governments, there had been a Conservative administration, practically covering the whole period of which I write.

In 1961, life expectancy for males was 70 and females 74. The rate for employment growth in Britain was 3.2 the lowest for the seven largest Western economies in the world. The place of women was particularly difficult. The war years had seen a tremendous influx of women into not only the armed services but into industry – there would be no turning back, women sought parity with men in all fields. Women jobs in printing factories were for warehouse duties. Apprenticeships and trainee positions for girls only started in the early eighties. Girls just out of school no longer thought about getting married and having children. It was now about getting a job, fulfilling ambitions and becoming independent.

The economy was thrusting ahead which continued for over a year. Working conditions negotiated on an annual basis, in retrospect, always the same: longer holidays, shorter working and an annual increase to keep abreast of inflation. Overtime worked by the majority - at least two nights for four and a half hours per week and Saturday mornings from 6-12. New firms were opening up every week offering better wages and conditions and there was a steady turn round of staff.

In the sixties, the industrial unrest centred on the shipbuilding industry, dockside workers, mines and motor works. This had the effect of turning young people off those jobs - for fear of being involved and losing wages. The long-term result was a lack of suitably trained workers within all industries. The emergence of web-offset printing - from continuous reels of paper, for the production of local newspapers and periodicals -

cut costs, introduced better quality pictures and started the use of colour. This was the beginning of steps taken to restructure the printing workforce.

The three main printing processes, letterpress, gravure, and lithography, competed with each other for the middle print-run jobs – a print run of half a million copies. Letterpress held on to newspaper production... mainly because the production set-up long established and would be expensive to change, and the strength of the letterpress chapels had always held the management to ransom. Letterpress also controlled book production for a similar reason although from a union point of view their power diminished – their profits were not from advertisers and deadlines. Photogravure existed for long runs - magazine production in the millions. Lithography printed labels, holiday brochures, lesser magazine runs, greeting cards, prints and jobbing work. By the 1960s, it was very clear that the two former surpassed the latter... All the most modern innovations: Flatbed scanners, studio cameras, film & foils, printing machines and rotary machine plates pointed the way - the printing industry was heading towards a radical change... In fact, it was a revolution.

Countries abroad influenced change too. Their workforce flexible - easily controlled - dominated by strong management. New techniques, working arrangements and modern machines were quickly introduced – without renegotiating new agreements. This undercut Britain's industrial effectiveness.

In Britain, the newspaper industry continued to run on pre-war working methods. Abroad – mainly in Holland and Singapore, faster and cheaper lithographic processes undercut prices.... Their use of film for the production of typematter, multiple images and scanners, for four colour reproductions, gave them an edge – on price and time. Foreign governments

financially assisted their country's printing industry. Britain could no longer compete.

1963 – 4 saw the twelve-month premiership of Sir Alec Douglas-Home, the surprise choice of the conservative party. He predictably came across as a reliable, trustworthy prime minister who unfortunately had no persona for television and the media. He was a bad choice not because his policies were bad but because he did not reflect this age of youth and scientific progress – there was to be great changes in industrial development, which did not bode well for Sally and me – planning our way ahead...

It was considered by government 'think-tanks' that motorways was the answer to traffic hold-ups. 1963 heralded... the introduction to: town planners and developers proclaiming a new architectural design - to progress a brighter future... the promotion of concrete – roads, embankments, slab-sided buildings, bridges – institutional buildings and council offices. Cities and towns forty years later decried this misplaced zeal began to haul down these edifices of blighted opinion...

When we had been living at Pinner for just over a year Sally decided that it was time for us to think about having a family. We were still saving hard for our own house and the thought of having to do without one salary in our saving strategy was worrying. The question of having to start planning for a baby was a shock... and what about the long-term effects?

We had never discussed having children or if children came along what size family we would like. In fact, Sally had never shown any desire for children - enjoyed their company - shown any regard for babies or been envious of mothers to be. It was almost an out of character act, for someone so sporting.

However, Sally was not to be put off by financial considerations. Here was a challenge that required dedication - if others could have children then so could we, any thought about

waiting until we had our own house was out of the question. So the decision made, that a pregnancy tried for - after two years of marriage life.

For me, to be making love most nights was an enjoyable experience and there being no need for contraceptives a liberating and satisfying time - but for Sally it was a mission - not something to be fulfilled by or enjoyed.

After a couple of months of trying for a baby with no results Sally began to question what was wrong. She consulted friends and colleagues at work. As she was still working at Wembley, hospital she was in the right place to gain some of the answers. Eventually the family doctor consulted. The usual advice given to achieve pregnancy was, give it time, be patient, achieve the right temperature and posture, and be relaxed... All of those I had in plenty. For Sally it was frustrating.

At last, the day came when Sally had the pregnancy test... which proved she was. It was a time of satisfaction and expectation. Sally still cycled to work and the months ticked by up to the time she gave up work just a few weeks before the birth.

That year we spent our holiday at a farm in Timberscombe, Devon, close to Dunster and its castle. I can still see the large bowl of cream placed on our table for every meal and the porridge too made with cream and full cream milk provided for breakfast. In the afternoons, a cream-tea served and once again, there was the cream placed before us in a large bowl.

On one of our motorcycle trips out around the lanes near Rickmansworth, we sped round a corner to meet a car coming in the opposite direction. The leaves on the wet road presented no grip and we drove straight into it. I gripped onto the handlebars like glue Sally meanwhile flew over both my head and the oncoming car – I sustained a broken wrist and she nothing at all.

I made my way to Mount Vernon Hospital where my wrist put in plaster. The damaged motorbike transported to a garage in Wealdstone where it was repaired. Never to be quite the same bike again - being out of balance - the frame slightly twisted. That made us very aware that from now on our family's safety was paramount.

That Summer I started to take driving lessons in a Standard Pennant car setting off with a hill climb up the hill to the cinema along Pinner high street or trying to pull out from the parked cars going down towards Love Lane. Riding a motor cycle had made me road conscience so it did not take me long to get the hang of driving. I managed to pass in eleven lessons, which was a relief because we badly needed the money.

I sold the Triumph 650 cc, which I bought in place of the BSA nine months before, and bought from a friend - Colin Reuter who ran a garage along the Pinner Road, a pale yellow Ford Anglia 15cwt. van for £150.00. It had only three forward gears and a side valve engine... but much needed for a growing family and gave noble service.

Stan, by this time, had gone into the motor industry from being an agricultural engineer, was in the servicing department at Dagenham Motors, Alperton. They took over servicing my car.

Often I wondered, after sampling dry, warm motoring, why I had continued with the motor bike. Those freezing cold fingers, wet chilled knees, waterlogged shoes and bulky weatherproof clothes. Not to mention those awful raised white lines on a wet day coming round a corner - that if you got one wheel one side of the line and the other wheel the other it meant a possible fall. This was the same feeling experienced when going over a polished manhole cover or a pile of rotting leaves. Alternatively, the heart stopping moment when a motorist suddenly opens his

door, adjust wipers blades, cleans the windscreen, or to turns sharply in front of you... now we had a family to care for...

Our first child, a boy, was born on 5 February 1960, at Wembley Hospital Maternity Unit. We named him Simon Roger [after Sally's brother]. I was twenty-five and Sally twenty-eight delighted that the birth had been a success - without any complications.

After ten days Sally, released from hospital carrying Simon, we drove back to her parent's home – thinking that there she could rely upon her mother to make the passage to parenthood easier... could develop a routine to transfer back to Pinner. It was a relief that her parents were so near and that Rita was happy to put up with the invasion... It was an ideal situation, which lasted for a couple of weeks, but like all good things had to end...

We got all the new infants bits and pieces together and with Sally's case, journeyed back to Pinner. When we got there, we unloaded the pram and wheeled it up the front path. There, we suddenly realised the awful truth - the pram was too big - would not, with any twisting, turning, tipping and tugging, be enticed around the front door and up the stairs to the flat. It was at this stage, Sally, getting more and more upset, refused to proceed - declared that we were to return to Priory Gardens immediately...!

Our fateful return convinced the In-laws that here was a crisis that they had to be corrected, being too well aware, they would have to put up with an invasion... yet again, unless desperate measures taken. A powwow produced a solution... we had to have our own home and fast... Harry scanned the local papers for Houses for Sale...

Both he and I went in the van to see some of the houses on offer whilst Sally stayed behind with Simon. We had talked through the financial situation knowing that I had this Provident Life Policy - could be used to provide a loan for house purchase.

When I was seventeen my Aunt had taken me to one side to explain that I should devote some of my wages to take out a Provident Life Policy – to save, and later, convert to house purchase. This seemed like an excellent idea and I completed the paperwork at once. This cost me in the region of £17.00 a month – which was a lot of money to me being almost, one week's wage. How pleased I was when it became clear that this policy would be our salvation for it allowed us to put down as a deposit £2,300.00. However, we needed another £500. My Father-in-Law stumped up the amount needed, put the transaction through the banks Lawyer and checked the paperwork. How lucky we were that he was a bank manager fully conversant with such matters.

Sally turned down a number of houses we looked at - being unsuitable – either too small or in a position which to her was unacceptable. At last we came upon 68 Norwood Drive which at first glance would provide all that Sally desired. She gave it the thumbs up and we speedily made our way to the Estate Agent.

The purchase arrangements was speedily completed and we became the proud owners... knowing that there was much work that needed to be done - to put it into a state suitable to receive our new family. All my spare time was spent scrubbing floors, stripping old wallpaper, painting and planning the new kitchen. Sally and I agreed to name the house Harbury - adopting 'Har', my home town [Harrow], and 'bury', from Sudbury - her home. The sign graced the front porch - hanging from the door canopy. It was very exciting to own our own home... I could not stop myself from walking round and round the house thinking how lucky we were...!

It was about this time that Harry took early retirement from the bank at the age of sixty. He had looked forward to this moment with relish – he was going to do all the things he had

been dreaming of: being a grandfather, watching cricket, cycling, reading and perhaps most of all buying their first television and watching Westerns. His face would wrinkle up in a tremendous smile, he would draw an even greater mouthful of smoke in and exhale through his teeth as the wonderful thoughts, expectations, and delights regaled him. Now he could devote all his energies and time... to fulfil his dreams!

## CHAPTER IV

### My Own Home

Another Cutler home – North Harrow - Sun Litho – Father-in-Law – Building a garage - Page planning – Colour Masking – First Car - Growing Family – Seaside Holidays – Gardening – The Angel Islington – Printing Strike - Wharf Road – Badminton – CCPR. Courses – Golf – Home improvements – Overtime – Shopping – Pushing the pram - Bedtime stories – Christmas cheer.

Number sixty-eight newly built in 1932 when much of the town of North Harrow developed... The construction of suburban homes provided work for a great number of unemployed building workers after the disastrous General Strike of 1926... The new towns followed the Metropolitan Railway Line... running from Aylesbury to London...

We arrived, with our new baby. The few cars, that were owned, parked on driveways leading to tile-hung, lean-to garages, with pitched, tiled roof... the roads bare of parked cars... quiet - residential...

The road was flanked, as the majority, by a grass verge, behind kerbstones... Obligatory crab apple, hawthorn or almond trees planted squarely in the middle – one before each house... It was *infra dig* not to keep the front of one's house tidy... all kept their front gardens immaculate - grass verges and lawns, short... Privet hedges, trimmed - scalloped or castellated... masked the chain-linked fence beneath...

House window frames and doors, painted either green and cream or brown and cream, and most, if not all, had lace curtains. This may all sound rather twee – regimental. Perhaps it was, but it led to a good standard of decoration - uniform behaviour, being normal rather than extreme... A green and pleasant land prevailed...!

These were three bedroomed houses with two reception rooms plus a bathroom upstairs and a kitchen below. The larder was in the hall next to the kitchen with an under stair cupboard. Picture rails and plate racks, dado rails in hall and landing, open spindled stairs-cases, unpainted polished handrails, galleried landings, and wood surround fireplaces on a tiled hearth... These were Horace Cutler homes, built by the same builder who constructed my parent's rented home in Cumberland Road, solidly built with tile-hung, curved bays to the front and french doors at the back. No drive or garage but a rear entrance with wooden fence and gate. The panelled front door was glazed with stained glass and so too the landing window. The kitchen provided with a range that heated the water, a wooden dresser, butler sink and surface plumbing. Previous owners had not altered the house - it contained all its original fittings and fitments...

Opening the back door revealed the garden... and the concrete path that circled the house. Not having a shed - for either coal or tools, gave further proof, to the property's

unaltered state. The sixty-foot lawn sloped down to a mature hawthorn hedge... the one-time field boundary..., stretched as far as the eye could see, all along the back gardens, giving shelter, shade and animal byway... thereby ensuring a rural landscape - through all the seasons.

On either side of the lawn, a three-foot wide flower border, held a couple of clumps of bedraggled Michaelmas Daises and a woebegone Phlox. The lawn, such as it was, held indentations where onetime wartime vegetable plots laid out. There was much scope for improvement... it was all ours... we proud owners...!

Our immediate neighbours, Lilly and Bart Walker, had a daughter Janice - the same age as Simon. Eventually they attended the same class at the Primary School just two hundred yards down the road towards Rayners Lane. On the other side of us was the electricity board sub station and the ends of the gardens from the houses in the next street.

We moved in prior to Easter 1960 and settled down to domesticity. Simon occupied the same bedroom we did - at the front of the house, and continued so doing for three months before taking up residence in the second bedroom - to the rear. It was not long before we invested in a fitted grey hair cord carpet to cover the whole house except the kitchen, bathroom... wood parquet, graced the hall...

By this time I was working at Sun Litho, Ruislip, with most of the work force being of similar age - most, newly married... starting a family. There was much talk of home repairs, improvement and renovation... the latest cars, washing machines and fridges... Arguments would ensue about the relative strengths of certain mixtures of cement to sand, the boxing in of staircases, panelled doors and difficulties hanging wallpaper or fixing wall tiles.

Regular mystery car trips were organised which ended up at a local hostelry. It was all very friendly - learnt over time - to accept and be relaxed in each other's company. It was also a 'go-ahead' firm using the latest industrial methods. A period of boom swept over the print world and thankfully we became part of it...!

My first task after decorating the inside was to build a garage. I drew up the plans and submitted them to the council. There was nothing in the plans to cause any dissent from the planning department and so that summer taking a week off from work I started work. The side fence and gate was cleared away so too the front hedge and brick wall. I began digging out the footings, which needed to be dugout to a depth of four and a half feet to allow for the clay subsoil. Fortunately, my garage only needed one side and back wall - a lean-to garage, 20 feet x 11, with a corrugated asbestos roof.

When it came to filling in the footings - it was even more of a struggle than digging out... Not investing in a mixer - mixed by hand... what seemed like tons of concrete...? To make it a little easier I started heaving in some of the two thousand bricks ordered for the walls - to supplement the mix...

Building the walls slowly accomplished, taking care of the stability of the single brick, one pier, construction... When it came to building the reinforced concrete joist over the double doors - I nearly met my match... Lifting a bucket of concrete up above shoulder height - to pour into the shuttering, was far harder than imagined, particularly because, my ladder was short... Eventually the job was finished with the roof on, parapet built and doors hung, including the fixed framed window to the rear. Now I had to construct the drive and lay the garage floor...

It took me so long to level out the hard-core, breaking the bricks into manageable pieces, then to mix up the necessary

concrete. Sally's father came over to lend me a hand and at onetime I thought he was going to have a heart attack...

To make the job go faster I shovelled up a massive pile of ballast and cement in the road. As I hosed in the water, Sally's father and I started to break down the sides of the pile - to mix up the concrete. Unfortunately, the side's of the well broke and a wet mixture - of half-mixed concrete started to flood out into the road. What a gallop we had to rush round to stem the tide. We furiously mixed as we circled the pile trying to stem the tide whilst stiffening up the mixture. Poor father-in-law had to go in for a cup of tea and a long sit down...

Later on, that summer of 1960, we went on holiday to Bournemouth, for a weeks stay at a hotel, with Cedric, Jo and new daughter Jane... Cedric, doing his internship, and Jo, a physiotherapist, both worked at Wembley Hospital... Jo being pregnant with Jane, at the same time as Sally - who worked in the secretaries department whilst pregnant with Simon... They became one of a small circle of friends throughout the childrens *growing up* period...

Harry, we were told, had had a mild heart attack, the week before we were due to go on holiday. Because it was considered not life threatening we were advised to carry on with the holiday arrangements. It was during that holiday we heard of his death... Rita, Sally's mother, advised us to finish the holiday before coming home - nothing we could do to help. What a shock this news was and how distressing; he was only sixty one and had so looked forward to retirement - to cycle over and watch Simon grow up and to watch a lot of cricket... things he had been planning to do for so long... I was certainly going to miss him and his steady influence...

Rita continued to live at Priory Gardens after the funeral - being only fifty two at the time, putting on a brave face... to the

terrible tragedy, especially when we heard that it needn't of happened if the proper course of action had been taken by the Hospital. She was to take an active part in our growing family making sure each child had all the necessary clothes and school uniform whilst always remaining interested in their out of school activities. Birthdays always celebrated, school reports scanned and problems talked through... No week went by without some contact and monthly visits to her house - for Saturday or Sunday tea.

Making wine was another common fad which many work mates succumbed to. The kit was bought with all the ingredients plus the carboys to hold the wine, siphon, and distil. The chaps at work were continually going on about what a magnificent brew they had obtained – so a craze started. It all ended up with the whole lot dispensed with - down the drain, and the carboys given away.

I had a vision to create a smart frontage to the property by erecting an oak-railed fence in place of the privet hedge. To complement it an oak door made especially at the local joiners in Harrow - to replace the original stained glass 1930s style door, which was beginning to come apart.

In the late 60s, it was all the rage to remove all the plate rails, picture rails and dado mouldings from the walls. Box in all the stair rails and panelled doors. Knock down the fireplaces and hearths, remove the over mantles and the fire surrounds and replace with electric or gas fires mounted on the wall. This sacrilege went on throughout the country; doing away with the old, and replacing with easy to decorate and simple to clean, gloss painted hard board.

Many years later: conservation and restoration experts declare, 'original fixtures and fittings, to be left - in situ' - replace the original mouldings and fireplaces if possible, put it all back as

it was. Thank goodness, common sense has returned and properties now reflect the age and style they were built. Owners now began to appreciate the skill of past craftsmen and the quality of their materials. The many television programmes concerned with renovating old buildings and interior decorating has opened their eyes. House buyers are better educated to appreciate past standards. The philistine age of knocking everything down has passed with the advent of educational television programmes that explain the skills used in the past.

This was the age of the mini skirt and Carnaby Street fashions. Informality was in and strict dress codes were out. Denim trousers for both sexes went with long hair and Beatle haircuts. The BBC launched Radio 1. No longer, did families gather round the radio of an evening to share a programme – young people had their own channel and in all probability listened to a pirate radio station. I ran a Kay's catalogue and bought all the family's clothes from that source which made dressing the family so much easier.

I was in competition with the next-door neighbour – unbeknown to him... Their garden, with prized lawn, precisely arranged flower beds and regimented kitchen-garden, represented perfection - neatness and colour content.

Two could play at that game: I invested in lorry loads of peat, the latest scientific advances in chemical fertilisers... laying a well hidden, punctured hose, along the edge of the flowerbeds... No vegetable matter was going to be retarded by lack of water, what was good enough for the Nile delta was good enough for me! There, that should do the trick, I thought...!

My beans galloped over the canes and nearby fence – mighty curling vines - thick as a python, with tendrils wrapping themselves around everything. The tomatoes suffered from root

rot and wilted; the lawn became yellow and patchy... and my lawn boasted the richest harvest of vetches, clover and moss.

I retreated in ignominy and relied upon the overhanging branches from next door's apple tree to supplement my dwindling horticultural produce.

It was Sally's plan to have children fairly close together – a two-year gap between the first and second. Because Simon had taken longer than planned Sally thought we ought to start earlier - to produce the second. As luck would have it, for Sally, she became pregnant at first try... David Harry [named after Sally's father] greeted life a little early, on 3 September 1961. In those days a home confinement and birth was possible for the second and subsequent children. Therefore, we met as a family, Nurse Foulds, who became Sally's midwife, confidant and friend. She saw Sally through the nine months - we were delighted at the end result... there I was, running up and down the stairs - with hot water. Even though I had attended the birth and read books I was still remarkable ignorant about procreation and the likes and dislikes of women. David was heavier at birth than Simon was and more even tempered and carefree; made very much more of his teething which must have been more painful for him.

Rita baby-sat for us at every night out we had. It did not take her long to appreciate that it would be very convenient to own her own car. So she started to take driving lessons which were to take her over two years to achieve.

My elder brother Stan had his first child Steven that year too which helped to make their new home in Chesham complete. We watched together that house being built - on farmland which, went to make up a new development on the outskirts of old Chesham. How Stan drove to work in that old Ford I shall never know? Its remarkable, looking back, what one does - taking

everything in at a stride, not considering sufficiently the eventual outcome?

Derek, my younger brother was now eighteen. Before he left school at fifteen my father had secured for him a position with the London Underground working in the signalling section. I do not think Derek thought much of that so went to work for Halls timber and hardware store just off Rayners Lane. During that time, he helped me decorate the sitting room renovating the fireplace – helping to scrape the rich brown varnish off the woodwork. He was the proud owner of a large Ford car that required an enormous amount of work to keep it on the road.

It was about this time that my parents received the awful news that the owners of their house had died and that the new owners were putting the property on the market. Initially my father, as a sitting tenant, gave the opportunity to buy it for the sum of two thousand pounds. This of course he flatly refused one because he said that he didn't have the money and two because it went beyond his principles of never to own his own property. It was a tremendous blow to my mother.

Over a period of many months, every avenue explored to come up with an answer - where they were going to live. Even the Freemasons were involved but they refused to help. The council were informed. Initially they could not help. As time went by their position became more urgent - something arranged to find a home where they would be happy.

Pinner Green had an estate of council flats erected right at that moment. Once again, even though my parents lived within walking distance they never visited or phoned. I found this most unusual could never could make out why? When we did visited them we were made to feel so welcomed and at ease. This was not what I had planned and worked towards for so long - I wanted to play an active part in my children's family life – go on

joint holidays, watch my grandchildren grow up, read those stories, play with them, see them take part in sports and go to their school.

As previously explained, my parents did not own their home... they were tenants. The owner died. As sitting tenants they were offered the chance to buy it at a reduced rate... it was then offered to them for two hundred pounds. There was no way she could afford that, having no savings, whatsoever... my Father then declared, 'he did not possess that amount and would not consider borrowing the money...' The opportunity was lost, for neither my brother nor I had that sort of money to invest. This had a tremendous affect upon my mother... never being a town person she harped back to her childhood and all the country things she loved... she would have loved to keep the house in the family. They were given six months to find another home... after trying every avenue - to stay or rent, the Council came up with a solution - to live in a ground floor flat, one, in a block of flats, in Pinner Green.

Derek, who was living with them, the last child at home, had to dismantle all the fixtures and fitting. Help burn all the furniture not wanted and prepare for the move. What a disastrous thing to happen. My father had all the time in the world to prepare for this moment. It was just his stubbornness, fear and ridiculous principles, which got in the way. It was also surprising, looking back, that we boys could not have got together to find the money... knowing that when they died the sum would come back to us. It did not strike us at the moment that this would have been the solution... which shows, how familiar we now with financial services: mortgages, loans, trusts and wills... the advantageous manipulation of money and resources.

The summer of 1962, Sally decided that we should start to think about increasing the family believing that it would be lovely

to try for a girl... there being no girls in the immediate family... it was something to look forward to. We were both pleased to find out that Sally was pregnant again - that August... for a birth sometime in May 1963. It was also that year that Stan and Jean had their second child – Stuart, whilst they were still living in Chesham.

My old Ford van was not suitable for a growing family - further seating needed. Living next door to Rita, in Priory Gardens, was the owner of the local garage in Sudbury. We told him that we were looking for another car and he came up with a red Vauxhall Victor 1500 cc. car, which was only one year old. This seemed like a sensible buy. That car took me to work in Islington for many years... giving excellent service.

During Sally's pregnancy with Rachel, leaning over the settee twisted the umbilical cord. This caused fluctuations to the blood supply to the womb - at onetime we though the pregnancy would have to be terminated. By taking things steady - not exerting her, the nine months might pass by without trauma... only this time the baby delivered at Edgware Maternity Hospital. At last, Rachel was born on 18 May 1963 - named after Sally's mother - Rachel Rita. The problem over the part strangulated cord did mean that Rachel had not had all the necessary life giving aids and was lighter than normal. However, she soon perked up and became the feted first girl for generations, in the Kearey family.

Our family holiday's were arranged for single weeks never a fortnight at a time. We would spend the first holiday of each year at the YMCA, Eastbourne. This opportunity eagerly looked forward to - it provided lodging and full board. It also had a lot of space for the children to explore, organised evening entertainment and gave us the opportunity to have a laid afternoon tea in the dining room.

The YMCA run as a hotel being directly on the sea front in the middle of town made it perfect. We have to know all the local facilities especially the best walks and sights. This holiday at Eastbourne was eagerly looked forward to becoming a central part of the family's life and continued for many years – it never let us down.

I was fortunate that at this time I had three week's holiday a year. For the other two I planned walking holidays based upon either a farm or lodgings mainly in the West Country. For each holiday, I bought an Ordnance Survey map and carefully planned each days walk to take in as many archaeological points of interest that I could find starting mid morning and finishing mid afternoon. They had to be circular so that we never walked twice along a certain footpath nor saw the same piece of landscape. All the walks planned to follow reasonably flat ground - to allow for the pushchair. Towards the end of each day's walk, the pushchair had to carry two children, I to carry the remaining tired soul. It was a challenge to come up with such a walk every day for a week and we got into some difficult times when the map was either unclear: the footpath not used sufficiently - the nettles and brambles unflattened or the path went through a herd of cows, or the little stream had become a raging torrent. Perhaps, the village, shown on the map, was either of a few solitary houses or devoid of any habitation at all. All this had to done under any weather conditions usually in the pouring rain, particularly when we visited Wales of the Welsh Marches.

I usually lead being the map-reader and Sally brought up the rear. In between was strung out the children who were enticed by the many and varied games I thought of along the way, with a prize of a few pennies for the winner. Nursery Rhymes sung as a roundelay as well as the alphabet, who can find the roundest stone, who can gather the prettiest posy - usually placed

on the oldest gravestone in the graveyard... our walks always included a visit to the church. The challenge was, who can select the most varied group of coloured leaves, who can think of a girls or boys name beginning with each letter of the alphabet? In fact, I made up frequent quizzes and stories to make the journey interesting - keep the children occupied. Many times, I said, "It's just around the next corner". I made the rejoinder so many times that it become a family saying.

By looking at the map I could tell what the geography of the place was in relation to human habitation – so I explained why the houses were built where they were, why the farm was laid out so. The significance of where in the past houses were built relative to the lie of the land and so many other interesting pieces of information recording how past generations lived: how a dry stone wall was constructed, how a hedge was laid, why a ditch drained off the land. The object was to read the map in such a manner that one could picture the area - the contents and contours. Much of the time, my words were just a voice on the breeze. However, I did hope some of it was sinking in for I found it all fascinating especially when the walk took us to a castle, some other historical building or place with the significance of the crossed swords indicated on the map - and the consequences thereby. Every church admired or criticized for its architecture - every detail; the gravestones checked to see which was the oldest. Our picked bunches of wild flowers were laid on that grave. We savoured the old-fashioned names and epitaphs.

All our holiday followed this familiar pattern with a packed lunch gathered up along the way to be eaten perched upon a rocky wall, gate or mound. The pushchair was the carriage: holder of all the unwanted clothes, after stocking up at the local shop, the source of comfort which would eventually lead to home; at times it transported three children. Even though it was a pain

when one had to lift it over a hedge or stile, it went with us everywhere.

David had been sleeping in his cot in the small third bedroom. Now that we had another child, that bedroom was to become Rachel's and David went into the larger second bedroom with Simon. This did not cause any upset nor cause any problem - it was a case of necessity.

On one of our visits to Jo and Cedric Selway, we had to bypass Epping Forest. We stopped to have a break and to give the children chance to play. When we left, I found that the car bogged down in mud. Stupidly I made to lift the car out of the mud and to ease it forward. In doing so, I strained my back. With much effort, I struggled into the car and we continued our journey. Now I had the job of getting out. I staggered into their lounge and had to lie on the floor, which I continued to do for the whole of the visit. What an effort it was to get back into the car and to drive home. . I can sympathise with anyone who has similar problems. Mind you, it was daft to try to lift the car in the first place. It does not take long for anyone who has a permanent illness or disability to become his or her own expert clinician. In my case I soon got round to standing on my feet by getting to my knees first or likewise sliding out of bed onto my knees.

Late in 1964, Sally decided once more on having another child. I was most concerned that, as it was, the family's budget was being stretched and having another child would stretch it! However, Sally insisted that we had ample baby clothes and all the other necessary things - after all, it was the four children that she had always wanted - that we had agreed upon. I did not remember any such agreement but if that were what was necessary to make her happy, perhaps it would be nice.

Now I really had to plan for an enlarged family. All the bedrooms occupied - we needed more space. The first thing was

to put in a downstairs toilet. This would not be too difficult because we had an existing under-stair cupboard that had been a walk-in larder. It had too sufficient headroom for what I had in mind. Luckily just outside the small ventilation window was the soil pipe from the upstairs lavatory so all we had to do was link into that. We called the plumber who was a friend of Stan's so his prices were very reasonable, so we pushed ahead with the plan. The window was louvered which gave sufficient ventilation and light. Now all I had to do was redecorate and put on a new door, which I built out at an angle to give a little more space. Overall, it worked out very well especially as we had fitted at the same time a new gas boiler and several radiators.

In 1964 there was few loft extensions built. Still the original layout of the roads, with their grass verges, was intact. The kerbstones were still complete without runways breaking up the sweep of the roadsides. The majority of houses retained their side entrances and complete front gardens. Few cars parked, hedges abounded and front gates hung. The roads were therefore neat, uncluttered and in the main unspoilt by alterations to the estates original conception. This was so all over Britain. What altered the panorama was the advent of higher wages – increased prosperity, which heightened the individual's will to better themselves. This declared itself by individuals altering the specification of their house and garden.

The country's prosperity and easier planning laws allowed individuals to alter their property to cater for a car. Pavements could be torn up to create a ramp - to cross pavements, garages, built with a flat roof although the brickwork had to be in keeping with the original specification. Lofts converted, front doors changed and window designs altered. These changes were made to houses all over Britain affecting the original design concepts devised by the architects and town planners

The baby boom of the sixties, and the ease of planning regulations and control, gave parents a simple option... It was much cheaper to alter your home than it was to sell and buy anew – a larger version of the same. Children could carry on attending the same school... the routine of living - continue unaltered... This made extending a far more attractive proposition. The appearance of British town's changes forever... gone, calm green vistas and conformity... DIY ruled and cheapness the governing factor to design...!

This happened all over Britain a situation where a vast proportion of properties were beyond the financial reach of a certain sector of the population. First time buyers seeking affordable homes found less and less on the market. Mrs Thatcher sold off council homes and buying to rent made difficult.

I believed that I could provide a better environment for my family if I relocated to the West Country. A larger house, purchased in Somerset or Devon, with the money received from the sale of Norwood Drive, would be a better proposition than staying close to London... Part of the building could be let out for holidaymakers or as bed and breakfast accommodation. The possibility of a larger garden would provide a much better environment for the growing family.

Excited by the thought, of what the future might hold, I made plans about how I should go about it. Sally appeared to be interested in the idea and could see the benefits. I contacted the West Country union offices and enquired about vacancies. One existed and so applied for a 'white card' to receive back a request for an interview. I wrote to some of the local Estate Agents - near Exeter to receive back a sheaf of particulars that looked promising...

It was at the point that Sally said that she did not want to move. This forced me to reconsider all my plans - led me to take out another insurance policy with Provident Life to allow us to have the capital to go ahead with an extension. We also extended the kitchen sideways and redesigned the interior layout – constructing a hatchway into the dining room. On my next holiday, I built a new patio, garden wall and replaced the wooden fence with a brick wall - separating us from our next-door neighbour.

To allow more space in both the second bedroom and the dining room I thought I would remove the fireplaces and the chimneybreasts. Tackling the bedroom first, I started to remove the brickwork, which came away quite easily. Where the breast came up to the ceiling, I staggered the brickwork back to support the breastwork above in the loft. All the rubbish I threw out of the window and then wheeled it to the skip. When I came to do, the downstairs dining room things were not quite so easy because the massive concrete hearth to the room above not supported. The concrete hearth was six inches thick by four feet long and eighteen inches wide. The question of how to get it down was a puzzle. At last, I had a brain wave. I would lean my ladder against the wall and then hammer it down from the room above. At the first twenty smashes, nothing happened. I could feel the house move but not the slab. Not even a chip flew off. Wishing to get on I assaulted the stubborn block by giving it a tremendous whack. That did it. It plummeted through the floor straight through my ladder, which it was suppose to slide down, and buried itself into the splintered floorboards. I peered through the hole in the floor aghast at the damage done. My new extending ladder bought for me by my mother-in-law was ruined. To remove the slab: rolled - head over heels... through the French doors up a sloping plank into the skip... now I had to plaster two

rooms. It looks so easy when you watch a skilled plasterer lying on the coats of plaster dampening down – flicking a brush of water onto the drying surface just to allow easy passage of the float to give the plaster a polished surface. What a performance trying to get it just right. In the end, I relied upon sand papering succeeding coats of plaster to give the wall some semblance of ‘a level professional finish’.

In 1964, Harold Wilson and the Labour party elected. This was a time of industrial failure, out-of-date technology; short term fixes which propelled the country into yet another sterling crisis and inflation. Therefore, off we went again into the annual wage demand to keep up. Wilson stepped back from trade union reform. It was just a few years later that the Labour moved towards comprehensive secondary education.

Talking amongst ourselves at work, I could tell there were higher expectations sought from life. Individuals spoke about flying to the Far East or America. There was much talk about going out to restaurants and nightclubs. New towns were springing up all over the country. Men at work told stories about weekend parties... and the swopping of front door keys. All sorts of choices in lifestyle were possible and there were shops and stores catered for any deviant behaviour.

Distemper superseded by emulsion paint and the public shied away from having green, brown and cream exterior woodwork - choosing instead, new softer tones. Centre lights taken up to the ceiling. Net curtains frowned on. Privet hedges replaced by brick walls, roads erupted with new driveways and lean-to garages sprouted. The old quiet charm of the thirties went modern! Kitchens were now fitted with everything beneath the worktop surface; the box freezer was the ‘in thing’. Fireplaces ripped out, chimney places bricked up and wall-to-wall carpeting finished off the effect of uncluttered space. Gas and electric fires

were taking the place of conventional fires for both heating the water and for heating the living space. New 'Do-it-yourself' programmes backed up all these alterations on television.

Overtime for me was now a necessary buttress if I was going to supplement state education by out of school activities like swimming and drama [elocution] lessons... our holidays, had to be booked. Sally's decision not to move to the West Country put an end to all my hopes to try to supplement my sources of income. We had to continue as we were...

In 1965 our eldest child was about to start Primary School; the second had just started swimming lessons at the Swimming Baths, our third was starting to walk and Ruth was about to be born.

Both Sally and I were keen to see that the children kept up to the required standard at school. Because Simon had had such a good start, being in a class at Primary school mainly populated by girls, the standard of behaviour and learning had been high. The parents too had been interested in their own child's progress. It was natural for us to expect all our children to assume the same progress. We also compared our children with friends and relations children and discussed with them their views. We watched and kept note how each one progressed from birth... Sally filling in the 'baby books' assiduously keen to make sure nothing was missed out...

As a young family, we did without television until our eldest was twelve when the pressure from outside the home became too great to continue without one. This doing without a television was a conscience decision by both of us parents, to prevent addiction to triviality, violence and puerile programmes.

We paid a weekly visit to the library where all the children drew out books - read by the following week. This Saturday trip to the library became a routine event come rain or shine...

followed by two ounces of sweets each to eat on the way home. All this started when the eldest became old enough to benefit and continued well after the time television was to become popular entertainment.

I was working at least two four-and-a-half hour periods of overtime on top of my normal hours during the week... on Saturdays, I started at six until two in the afternoon. The midweek rate for over-time was time-and-a-half and for Saturdays double-time. I started off from home during the week at about seven and drove to London by either car or motor bike to be there for eight and arrived back home around six for normal days and getting on for eleven on those nights of overtime.

The owner of Cumberland Road died and the son inherited the house. He wished to sell the property for £400 which my parents could not afford. Eventually, after a lot of heart searching – looking into every possible way to stay, or at least find a place to live, the council offered them a home at 99 Mill Farm Close, Pinner Hill Road. It was a very difficult time for all the family particularly for my mother who hated to leave her garden and neighbours.

As a social group, trades union's officials, whether at the union office or shop floor, enjoy power - to satisfy: their inadequacies, enjoy the excitement of confrontation, look upon industrial disputes as opportunities to sit back, stop work and talk about 'management unfairness...' There are those, who make such situations, one to 'help their fellow workers, right injustices and a few, born leaders of men – who like cream - rise to the top... as well, many others. A few, believe in 'socialistic philosophy' – an ideological belief concerned with equal distribution of profit - relative to need... This, world-wide, proved to be: inefficient, unworkable, unfair and socially

detrimental and holds back evolution... From my experience, a generalization, none were the most skilled workers...

The workers representative would be called into the works office to discuss unusual jobs, difficult production schedules, annual pay reviews, changes in all workers 'rights', overtime payments, clarifying arrangements, discussions about new materials, machines and safety-first and welfare issues etc. All the above are extremely vital factors needing sometimes delicate handling. In many instances the union representative was not up to that delicate task – not technically able...!

When workers are receiving top salary rates and as much overtime as they want there are no complaints. Workers will work in terrible conditions with fearful safety problems - due to poor lighting, dangerous floors, amateurish electrical fittings, draughts and floods.

Between the wars trade unions officials shied away from wielding their strength - as to affect the nations economy – giving way as soon as the national safety declared an issue. Always it was 'how the economy would not stand a change'. When there is full employment, and not enough skilled workers, then, union power at it's strongest. This is obvious – reflects scarcity value.

This book covers the period when unions were probably at their strongest –any shortfall, from earlier times, made up by an influx of white collar unionists, older trainee groups and women workers. The number of strike – days lost an escalating one, and the largest proportion of these, unofficial. As a onetime junior union official – all SLADE & PW members had to take their turn in attending meetings and filling local union jobs, it was apparent that head Office union leaders were not strong enough to control their more activist members. Very often men were forced to 'toe-the-line', if not - sent to Coventry. It was not a period of 'common sense'. The local union officials acted irresponsibly.

They never explaining that, ‘by the way, this strike might lead to mass unemployment, work going aboard - lead to industries closing down...’ Point out: the advance of electronics will come about which will alter working arrangements.

The workers continued their overtime habits – now relied upon... a necessity not just to get the job out on time but to pay their own bills... leading to the eventual loss of profits for the firm... delayed introduction of new working arrangements and installation of the latest technology. It was a viscous circle, which no one benefited from, least of all the workers. I have heard men say at a union meeting, “I would rather have this firm shut down rather than give way - on our demands”. There was a hard core of individuals who did not care about the industry – who enjoyed confrontation, who spoiled for a fight. They did not concern themselves with the changes facing the industry - the new ‘reprographic’ printing systems. Although traditional ‘in-plant’ printers were slow to exploit what was ‘new’ – instant print business, they made changes, which swung general trade work towards litho replacing their slower more inflexible letterpress machines. There was a very subtle difference between what the traditional printers estimated and what the competitive small jobbing printers charged. The former boasted faster delivery, quality and reliability and the latter cheapness. However, the differences were becoming ever closer. New materials, faster make ready times - on the printing machine, and electronic picture scanning, finally made the difference. A century of hand produced coloured posters ended...

British governments continued to employ a policy that held back investment and destroyed confidence - no party had a leader strong enough to stand up to the unions: allow a wages policy, plus degree of unemployment, to force out the inefficient, time wasters and industrial agitators.

It was in this climate that we were bringing up our new family. I had to be very circumspect about what I said at work and how I did my work. Each man looked over his shoulder at the chap at the next bench. Was he achieving a faster, better job, doing more overtime or paid a higher salary? I could never relax because it was essential to continue to earn as much money as I could.

Everything at home, carefully thought through - contributed towards making a good environment for a family - educational trips to the Commonwealth Institute, Museums, Galleries, Concerts, places of interest and the library. Removing the television was paramount... to form a quiet, self-learning environment we hoped would be habit forming.

It was just such a pity that each child could not have their own room to enjoy privacy - have their own things around them. Perhaps more space achieved by building a loft extension, or *in extremis*, moving to a larger house.

I compared my living standard and expectations with my parents. My world was utterly different. It was not just different because of material differences, for they were many, but of expectations and possibilities. Our life was certainly closer to my in-laws - their horizons, tastes and practices, and this set the standard for the children - how we would bring them up - their speech, manners and horizons. We had hopes that by adopting these ideas we had done our best to raise socially adaptable children - capable of achieving a happy fulfilling life. So far, the plan was working... However, not far away the pressures of the peer group and sexual awareness both might spoil all the good work and effort.

The differences between social attitudes within all classes related to the size of the family. Instead of being surrounded by a number of clambering children the modern family could be

enjoyed and this reinforced by better living conditions. Little did I realise then what was to come about...!