Angus Mackay Diaries Volume I (1940-1952)

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 1

Angus Mackay.

1 January 1940

Stayed in the morning and read. Went to pictures to see 'Juarez'. Very good, but a bit nasty. In the evening went round to Ian's, and played billiards. Stayed there till 8, and then home to bed.

2 January 1940

Went to Grovely with Ian and Donald. Didn't stay with them long, so dull. Went home and read "St Joan" G.B.S. In afternoon went to News Theatre with Miss Kendall. In evening read St. Joan again.

3 January 1940

In morning went to Grovely again. Had much better time, chased some little boys who had an imitation pistol which they kept on letting off. I got one on the back with my catapult.

4 January 1940

Chamberlain II

Stayed in and did some bird-recording. In afternoon went out with Donald to the library. Got four books, two with Fred's tickets The Damned Spot Vitoria Regina, Natural History.

5 January 1940

Went shopping with Mummy to get patent-shoes. Went to all shops with Mummy. In afternoon got ready to See XX be's party. Had a jolly good time, got a comb as a prize.

6 January 1940

Rolls

In morning read the Admirable Crichton by Barrie. In afternoon went to Nurse Edith Cavell with Mummy and Lalla and Donald. It was jolly good. Other film so silly. Very crude. Full Speed Ahead.

7 January 1940

Lalla's grandfather died.

In morning went to church. The Christmas Tree's still up. Daddy preaching. Went for a walk in afternoon. Went to church in evening. Daddy preaching again. Very lovely sermon.

8 January 1940

Went to Grovely with Ian and Donald. Found same little boys. Ian got one of them on the seat with his catapult. And the boy jumped a yard in the air. Read all afternoon. Did bird-recording.

9 January 1940

Chamberlain I

Went to Grovely in morning but soon came home because the little boys weren't there. Went to French Without Tears with Mummy and Daddy as Lalla was still away. Ever so good.

10 January 1940

Myra's baby born. Lalla came home. Did not know till she came home. Went out for a walk. In evening went round to Ian's for tea and supper. Had a game of billiards.

11 January 1940

Strong I and II came to stay with Ian. Donald and I went with Ian to met them at the bus-stop. Played with them in Grovely. Came to tea and supper. Donald went to Jumbo's till 10 o'clock.

12 January 1940

Played with Strongs and Ian and Donald in Grovely again. In afternoon went to the Lion Has Wings with Margaret at the Moderne. Had tea. Jolly good film. Went home and started Mary Rose.

13 January 1940

Went to Ian's again, and had a lovely time. With the Strongs and Martin. Had sardines in the dark. In the evening went to New Theatre's with Daddy and Mummy.

14 January 1940

Lalla's birthday. Gave her stockings.

Went to church. Horriban-Kirkman preaching. Awful, really, but good hymns. In afternoon stayed in because it was raining. In evening Daddy was preaching. Jolly good.

15 January 1940

Stayed in, in morning, read Mary Rose. In afternoon went out with Dodo down-town for tea and went to "the News Theatre. Came home, and finished Mary Rose, and read Dear Brutus.

16 January 1940

In morning went with Ian to Grovely because Donald was getting his things together with Mummy to go to school. Had a jolly good time, then went to see them off. Stayed in and finished Dear Brutus.

17 January 1940

Stayed in and started The Admirable Crichton. In afternoon Dodo took Donald and I to see Man of Conquest at Electric. Had poached eggs on toast in restaurant.

18 January 1940

In morning Donald, at 10:30, went off to Uppingham. Said goodbye. Went for a walk with Ian. In evening went to The Prince and the Pauper with Lalla. Jolly good. Had my first injection.

19 January 1940

Taylor.

Went back to school. Got reported by Mabley. Didn't go back in the afternoon. Went with Mummy and Daddy down-town. Daddy bought Book of Fortune. I bought House Master and the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

20 January 1940

Went to school. Had good time with old Skey. Got told of by Pickering. Didn't go back in the afternoon. Went to library. Got sequel to Victoria Regina.

21 January 1940

Revise.

Went to church. Daddy preaching. Good. Went for a walk. Stayed in with Lalla because she had a cold. Heard it was a lovely sermon. Bed.

22 January 1940

Went to school. Got told off my Mabley again. Had nice day. At home read. Did not go in afternoon. Read. Had good preps. Went home and read Dear Brutus.

23 January 1940

Went to school. Got told off by Corby for not going yesterday afternoon. Did the board and did some good preps. Fooled a lot with Pickering. Went home and read Dear Brutus.

24 January 1940

Went to school. Good morning. In afternoon went for a walk. Saw a diver. Good preps. Finished Dear Brutus.

25 January 1940

Robert Burns born.

Went to school. Had good morning did A.R.P. shelter for drawing. nearly got a plus. Went to Doctor Vernon for second injection. Didn't hurt at all same as first. Good history and maths preps.

26 January 1940

Went to school. Mabley in a good temper. Had a good fool in Skey's class. Raining in afternoon. Had lovely time in Skey's prep. Ian had his tea. In evening met Admiral Evans and heard his lecture.

27 January 1940

Read rest of library books.

Slight rumpus about Ian's book. Pickering lied about it terribly about. Corby talked a long time. I am going to behave better and work harder. Went to library and got Island of Terror The G.C.N.I.A.H.D.

28 January 1940

Revise.

Did not go to church as Mummy had a headache. Stayed in and read Good Companions morning and afternoon. Went to church in evening. Wrote letter to Donald.

29 January 1940

Started to snow. About 4 inches. Went to school. Good morning. Snowing all day. Good time in Skey's class. Had lovely time during tea time. Jenkins I and Jordan I came back. Boarders had doctor's examination. Prep taken by Corby senior. Read Island of Terror.

30 January 1940

Jordan II. Mrs Mabley.

Went to school. Snow 4 inches deep. Had lovely time going to and from school. In afternoon went out for walk, got hiccups and felt sick. Read All the Dogs of My Life by the author of Elizabeth and her German Garden.

31 January 1940

Went to school. Snow all mush. Thawing quickly. Good day at school. Read in Pickering's class. Went for a walk, got wet. Read All the Dogs of my Life.

1 February 1940

Snow still thawing. Practically gone. Went to school. Skey's mother is ill. Went down into playground and had games with Mr Mabley. Jolly good time. Had history essay on the Middle Ages. Did 6 pages.

2 February 1940

Snow all gone. Went to school. Had good day. In afternoon could not go into playground as it was raining. Had P.T in big classroom. Then lessons. Jolly good. Marvellous preps. Read Good Housekeeping books rest of evening.

3 February 1940

Read library.

In morning went to school. Had singing. Sang Buttercup with Wallace. Had essay. Through the Forest. The Changing Seasons. Went to the library with Ian and got Four Plays Five Plays Conan-Doyle's Short Stories and the Wedding.

4 February 1940

Divinity Prep.
(i) Give some account of work of Abraham.
(ii) The Nativity.
(iii) The Temptations.

Went to church. Fletcher preaching. Not bad. Afternoon went for a walk with Lalla. In tea Wilson-Blairs and son came. Went to church. Daddy preaching. Jolly good. Wilson-Blair's gone.

5 February 1940

Went to school. A little bother in Skey's class. In Pickering's class Mabley came and told us off. He would. Mr Corby announced we have to go into quarantine for three weeks for German measles. Peddie. Lovely preps. Read C.D.S.S.

6 February 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. Gibson absent because of quarantine. Did Latin unseen in break. Desk brought into dining-room. Started to clear it out. In afternoon went to playground and did P.T. Did Divinity in evening. Mrs XX came XX and XX.

7 February 1940

Went to school. Mabley not very good. Had P.T. and XX in playground. Brought hockey-stick to school. Have been chosen to play hockey. Did Latin prose in evening.

8 February 1940

Went to school. Mabley all right. Good morning. Pickering has not corrected essays yet. Lazy thing. Did Divinity in lunch-hour. In afternoon was late because of Divinity. Had games in playground with Pickering. Did Geography and read.

9 February 1940

Went to school. Everybody slept in. I was late. Did not get into trouble. Were doing Sulphur Dioxide experiment. Flask broke. Jordan got something in his eye. Went down for games into the playground and got frozen. Had good lessons. Good preps. Read The Wedding by Denis Mackail.

10 February 1940

Went to school. Did not go to school as had a cold. Stayed in bed and read but got up in the afternoon. Went to library and got. Did not got the library either.

11 February 1940

Divinity Prep O.T. pg 31-45. Esau and Jacob. N.T. Pgs 339-349 including Fishes.

Did not go to church, because of cold. Stayed in bed, got up during morning. Stayed in and read. Cleared up Mummy's desk. Wrote letter to Donald. Read rest of evening.

12 February 1940

Got up at 11. Read. Did Mummy's desk again. In afternoon read the Crooked Lip, Herbert Adams. Played gramophone till tea. Had tea. Had a bath. Listened to wireless. Then went to bed.

13 February 1940

Got up and had breakfast. Read, and then looked for my old diaries. Started to fill them in, in the afternoon. Was all alone. Found another diary in daddy's study. Went on filling in diaries. Listened to wireless. Then went to bed.

14 February 1940

Got up usual time. Found Valentine from Ada. A good joke. Went on filling in diaries. Went for a walk with Mummy and west to Mrs. Franks and then to Miss Sherwell's. Lalla and Mummy went to pictures. Went to the library and got.

15 February 1940

Farmcombe.

Went to school. Mr Corby ill with laryngitis. Had History. Good morning. In afternoon was taken to school by Margaret with Daddy. Went for a walk. Jordan slightly ill. Good preps. Had to read instead of History.

16 February 1940

Went to school. Mr Corby not well yet. Mrs Cook ill now!!! Had Skey with I & II. In afternoon stayed in and went to dentist. Then went back to lessons. Mabley awful.

17 February 1940

Gibson.

Went to school. Mr Corby still ill. Ian was late. Had lovely History with Mr Mabley. Mrs Cook took us for singing. Much better than Corby too.

18 February 1940

Absent

Did not go to church as had a sick headache. Felt rotten. Stayed in. Read. Listened to the wireless and went to bed early.

19 February 1940

Still feeling a bit rotten, though not as bad as yesterday. Heard Ian was in bed. Corby seriously ill with pneumonia. Read. Listened to the wireless.

20 February 1940

Quite better now. Perhaps a bit headachey. Head Ian was coming to take exam in Daddy's study. Going to stay two nights. Good. Read. Went out for a walk. Bed.

21 February 1980

Still at home. Read. Did exam that Ian had done. Arith. Easy. Went out for a walk with Ian. Met Lalla and got my watch. Read. Listened to the wireless.

22 February 1980

Still at home. Did Algebra paper Ian had finished. Read and did news-cutting in afternoon. Went out for a walk with Ian. Seeds got by Lalla. Jesse Mauatt came.

23 February 1940

Still ill. Ian went to school. Jessie Mouatt here. Quite nice. Did news-cuttings. Jessie Mouatt went by I.A. Ian told me more boys got german measles. Bed.

24 February 1940

Read and did news-cuttings. In afternoon went to library and got Wings of Revolution, Play 1935-6, Jaggers Swoops Again, Quit Wedding. Went to Where the Rainbow Ends. Jolly good.

25 February 1940

Hill.
Absent.

Went to church. Horrabin Kirkman awful as usual. In afternoon went for a walk with Lalla. Went to church again. Daddy much better. Read. Went into Donald's room to sleep.

26 February 1940

Went to school. Five boys down with German Measles. Mr Corby quite better again. Good morning. In afternoon did not go because of games. Dodo came in. Read. Bed.

27 February 1940

Went to school. Mr Corby came down again at half-past eleven. Had lovely History with Mr Mabley. Witt still absent. In afternoon Lalla got me man are. Walked round field while others did P.T. Lalla lost her bag. Good preps. Read.

28 February 1940

Went to school. Went to the dentist. Did not get hurt. In afternoon played hockey although was not supposed to. Good game. Good preps! Read. Had haircut. Hair washed. Bed.

29 February 1940

Went to school. Mr Corby came down for first time to prayers. Witt came back. Good morning. In afternoon did P.T. games and lessons. Good preps. History. Went to sisterhood Party. Jolly good. Bed.

1 March 1940

Gautier-Smith.

Ill with cough and cold. Stayed sleeping till 11. Had toast and tea. Got up in afternoon. Read. Listened to wireless. Bed.

2 March 1940

Stayed in bed. Got up for lunch. Listened to the Boat Race. Cambridge won. Read till afternoon. Listened to the wireless. Jolly good. Bed.

3 March 1940

Mr Corby Divinity Prep
O.T. 71-78
N.T. 359-370

Did not got to church because of cold. Bit better today. Stayed in, and listened to the wireless. Read Plunder Bar. Quite food. Went to bed.

4 March 1940

Still ill. In morning got up and did a bit of gardening and put manure down. Planted peas at back. Plan of garden:- R. Radishes. L. Lettuces. P. Parsley. M. Mustard. C. Cress. Going to plant rent tomorrow. Got a sore lip. Read. Bed.

5 March 1940

Still ill. Stayed in morning because of cold wind. Did not go to the dentist because of cold. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla. Read our books in Grovely. Read.

6 March 1940

Still ill. Stayed in till I went out with Mummy shopping. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla. Read. Bed. Listened to the wireless.

7 March 1940

Still ill. Read in morning. In afternoon went out for a walk with Lalla. She forgot her key so she had to climb through the landing-window. Read. Bed.

8 March 1940

Still ill. Streaming cold again. Worse than before. Stayed in bed till 10. Got up. Bath. Felt rotten. Read. Bed.

9 March 1940

Still ill. Stayed in bed. Read. Listened to wireless. Library books due today but of course could not go. Bed.

10 March 1940

Absent.

Did not go to church. Stayed in bed all day. Lalla and Mummy stayed in alternately with me. Read. Listened to the wireless.

11 March 1940

Still ill. Had breakfast in bed. Read. Lalla found a Hedge-Sparrow with its wing broken. Pit in the breeding-cage of the budgies. All right, so far.

12 March 1940

Still ill. Had breakfast at 11. Minister's meeting on. Little hedge-sparrow still all right. Helped Lalla clean out his cage. Let George and Elizabeth out. Read.

13 March 1940

Still ill. Little bird still all right. Went out in afternoon with Lalla and when we came back we let the sparrow go. Planted M & C.

14 March 1940

Still ill. In morning was just going to go out with Mummy when it started to snow. Did not settle however. Went out in afternoon with Daddy to the dentist. He put two little things in. Listened to wireless.

15 March 1940

Shortt.

Still ill. Went to the dentists in afternoon at 3:20. Did not hurt. Just put two wires in. Went with Lalla to see Easter Egg Farm. Plate hurt terribly. Hurt all evening. Read.

16 March 1940

Still ill. Went out shopping and to the dentists with Mummy. Took out one wire. Eased pain a bit. Went to the library and got "Jacinth" Famous Plays of 1931. Journey's End, The Scarlet Pimpernel.

17 March 1940

Margaret's birthday. Daddy and Mummy gave her evening bag.
Absent.

In morning did not go to church. Stayed in with Mummy. Went to church in evening. Came home in Margaret's car. Dropped Granny Rogers. Read.

18 March 1940

Was going to go to school. But letter came to say about German measles running through the school so did not go this morning, but will probably go tomorrow because Daddy said so. Went to dentist.

19 March 1940

Am not going to go back to school at all because of measles. Went out shopping with Mummy. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla in evening went to Ada Sherwell's. Read. Listened to the wireless.

20 March 1940

Peddie.

Got up. Went to the dentist. Went shopping with Mummy. In afternoon went out for a walk with Lalla. Read. Listened to the wireless.

21 March 1940

Owen.

Got up. Made up Goggy's parcel for his birthday. Gave him 2/6 cake, chocolates, money. Hope it gets there all right. Went out a walk with Lalla. Came home. Ada came. Read.

22 March 1940

Went to church. Saw Granny Rogers. Lovely service. In afternoon went for a walk with Ada and Daddy along the front. In the evening read and listened to wireless.

23 March 1904

Got up. Went shopping with Mummy and Ada. Went out in afternoon with Lalla, Ada and Daddy along front. Went to the library and read.

24 March 1904

None.
Donald.

Went to church. Daddy preaching. Lovely. Went down to the front after the service before lunch with Dodo and Ada. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla and Ada. Went to church. Lovely service. Read. Listened to the wireless.

25 March 1904

Got up. In morning went out a walk with Ada. Dodo came in in the afternoon so we stayed in. Joe Patrick came with Ruth. Read. Listened to the wireless. Read.

26 March 1940

Pearson.
Bobby.

Got up. Ada went home. Went at 12:30 to dentist. Went out shopping with Mummy. In afternoon wrote letter to Donald. Went for a walk with Ian. We were going to pictures but Dodo came in, so we're going Thursday.

27 March 1940

End of term.

Got up. Ian came round. Told me all about school. Report sent. In afternoon went out for a walk with Lalla. In evening Lalla and I went to First Love. Deanna Durbin. Jolly good.

28 March 1940

In morning went out shopping with Mummy. In afternoon went for a walk with Ian. In evening walked with Daddy to the Westover where we met Mummy and Lalla. Saw Gulliver's Travels and Just William. Good.

29 March 1940

Got up at 9:45 went to dentists. Just looked. Went to Bobby's. He wasn't in however. So came home again. Went downtown with Mummy. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla.

30 March 1940

Long walk with Daddy over the Golf Links. Read. Listened to the wireless.

31 March 1940

Went to church. Beswarwick. Not bad. Mummy and Daddy went out to lunch. Went out for a walk with Lalla. Archers came in for tea. Went to church. Archers came again. Had wireless in my bedroom.

1 April 1940

Brown.

Got up. In morning went for a long walk with Daddy. Was going to lunch-hour but am going next Monday. In afternoon stayed in. Went to plays in evening with Mrs Dingle. Jolly good indeed.

2 March 1940

In morning went out a walk with Jan and met Sherwells who told there was a nest in their garden. Went round but mother-bird was sitting. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla. Read. Listened to wireless.

4 March 1940

Dentist 9:45
Concert 7:45

In morning went to the dentist. Went round to Sherwell's bird still sitting. Went shopping with Mummy. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla. Got egg. Blackbird. Concert. Lovely.

4 April 1940

Gerhardt.
Donald comes home.

Blew the egg. Stayed in. Went out to get seed. Went down to station to meet Donald. Has a swollen gland. Read. Played a game. Listened to the wireless. Did news-cutting.

5 April 1940

Dentist 9:45.

Dentist said come on Monday. Did not hurt. Doctor came to see Donald in evening. Had to stay up in bed. Went out a walk in afternoon with Lalla. Read. Went to bed.

6 April 1940

Got up. Daddy went to Plymouth. Read with Donald. Listened to wireless. Read. Went out shopping with Lalla.

7 April 1940

Got up. Went to church with Lalla. Hickman-Johnson from Mission House. Not bad but too long. Went out a walk with Lalla. Betty came to tea. Went to church again.

8 April 1940

Evening concert.
Dentist.

Went to dentist. Going next Monday. Went to Dingle's and Mrs Dingle gave me a note for Mummy asking can I go to Lunch Hour Concert. Went. Jolly good. Read. Listened to wireless.

9 April 1940

Got up. Went for a walk with Ian in Grovely and on cliffs. In afternoon went to First Love with Lalla and Ian. Jolly good. Read. Listened to wireless.

10 April 1940

Dentist.

Got up. Went to the dentist. Didn't hurt. Went round to Bobby's a bit. In morning and afternoon did news-cuttings. Read. Did news-cutting. Listened to the wireless.

11 April 1940

Got up. Read Mickey Mouse. Did news cuttings. In afternoon went for a walk with Lalla, and got some seed at the bird shop. Saw little puppies. Read. Listened to the wireless. Bed.

12 April 1940

Dentist.

Got up. Donald got up after breakfast. Started to clear out little room. Did news-cuttings. Getting through them nicely. In afternoon Bobby came in and stayed in a bit. Read.

13 April 1940

Got up. In morning did news-cuttings. In afternoon went to the library. Got four good books. In evening read and planted some more radishes. Had bath. Bed.

14 April 1940

Got up. In morning went to church. Terrible. Old super. Dreadful. In afternoon went out for a walk with Lalla and Donald to Bobby's. In evening went to church again.

15 April 1940

Dentist.

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went to French Without Tears, the play. In evening did stamps and went out shopping with Lalla.

16 April 1940

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went tot he News Theatre. Jolly good. Mickey Mouse Week. Very funny. Had bath. Bed.

17 April 1940

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went out a walk with Donald and Ian. In evening did stamps and news-cuttings.

18 April 1940

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went to get my watch with Lalla and Ian. Donald went to Jumbo's for a party. In evening did news-cuttings.

19 April 1940

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went to the library and got two H.G. Wells, a Laurance Housman and a bird. Jolly good. Bed.

20 April 1940

Got up. In morning did stamps and news-cuttings. In afternoon went out a walk with Daddy and Donald. In evening went to Gulliver's Travels. Jolly good. Bed.

21 April 1940

Got up. In morning went to church. Gregory. Not too bad but took service awfully. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla and Donald. In evening went to church again.

22 April 1940

Got up. Went to the dentist. Went out with Donald and Ian to Grovely. Came in and did news-cuttings. In afternoon did stamps. Went out shopping with Lalla in the evening. Had bath. Bed.

23 April 1940

Mr Mabley.

Got up. In morning did news-cuttings and went for a walk. In afternoon went with Ian and Donald to see Robin Hood. Jolly good. Had bath. Bed.

24 April 1940

Dentist.
With Daddy.

Got up. Found two blackbird's nests. One egg in one, 2 in other one egg one deserted. Blackbird sitting on other. Found sparrow's nest. Read. Listened to wireless. Bed.

25 April 1940

Got up. Nests all right. Kept on looking for more nests. In empty house. In afternoon went out a walk with Donald and Ian. Went to Bobby's. Read.

26 April 1940

Strong II

Got up. Blackbird still sitting. Blew eggs. Blackbird. Hedge-sparrow that I got at Mr Lincoln Herbert's was bad. In evening read and listened to the wireless. Went round to Bobby's.

27 April 1940

Got up. In morning went for a walk with Donald in Grovely to look for bird's nests. Found 10. All blackbird's except one which was a wren's.

28 April 1940

Got up. Went to church. Horrabin Kirman. Awful as usual. In afternoon went to Bobby's with Lalla and Donald and then went for a walk. Bobby's pond getting on quite well XX.

29 April 1980

Got up. Did news-cuttings in morning. In afternoon went out with Lalla and Donald and saw The Wizard of Oz. Jolly good. Saw Deakin Awful. Bed.

30 April 1940

Got up. Did news-cuttings. In afternoon went for Donald and Ian in Grovely and on cliffs. In evening read library books. Listened to wireless. Had bath. Bed.

1 May 1940

Got up. Went with Donald to Grovely to find bird's nests. Found 5. In afternoon did news-cuttings. Read. Had bath. Bed.

2 May 1940

Got up. In morning finished by news-cuttings, at last! In afternoon went round to Bobby's with Donald. In evening went with Donald and Margaret to Mr Smith goes to W. Good.

3 May 1940

School begins.

Went to school. Some absent. Had good morning. In afternoon did P.T. Marching very good. In evening potty learning preps. Read St. Joan again. Bed.

4 May 1940

Aggression and organisation in the German mentality.

Went to school. Did Maths instead of singing. Jolly good. In afternoon went to library. Got book of poems, and others. Had bath. Listened to the wireless. Bed.

5 May 1940

Got up. Went to church. Fletcher preaching. Quite good. In afternoon went for a walk with Lalla and Bobby along the front. In evening went to church again. Daddy. Jolly good.

6 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did sports. In evening not bad preps. Went round to Bobby's. Newts and tadpoles all right.

7 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did P.T. and lessons. Marching. Very good. In evening did prep. Not bad. Went round to Bobby's. Tadpoles coming on very well.

8 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did sports training. Did 3' 6". Not bad preps. In evening read and washed out old aquarium.

9 May 1940

Went to school. Donald went back. Mabley awful. In afternoon went up to field and did sports. Mabley not so bad. Preps quite good. Blackbird's nest deserted. Bed in old room.

10 May 1940

Daddy.

Daddy had presents. Went to school. Good morning. Sent out for inattention. Did some training in afternoon. Preps marvellous. Went home. Blew Skylark's egg. Bed.

11 May 1940

(a) The Street on a Sunday.
(b) The flower show.
The Country Railway Station.

Went to school. Not too bad. Went on with C.E.P. papers. In afternoon went for a walk with Daddy. Went to Southbourne. In evening blew other eggs. Found blackbird's was deserted. Bed. Last Garrison Theatre.

12 May 1940

Got up. Went to church. Daddy preaching. Very good. Uncle Will came to tea. In evening went to church. Daddy again. Very good. In evening read. Bed.

13 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. Mabley not bad. In afternoon did heats. Failed at 3.6. Not in any finals. In evening went round to Bobby's. He's all right now. In evening listened to wireless and read. Bed.

14 May 1940

Went to school. Not too bad. Gerhardt and Coleridge went to beach for day. In afternoon did sports. Not in any finals. Not bad relay and tug-of-war. Good preps. In evening Lalla came home and brought newts. Put them in aquarium.

15 May 1940

Sports Day.

Went to school. Gerhardt and Coleridge started their exam. Good morning. Lost Gibson. In afternoon raining so sports had to be cancelled. Saw a cuckoo on lawn. In evening went round to Bobby's. Had bath. Bed.

16 May 1940

Went to school. Not too bad. In afternoon did prep. Not bad. In evening did sports. Greeks lost. In evening found Bobby at home and helped him put the newts right. Am going with him to Hengistbury Head to catch frogs and newts. Had bath. Bed.

17 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did P.T. and lessons. Not bad. In evening went round to Bobby's and saw newts. All right. Mine all right. Fed them. Had bath. Bed.

18 May 1940

Lecture.

Went to school. Not bad. In afternoon went to Hengistbury Head. Caught a common frog. Organisms and newt tadpoles. Put all tadpoles in my aquarium lovely. Bed.

19 May 1940

Divinity.
(i) With reference to context:-:
(a) Break off the golden earrings.
(b) This is my beloved son (not the incident with J.B.)
(c) Thou hast answered right (d). Thou are careful and troubled about many things.

2. Tell briefly the story of the waters of Meribah.

3. Either precis: Our Lord's teaching in the Good Shepherd OR the story of the Good Samaritan.

Went to church XX Not bad. In evening Daddy sang XX there. Awful. xx.

20 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad. Did Kingswood paper that Ian did. Easy. In afternoon went up to the field and took third game. Awful. Not bad preps. In evening had my hair washed and had bath. Newts all right. Finished Latin.

21 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad. In morning drawing exams XX. In afternoon did P.T. Pussy gave me egg of chaffinch which turned out to be ballfinch. Gave him 12 stamps. Bed.

22 May 1940

Went to school. In morning Penball gave me two thrush's eggs. In afternoon took third game. Awful. Not bad preps. Bed.

23 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad. Drawing exams still on. Gerhardt and Coleridge passed. In afternoon kept score for cricket. Not bad. Not too good preps. Bed.

24 May 1940

Went to school. Mabley awful. In afternoon did P.T. exercises. Awful. Lovely prep in evening. In evening went round to Bobby's. Gave me water-snail. Nice one. Had bath. Bed.

25 May 1940

My Most Thrilling Experience.

Went to school. Not bad morning. Nice Maths. Stayed in all Saturday afternoon. Found long-tailed tit's nest in Grovely. Had bath. Bed.

26 May 1940

Revise.

Went to church. Fletcher not bad. National day of prayer. In afternoon went out for a walk with Lalla and Bobby. In evening went to church. Daddy. Lovely.

27 May 1940

Maitland II.
Will takes his exam.

Went to school. Not bad. Mabley still awful. In afternoon took Third Game. Awful. Had to play Nuts in May!!! In evening went to Bobby's. One newt gone. Had bath. Bed.

28 May 1940

Went to school. Witt still taking his exam. Finishing tomorrow. Mabley lovely. Not bad. In afternoon P.T. Exercises, awful and lessons. In evening went to Bobby's. Other newt gone. Gave me other one. Bed.

29 May 1940

Went to school. Not bad. In afternoon took 3rd game. Worse than ever. Had to play cricket! with them. Not bad preps. Went round to Bobby's. Saw newts and toads.

30 May 1940

Went to school. Awful morning. Mabley awful. In afternoon came late so was in big classroom by myself till Divinity. In evening not bad preps. Did History. Read. Listened to the wireless. Had hair-cut.

31 May 1940

Dugdale.

Went to school. Mabley quite good. Not bad morning. In afternoon rolled cricket pitch with Gerhardt. Not bad preps in evening. Went round to Bobby's. Got glasses for Gerhardt.

1 June 1940

Your opinion of St. Joan.

Went to school. Did good Maths in morning. In afternoon took glasses to Gerhardt. Went round to Bobby's for tea and developed a film of a boy at his school.

2 June 1940

OJ. 113-120
N.T. 393-400

Got up. Did not go to church as Mummy was ill. In afternoon went out a walk with Bobby. Eggs hatching. In evening stayed in with Mummy. Did stamps and tried to fill my album.

3 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game. Worse than ever. In evening went round to Bobby's to take note from Gerhardt.

4 June 1940

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon did marching. Jolly good. In evening went to the library with Lalla and got Model Memoirs and First Sir Percy. Daddy came back. Jolly good books. Bath. Bed.

5 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon 1st and 2nd XI matches. Won both of them. Easy preps. In evening read and did stamps. Daddy went round to the soldiers in our hall. Had bath. Bed.

6 June 1940

Davidson.

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon watched cricket. Awfully hot. In evening did History and Geography. Got snails for Mr Skey from Bobby who came round. Bed.

7 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did tableaux and lessons. Jolly good. In evening did history and geography. Had bath. Bed.

8 June 1940

Noises at Night.

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon went for a walk with Daddy. In evening read Tarzan. Jolly good. Listened to the wireless. Had bath. Bed.

9 June 1940

O.T. 120-128
N.T. 400-412
St Columba landed on Iona.

Got up. Went to church. Clegg. Awful. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla and Bobby. In evening Daddy preaching. Good. Daisy Neal singing. Marvellous. Read Tarzan. Bed.

10 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game. Not so bad as it has been, but still pretty bad. In evening read and listened to the wireless. Had bath. Bed.

11 June 1940

Jenkins.

Went to school. Had to walk a long way on front cause others were bathing. In afternoon Mr Corby announced that there would be no Speech Day thank goodness. Not bad preps. Bed.

12 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon match. Had to watch talk about boring! We won. In evening went round Bobby's. All his tadpoles have come into toads.

13 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon went up to the cliffs with Mr Corby to see ship that Witt said had been sunk at Pool. Nothing there. In evening Mr Mabely lent me two wonderful book on XX XX.

14 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did P.T. with many stops and did sort of XX. In evening went round to Bobby's. Little toads growing bigger and lighter. Bed.

15 June 1940

Horses.

Went to school. Not bad morning. Silly essay, but very easy. In afternoon went for a walk with Daddy. In evening read and did stamps. Mrs Lincoln - Herbert's sister came to tea. Bed.

16 June 1940

O.T. 128-134
N.T. 412-421

Got up. Went to church. Daddy preaching. Jolly good. In afternoon had walk with Bobby. His toads quite big now. In evening Daddy preaching again. Marvellous. Had bath. Bed.

17 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game again. Awful as usual. In evening not bad preps but a bit long. Read and had bath. Listened to wireless.

18 June 1940

Went to school. Quite good morning. Had to go on bathing-walk. Beastly boring. In afternoon did P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. Mr Mabely lent me some marvellous books.

19 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game awful as usual. In evening not bad preps. Read Pride and Prejudice. In night bad first air-raid. Saw owl catch bat.

20 June 1940

Went to school. Quite good morning. In afternoon did not go to the field. Mr Corby let us go home and sleep because of last night. Went to Bobby's. Little toads big now. Had bath. Bed.

21 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. In evening not bad preps. Went to our hall. Soldiers all there. Did gramophone. Lovely.

22 June 1940

A Day in Bed.

Went to school. Rotten morning. In afternoon went to the Dr. Barnado's Homes garden party. Rotten as usual. In evening did gramophone for the soldiers. Lovely.

23 June 1940

Got up. Had a bath. Went to church. Rotten. Horrabin Kirkman. Terrible. In afternoon went out a walk with Bobby. In evening went to church. Good. Went to concert for soldiers.

24 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game. Rotten. In evening not bad preps. Did gramophone and played with soldiers. Air-raid.

25 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon had P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. in evening played with the soldiers. Had bath. Did stamps. Nearly XX.

26 June 1940

Mummy.

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game. Awful. In evening had bath. Did stamps. Bed.

27 June 1940

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon did Divinity. Did not go to the field because I came too late. In evening went the social for soldiers. Jolly good.

28 June 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did P.T. and had lessons. Jolly good. In evening soldiers place closed now because they have gone. Did stamps.

29 June 1940

The Work of the King.

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon went out a walk with Daddy. Did stamps in evening. Mummy still in bed. Had bath. Bed.

30 June 1940

O.T. Pgs 144-158
N.T. Pgs 422-431

Got up. Went to church. By myself because Lalla stayed in with Mummy. In afternoon stayed in and did stamps. In evening stayed in with Mummy. Had bath. Bed.

1 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon went up to the field and took the third game. Awful as usual. In evening not bad preps but rather long. Went round to Bobby's and read.

2 July 1940

Crane.

Went to school. Not bad morning. They have knocked a hole in the passage wall to have a back-entrance to the air-raid shelter. How silly. In afternoon did P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. In evening went to Bobby's and looked at his air-raid.

3 July 1940

Seward Rumbold.

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon came to school but was sent home again. Air-raid at 3.0. In afternoon did prep. Quite good. In evening went to library with Lalla but found it was closed. Going tomorrow

4 July 1940

Gift-Day

Went to school. Not bad morning. Daddy at church. Mr Mabely away in London. Tubby leaving. In afternoon went down in the playground and did P.T. Did lessons. Jolly rotten. Good preps.

5 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. Went to baths to choose team. In afternoon did P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. In evening not bad preps. Did stamps. Had bath. Bed. Woke up in the night.

6 July 1940

My New School.

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon went to library and got Short Extracts from P.G. Wodehouse and Leather Face by Baroness Orczy. Did stamps. Read library books.

7 July 1940

O.T. Content
N.T.
(i) I will put a fleece in the floor.
(ii) And the wall of the city shall fall down float.
(iii) The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.
(iv) Pay me what thou owest.
2. Give and account of the siege of Jericho.
3. Summarise our Lord's teaching in the Farewell Discourse.

Went to church morning and evening.

8 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon took third game. Awful as usual. In evening not bad preps. Did maps. Stamps. News-cuttings.

9 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon had P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. In evening not bad preps. Map. Bath. Bed.

10 July 1940

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon till 5.0. Jolly good. Because of rain. In evening rotten preps. Bath. Bed.

11 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon did not go to school till lesson-time at 3:15 because there was a 1 hour and 5 mins air-raid. Air-raid at 8am also. Did stamps. Bed.

12 July 1940

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon did not go back till afternoon lessons because of rain. Was late. In evening had bath. Bed.

13 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon had three air-raids. One at 2.0p.m.4:15p.m. 7.5p.m. First one and last lasted 20 mins. Middle half an hour. Bed.

14 July 1940

O.T. 159-169
N.T.

Got up. Went to church alone. Lalla stayed in with Mummy. In afternoon went out with Lalla. In evening stayed in with and did stamps and maps. Had bath. Bed.

15 July 1940

Mackay. My birthday._____

Got up. Got sweets, £2"7"0. Effie's present not come yet. Went to school. Not bad morning. Did not go at all in the afternoon because it was raining. Went to pictures.

16 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. Did P.T. and lessons. Jolly good. In afternoon. In evening not bed preps. Effie's parcel not come yet. Probably coming tomorrow. Bed.

17 July 1940

Went to school. Forgot bus money so was late. Not bad morning. Mr Corby said we are going to break up on Saturday week. Thank goodness. In afternoon air-raid just as we were changing. Bed.

18 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. Mabley told us off. In afternoon we went up to the field. Rotten. In evening gave my new pen to Margaret to have a finer nib put it. Lovely now.

19 July 1940

Went to school. Got into trouble with Mabely. In afternoon had lessons and P.T. Jolly good. Had air-raid during tea. In evening dull preps. Bed.

20 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon went out a walk with Daddy. Air-raid in afternoon. Out and never heard. In evening did stamps and news-cuttings. Had bath. Bed. Had two other air-raids in afternoon.

21 July 1940

Wallace
Got up. Went to church. In morning Julian christened. First Sunday air-raid. Another air-raid in evening. In evening stayed in with Mummy. Ian taking exam tomorrow.

22 July 1940

Went to school. In morning not bad. In afternoon took third game for last time. Jolly good for a wonder! In evening not bad preps. Did stamps. Had bath. Bed.

23 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon had match. Won. In evening did map. Not bad preps. Had bath. Bed.

24 July 1940

Went to school. Not bad morning. In afternoon match cancelled because of rain. So did prep. Not bad. Had bath. Bed.

25 July 1940

Went to school. Air-raid at 1.30. In afternoon match. Won. In evening not bad prep. Had bath. Bed.

26 July 1940

Coleridge

Went to school. Not bad morning. Air-raid in morning 9.30am. Another at 12.5. In afternoon had prizes. Another raid at 12. midnight for 3 hours. Tired.

27 July 1940

End of term.

Went to school. Said goodbye. Had hair-cut. Had air-raid just as I was leaving. In afternoon went to tea with Mrs Lincoln-Herbert. Had bath. Bed.

28 July 1940

Got up. Went to church in morning. Went out a walk with Lalla in afternoon. Did not go to church in evening. Stayed in with Mummy. Bed.

29 July 1940

Wearing long trousers now.

Got up. Am taking exam today. Did Arith, Geog, English, English History. Not too bad. Next Latin, French, Algebra, Geometry. Rotten. In evening went early to bed. Tired.

30 July 1940

Donald XX.

In morning got up. Stayed in. In afternoon went to meet Donald with Mummy and Margaret. In evening went out a walk with Donald and Daddy. Bed.

31 July 1940

Got up. In morning started to write post cards to people for match. In afternoon caught butterflies. Bed.

1 August 1940

Got up. In morning got one answer. In afternoon went up to Meyrick Park to see practise of K.S. team. In evening had awful job trying to get a team. Haven't XX.

2 August 1940

Got up. Had dreadful time trying to get team together. Got it at last. In afternoon had match. We won, 119 to 78. Good tea. In evening had supper. Bed.

3 August 1940

Got up. In morning caught butterflies. 1 Red Admiral. In afternoon caught 1 Red Admiral and 2 Commas. In evening read. Bed.

4 August 1940

Got up. Went to church in morning with Donald and Lalla. Went for a walk with Donald and Lalla and Bobby. In afternoon went to church again.

5 August 1940

Got up. In morning went to Peal's with Mummy and got clothes. In afternoon went with Mummy, Daddy and Donald downtown to get more clothes. Read in evening. Bed.

6 August 1940

Got up. They are going to have another match. O dear. Thank goodness stopped getting clothes. Read all day. Lovely. Bed.

7 August 1940

Got up. We are definitely going to have another match on Saturday. In afternoon read and did stamps. Went out for a walk in the evening with Daddy and Donald. Bed.

8 August 1940

Got up. In morning went round to Bobby's to fetch Donald. Read. In afternoon Daddy was in London. Read. In evening went to Coleridge's party. Jolly good Donald and I won prizes.

9 August 1940

Got up. In morning read. Air-raid in afternoon. Nothing on for quite a long time. Daddy and Donald went to cliffs. Empty cartridge cases rained ground there. Most exciting.

10 August 1940

Got up. Read and caught butterflies in morning. Did stamps. In afternoon went for a walk with Donald and Daddy. Very good indeed. Bed.

11 August 1940

Got up. Went to church in morning. Daddy's last Sunday. Most sentimental. Everybody saying goodbye. Expect everybody will forget everything Daddy's done for them. They're just like that.

12 August 1940

Got up. Read and went out a walk with Donald and Ian. Daddy having a bit of rest. Air-raid. Nothing. In afternoon went out a walk to shops with Lalla.

13 August 1940

Got up. Read and caught butterflies. Lovely and warm. In afternoon went to pictures with Donald and Ian. Jolly good. In evening read, listened to the wireless and did stamps and news-cuttings.

14 August 1940

Got up. Read all the morning and did stamps. In afternoon did some news-cuttings which had been accumulating.

15 August 1940

Got up. In morning read and did stamps. In afternoon read and did stamps and news-cuttings. Read. Bed.

16 August 1940

Got up. In morning read and did stamps. In afternoon went to the pictures with Margaret and Donald. Marvellous. Bed.

17 August 1940

Got up. In morning read and did stamps. In afternoon went to the library and got four books.

18 August 1940

Jenkins II

Got up. Went to Dr.'s church with Lalla. Richmond Hill Congregational. Not bad. Next best. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla and Donald. In evening stayed in and read. Bed.

19 August 1940

Got up. In morning went out with Daddy and Margaret for Daddy's first driving lesson. Pretty bumps but not bad.

20 August 1940

Nash. Got up. In morning went out with Daddy and Margaret in car. Better. Very funny. Daddy jumps forward like anything. In afternoon read and did stamps.

21 August 1940

Got up. Went out in car again. Very good. Saw a pheasant. In afternoon went to Grovely. Not bad. Bed.

22 August 1940

Got up. In morning went round to Ada's and stayed there all the morning. In afternoon went out in the car to Iford. Very nice. In evening read. Bed.

23 August 1940

Got up. In morning went out in the car. Very nice. Donald came this time. In afternoon went to Ada's and caught butterflies. Gave me a lot of very useful old books.

24 August 1940

Got up. In morning read and finished library books. In afternoon went to library and put books. Took tickets. Finished with the library as we are moving.

25 August 1940

Got up. Went to Bobby's in morning. Went out a walk with him in afternoon. In evening went to Congregational church again.

26 August 1940

Got up. In morning went out to Grovely with Donald and Ian. Jolly good morning. In afternoon went downtown and got 2 books.

27 August 1940

Got up. In morning had bath and played cricket with Donald in garden and in afternoon went to the pictures. Jolly good.

28 August 1940

Got up. In morning went out a walk with Ian and Donald. Into Grovely. Played game of hide and seek really but much more exciting.

29 August 1940

Got up. Started to tidy up a bit. Three air-raids today. Nothing happened. I am going to prophesy for the first time. There will be a bomb near us without a syren very soon. Funny if it came.

30 August 1940

Got up. Are starting to clean the house preparatory to moving. Makes me feel I am leaving my real home. Worse still that I am going home. Have been in Bournemouth as long I can remember. Bed.

31 August 1940

Got up. Read in morning. In afternoon was reading Punches when there was a frightful screaming whistle. 10 bombs had fallen on Keswick Rd. Unexploded bomb in Grasmere Rd. So had to get out. Went to Margaret's XX XX. It has come.

1 September 1940

Parsons.

Got up. Went over to Margaret's for breakfast. Daddy went home to get things. No chance of getting back yet. Went for a walk with Lalla and Jill. In afternoon went for a walk with Mummy. Read in evening. Bed.

2 September 1940

Got up, went to Margaret breakfast. In afternoon came back to home and started to move. Read. Bed.

3 September 1940

Got up. In middle of moving and packing. Went for a walk with a book. Jolly good. In afternoon went for the last time to the pictures. Jolly good. Bed.

4 September 1940

Got up. We are going to Ilfracombe definitely. Moving XX Most horrible. Chine in lounge. Wandered round, then went for a last walk to Grovely and read in garden. Bed.

5 September 1940

Got up. Went off straight away. Daddy and Lalla staying to finally clear up. Quite a good journey. Got to Ilfracombe. Effie came to see us.

6 September 1940

Got up. Effie came round and we went to Seagull Corner and Lil fed the seagulls when she came. Met Beatrice. Jimmy looks much better than he did at Ledbury. Went for a walk.

7 September 1940

Got up. Went to Gull Corner again. In afternoon went up Hillbro' and then round it. Went to the pictures. Jolly good. Bed.

8 September 1940

Got up. Went to church. Good service. Mr mason the new minister, preaching. Staying in afternoon and read. Went to church again. Very good indeed. Bed.

9 September 1940

Got up. Went round the capstone and through the town. In afternoon walked to Lea, had tea at the Blue Mushroom and bused back. Jolly good indeed.

10 September 1940

Got up. Went for a walk round to Gull Corner. In afternoon went on a tour in car and went to Bideford, Barnstaple, Hartland Quay and Clovelly. Jolly good.

11 September 1940

Got up. Went off straight away to walk to Harland Point. Beatrice very amusing. Had lovely tea. Walked home. Had bath. Bed.

12 September 1940

Got up. Went up to the town and got two Penguin books. Jolly good. In afternoon went for a blackberrying walk and then went to Pictures. Bed.

13 September 1940

Got up. In morning went round Gull Corner. In afternoon went to Coombe Martin and had tea. Jolly good. Bed.

14 September 1940

Got up. In morning went up Hillsborough. Went to Berry Harbour. Lovely. Had tea. Read. Bed.

15 September 1940

Got up. Went to church. Harvest Festival. Mason very good. Read and wrote letter to Daddy and Lalla. Having pretty bad time, I think they are. In evening went to church again.

16 September 1940

Got up. In morning went round Gull Corner met Effie and had an ice. In afternoon went for another walk to Lea and had tea at the Old Mill. Jolly good. Bed.

17 September 1940

Got up. Are having a very nice time, but Effie is keeping slightly away from us I think because of Lil. Rather difficult. Good Daddy's coming. Went for walk and pictures. Bed.

18 September 1940

Got up. Went out for a walk. Read in afternoon and went for tea at Southcombe's. Not bad day on the whole.

19 September 1940

School begins.

Got up. Should have gone to school but could not get back because of air-raids in London. Daddy coming on Saturday with Lalla. Nice day. Went for a walk.

20 September 1940

Got up. Margaret and Mrs. Bunney came. Mrs Lewis was so nasty that we went to Margaret's hotel instead. Went to the pictures. Jolly good. Bed.

21 September 1040

Got up. Went to the station to meet Daddy and Lalla. Had nice time. Bed.

22 September 1940

Got up. Went to church. Not bad service. Mr Cosson. In afternoon went for a walk. Went to church again. Nice service. Bed.

23 September 1940

Got up. Went for a walk with Daddy, Mummy, Donald, Lalla, Margaret and Mrs Bunney. Lovely. In afternoon went to tea. Marvellous. In evening stayed in and played cards. Bed.

24 September 1940

Got up. Went for a walk with everybody. Rather miserable. Said goodbye to Effie. In afternoon stayed in and read The Start Look Down. Pretty awful book. Bed.

25 September 1940

Got up. Went off straight away. Lost connection because train was late. Went with Daddy to Archway. Lovely place. Went for stay with Mrs Scales. Slept in shelter. Terrible night.

26 September 1940

Got up. Bomb had fallen in next garden. Broke all Mrs Scales' windows. Tried to catch 12.0 but missed it. Caught 4.5, got to Uppinham 7.30. Saw Mr Sackett. Daddy staying.

27 September 1940

Got up. Quite nice chaps in our dorm. Laurie, Turley and Broadbent, and Ian. Daddy went at 7.30. Did not see him. Am in L.V.CI. Not bad time for first day. Bed.

28 September 1940

Got up. Not bad morning - Unsworth, Hund, Hindley, Bishop, Hackett, Osborne, Redfearn, Krock, Smith, Smith, Thomas, Bounes, Darling, Dakley and Burton.

29 September 1940

Got up. Went to chapel. Not such a good service as I thought it would be. Not too bad though. Bed.

30 September 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In occo. read Punches in Uppingham Library. Good afternoon. Went for walk. Bed.

1 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning but Chips got angry with us cos we were wasting time. Although we weren't. Nice time. Bath. Read. Bed.

2 October 1940

Capper II

Got up. Not bad morning but overshadowed by the fact that i had to have my first game of rugger. Not too bad though. Bed.

3 October 1940

Calderwood.

Got up. Not bad morning. Ian had heat-spots. Good on his birthday. We had celebration in our study. In evening did disgusting preps.

4 October 1940

Got up. Good morning. Rieves-Smith hid in water cupboard and came out when Cook looked round. In afternoon with Public Works but ate blackberries instead.

5 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Getting on with Greek quite well. In afternoon and occo. read punches in Uppingham Library. Did prep. in library.

6 October 1940

Got up. Donald had touch of bronchitis. Not bed preacher. In morning and afternoon read in study. In evening went to hall. Cook our Hist. Master preached. Not at all bad. Bed.

7 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon played rugger. Pretty silly game. Read for rest of afternoon. Not bad evening. Bed.

8 October 1940

Got up. Two letters and parcel came. Good! morning. In afternoon read in study. In evening took tea prep. Bath. Bed.

9 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning, but muffed my Greek a bit. In afternoon played rugger again. Am now in 5th instead of 6th club. Bed.

10 October 1940

Got up. Good morning. Walleh thought my English all right I think. In occo. read. In afternoon read in study. Not bed preps. Gout got 8 sides. Bed.

11 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning, but in afternoon had to do P.W. Pretty rotten. Smith made us change. Tea. Not bad preps. Read in evening. J.B. read the lesson. Terribly funny.

12 October 1940

Got up. Quite good morning. In afternoon read in study. Have now 9 library books. Jolly good. In evening did good preps.

13 October 1940

Got up. Went to study and read. Then went to chapel. Too many readings by prefects who thought they could read! In afternoon read and finished off preps. Wrote to Mummy. Went to chapel again. Bed.

14 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Jolly interesting Biology. Went to Bird Society. Am going to reservoir on Sunday afternoon. Had rugger. Not bad. Tea and preps. Bed.

15 October 1940

Got up. Jolly good morning. In afternoon lessons. Read at Highfield. In evening read. Bad tea and good preps. Did not have a bath. Had good wash instead. Am going to have shower at Highfield.

16 October 1940

Got up. Good morning. Rugger in afternoon. Silly but not cold. Marvellous shower. Am not going to have another bath at the Central. Bed.

17 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon read at Highfield. Good tea and preps. Ian had to read the lessons at prayers. Very funny. I shall probably have to do it tomorrow.

18 October 1940

Got up. Rotten morning. In afternoon disgusting Public Works. Altogether a bed day. To crown it all, I had to read lesson. Felt dreadful about it. Bed.

19 October 1940

capper I

Got up. Not bad morning. Had to tell Hoare II to come on Sunday. In afternoon read at Highfield. Plenty of good books in the library, and plenty of time to read them.

20 October 1940

Got up. Watkin-Jones preaching. Jolly. Went to reservoir in afternoon. Saw teal, geese, mallard, dabchicks, coot, moorhen, great crested grebe!! Jolly good. Watkin-Jones again in the evening. Bed.

21 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Rugger in afternoon terribly cold and couldn't wash after and tres late for lessons and Sister. Bed.
22 October 1940

Whole hol.

Got up. In morning bad. Am getting on with my Greek very well. Much better than I thought I would. Read. Bed.

23 October 1940

Got up. Pretty boring morning. In afternoon had rotten rugger but had a lovely shower but rather spoilt by Turley cold watering me.

24 October 1940

Got up. Good morning. In afternoon read at Highfield. Got some good books out of the library. Got plenty of time to read here, thank goodness.

25 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon had to play rugger. Going to do P.W. on Monday instead of Friday. Rotten. Lovely preps. All writing. Bed.

26 October 1940

Hallowes.

Got up. Not bad morning. Directly after dinner went to hall to hear Potts play. Jolly good. Not bad preps. In evening in dorm. Inny gave me book and said I was to be Hare in Jun Lit pay - Noah.

27 October 1940

Got up. Not bad service. Very good sermon, by Dr. Wardle. In afternoon read Highfield. Good. Good service at night. Went to Highfield again. Bed.

28 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Pretty rotten game of rugger. Jolly good preps. Had to read lessons again. Bed.

29 October 1940

Got up. Jolly good morning. Had bathe in P.T. In afternoon read at Highfield. In evening preps were very long, all writing but quite easy. Had bath. Bed.

30 October 1940

Got up. In morning rotten as usual. Always is on Wednesday. In afternoon had lovely shower which made up for it. Good preps. Bed.

31 October 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon read at Highfield. At tea was told to put book back by Rattenbury. Not bad preps. Bed.

1 November 1940

Got up. Good morning. Lost my game of chess. In afternoon had to play rugger. Inny said we were not going to do any more Public Works. Much rather do P.W. Bed.

2 November 1940

Got up. Cruise asked me to go to reservoir with him and Thomson. Am going if possible. Started to rain so am going with Roche tomorrow. Really better because of …

3 November 1940

Got up. Read at Highfield. Then went to chapel. Mr. Gregory very good. In morning read and wrote letters at Highfield. Went to dorm and saw heron but nothing else new. Went to chapel.

4 November 1940

Got up. Jolly good morning. In afternoon played foulest game of rugger I have ever. Raining all the time. Got soaked. Didn't get a wash either. In evening lovely preps. Am going to read bit of bible every evening.

5 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Read in afternoon in Uppingham Library. Quite good lessons. Am getting on quite well with my Greek. Did not have bath, but had a good wash instead.

6 November 1940

Got up. Better than usual morning. In afternoon rotten as usual but lovely shower afterwards made up for it. Bed.

7 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Singing practice in afternoon, very funny. Plugger. Gloves came both pairs. Got muffler. Read. Very easy preps. Didn't even take them to Highfield. Wrote to Mummy.

8 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. P.T. though. In afternoon had to practice for House matches. Jolly good. Got out at 3.30. Had lovely shower. Did Marks in class. Was 3rd in everything. Not too bad. Bed.

9 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon read in Uppinham Library with Bruce then went to tea and Highfield and did no prep. Read Pickwick Papers. Bed.

10 November 1940

Got up. Went to Uppingham Library and read with Bruce. Went to service. Jolly good. In afternoon went U.L. and then watched procession. Not bad. In evening went to U.W.D.S. Mock Parliament. Went to service again. Jolly good. Bed.

11 November 1940

Got up. Jolly good morning. Ada sent stamps 51- 2/6 for me. Jolly fine. In afternoon frightful game of rugger. Cold and wet. Only been wet before. Broke up sooner than usual. Not bad preps. Bed.

12 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Did P.T. in gym for first time. Rotten lunch. Stew and prunes. In afternoon went to Uppingham Library and read. Then went and listened to Bruce playing. Not bad preps. Had wash. Bed.

13 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning, really. In afternoon had game of rugger and then House Practice. Then lovely shower. Had to go to tea with Mr. Sackett. Jolly good. Easy preps. Bed.

14 November 1940

Got up. In morning not too good. Gout teases and annoys me every morning after breakfast. It does not worry me, though. In afternoon went down to Highfield and read and wrote letters. In evening not bad preps. Air-raid just as we were coming home from Highfields.

15 November 1940

All-clear at 6.0 never heard.

Got up. Got away from Gout. Not bad morning. In afternoon played game of rugger which was not so bad as usual. It was dry anyway. In evening not bad preps. Bed.

16 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Have got to learn some of my part by tomorrow. In afternoon first went up with Bruce to house-match ‘cause he had to. Horrible. At half-time went away and listened to Bruce's organ practice. Good. Then went to Uppingham Library. Learnt part. Bed.

17 November 1940

Witt.
Auntie Mary.

Got up. In morning Chips preaching. Not bad. In afternoon went to rehearsal. Jolly good. Learning my part still. Pickard not bad. In evening went to U.V.D.S. Bruce speaking. Very good indeed. In evening bed.

18 November 1940

Got up. Not bad this morning. Club matches this afternoon. Be pretty rotten, I expect. Thank goodness 5th club played ordinary game. Terrible. Wrenched my thumb. Had it bandaged up by new Sister. No prep. Jelly D'Aranyi played. Simply marvellous. Bed.

19 November 1940

Got up. Quite a good morning. Did not do P.T because of thumb. I shouldn't think I shall be able to play tomorrow. Went to chapel and listened to Bruce playing. Good. Went to surgery. She said I wasn't to play. I'm not sorry. In evening not bad preps. Bed. Air raid.

20 November 1940

Got up. In morning not bad. In afternoon am going up to field to watch house-match. Beastly nuisance. Had to go and watch. Upper won. In afternoon got more jam. Donald can't get any more jam until he has seen the Bursar. Air-raid.

21 November 1940

Got up. Air-raid lasted all night. Had to get up and go downstairs. Slept all time. Not bad morning. In singing practice Sackett announced that breakfast would be 9.0. Good. In afternoon read in Uppinham Library. Good tea. Three air-raids in night. Did not have to get up. That's good too. Bed.

22 November 1940

Got up. Letter came telling parcel had been sent off. Hurray! Read in Uppinham Library. In afternoon did Public Works. Not bad lessons. Air-raid at 4.5. Lasted till 4.40. Not bad preps. Thumb quite better. Six air-raids in night.

23 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Had cough and beginnings of cold. Rotten. In afternoon went to the Uppingham Library and then went to Highfield. Came back and waited for parcel. Did not come.

24 November 1940

Got up. Went to Highfield and cleaned study. Have got new arrangement now. Wrote letters. Went to chapel. Mr. Foster from Human. Very good. In afternoon wrote letters. In evening went to the U.V.D.S. Euthanysia. Good.

25 November 1940

Got up. Cough a little better. Cold worse. Not very good morning. In afternoon did not play games as were club games. I was not in the team. Not bad lessons. Felt rather rotten. Bed.

26 November 1940

Got up. Felt very rotten. All sick and dizzy. Didn't have much breakfast. Had been dreaming all night of a lovely cool drink of water. So had one at breakfast. Marvellous! Felt the same at dinner. Felt a bit better afterwards. Had rehearsal. Not bad preps. Bed.

27 November 1940

Got up. Cold not so bad. Not bad morning. In afternoon asked Inny if I needn't play games and he said yes. Read all the time. Lovely. In evening not any prep at all. Good. Bed.

28 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library. Not bad preps in evening. Bed.

ONLY 3 MORE WEEKS!!!

29 November 1940

Got up. Not bed morning. Quite good weather. WHOLE HOLIDAY! Went to dam, then Stoke Dry, then to Caldecote then to Lydington. Looked at all the churches. Went with Bruce. Lovely. Bed.

30 November 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. But have got to play in house-match this afternoon. Might get off because of hard ground. Had to play. Terrible. Did not get cursed after as much as I thought.

1 December 1940

Got up. Bruce in the XX. Awful. Went to Uppingham Library. In afternoon went to the study and did Maths prep. In evening went to chapel again. Jolly good. In evening went music rooms. Had to stay outside. Turley wouldn't let me come in. Went to O.W.D.S. Western Civilisation is a Failure. Jolly Good.

2 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon played rugger against 6th Club. Not too bad. Got rather a bad cut on my shin. Does not hurt. Hadn't time to go to Sister. Not bad preps. Bed.

3 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. P.T. in gym, thank goodness. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library. Went and had a plate of toast in Buttery and got my jam. Jolly good. In evening not be preps. Read. Bed. Letter.

4 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Had to have a bath last night. Not at all bad. In afternoon had pretty bad game of rugger. Got a ball straight in the face. Rather a bad nose-bleed. Stopped quite quickly though. Lecture in evening. Mr Richards. Modern Architecture.

5 December 1949

Mr. Pickering.

Got up. Air-raid last night. Nothing happened. Not bad morning. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library. Jolly good. Bed. Nobody will ever know what going home means to me. Freedom from bullying, good food. Comfort. ONLY ANOTHER FORTNIGHT.

6 December 1940

Got up. In morning did pretty awful P.T. Terribly cold strong wind. In afternoon got present of 51- from Granny Rogers. Had a booze in Buttery. Jolly good. Not bad preps. Two air-raids in night.

7 December 1940

Daniels II

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon had to watch Old Boys Match. Awful. Had booze in Buttery and Dyers. Jolly good. In evening did no prep. Do tomorrow. Bed.

8 December 1940

Got up. Read and wrote letters at Highfield. Mr. Howard quite good in chapel. BRUCE CAME BACK. In afternoon went in Uppingham Library for half an hour. Then rehearsal. Quite good. Preacher good again. Prep at Highfield. Bed.

9 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon played pretty awful game of rugger. In evening pretty awful Maths prep. Rather bad day, but made up for by only 9 more days.

10 December 1940

Got up. Lovely morning. Bruce told me that my name was down for milk and bun. Am going to have it tomorrow. In occo. read in Uppingham Library. Jolly good. In afternoon rehearsal. Very good. Sawyer chucking Mrs. Noah. Bishop doing it. Had to kiss Woodford.

11 December 1940

Miss Kendall.
Dodo.

Got up. Lovely morning. Had milk and bun. Marvellous. In afternoon had my hair cut and read and wrote letters at Highfield. Lovely, no rugger. Clothes at laundry. Altogether a marvellous day.

12 December 1940

Got up. Good morning. Milk and buns. Lovely. In Occo. rehearsal of Scene II. Jolly good. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library. Very good. In evening thick frost slid. Bed.

ONLY ONE MORE WEEK!

13 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. In buttery milk and bun. Lovely. In afternoon did Public Works for about 1/2 and hour. So cold that we came back. Swellings on my hands bad. In evening had my report looked at. Not bad, at all. Good preps. Bed.

14 December 1940

Got up. Quite good morning. Milk and bun lovely. Hands not so bad this morning. No more rugger. No more freezing. Marvellous. In afternoon had to go to Bucket at 4.20. Read in Uppingham Library, till time. Last prep. Bed.

15 December 1940

Got up. Last service. Sang carols. Had written letter at Highfield and did prep. In afternoon went to Highfield and did prep. In evening went to master's debate. Marvellous. Went to Mrs. Kerr's Party. Wonderful. Went to bed 10.30. Bed.

16 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Was too late to have milk and bun. Packing this afternoon. Got packed. Quite well. Got everything in much better than I expected. House plays jolly good. Had cocoa and bun. Bed at 11.30.

17 December 1940

Got up. Not bad morning. Took trunk down-stairs. End of terms seems very near. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library. Went down to Buttery and Donald bought me a lot. Lovely of him. Uppingham concert marvellous.

18 December 1940

Got up. Marvellous morning. Did book-checking. Had milk and bun. In afternoon, took books to Redgate. Ian's father and mother came. Got money out of the bank. Had films. Rotten.

19 December 1940

End of term.

Got up at 5. At last. Packed case. Had breakfast. Had to wait an half-hour for the train. Got it at last. Uneventful journey. Got to London at 11.0. Daddy met at nice house. Good shelter.
WE BREAK UP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

20 December 1940

Got up. Am in bottom bunk in shelter. Nothing last night. Went shopping down Archway Rd with Mummy. In afternoon went down to Crouch End with Lalla. Went to Ration Book Office and shops. Read. Air-raids. Guns and planes. No bombs.

21 December 1940

Got up. Went shopping again and went to Hall. In afternoon went to Edward's an ordered lots of groceries with Lalla. Went to Hall and watched them decorating trees.

22 December 1940

Got up. In morning did furnishing of den. Went to church with Mummy. Didn't like the service very much. In afternoon stayed in and read. In evening stayed in with Mummy and Donald. Read and packed one parcel.

23 December 1940

Got up. Stayed in all day. Felt a bit bad. Did nothing but sit in front of the fire. Bad air-raid. No bombs. Bed.

24 December 1940

Got up. Cold better. Went shopping along Archway Rd. with Mummy and then up Muswell Hill. In afternoon set up tree and decorated it. Ada came. She has bad lumbago. Jolly good evening. No warning. Bed.

25 December 1940

Got up. Hooray!!! Went to church. Lovely service. Marvellous dinner. Got all money except wallet which is wonderful, and sweets from Mummy and Daddy. Wonderful Christmas.

26 December 1940

Got up. Went shopping with Mummy in Archway. Read all day. No air-raid at night. Played game with Ada. Bed.

27 December 1940

Got up. Went to Hall to get Daddy's letters. Then stayed in and read all afternoon. Did bit of work. Then read. 1st bad air-raid for 3 days. No bombs.

28 December 1940

Got up. In morning went to Muswell Hill with Mummy, Ada and Donald. Nice. They came back to Miss Bowyers' for coffee. Lovely. In afternoon went for a walk with everybody to Hampstead Heather and Kenwood. Read. Bed. No raid.

29 December 1940

Got up. Went to church. In afternoon finished Nicholas Nickleby, and did some work. In evening Donald and Lalla went to church. Ada, Mummy and I stayed in. Read. Very bad air-raid but nothing round our way. Bed.

30 December 1940

Strong I

Got up. Ada went. Saw awful fire in City. Did lot of work with books. Ada came back at 2.30. Said all City was blazing. Terrible. Read. Did more work. Ad game. Daddy out all night. Read. Bed.

31 December 1940

Got up. Stayed in all the morning and did ever such a lot of work fitting out my room. Lovely, now. In afternoon did more work. Finished at last. Ada came back. Went out shopping with her. Did work. Bed.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARIES NO. 2 & 3 (COMBINED)

1 January 1941

Got up. Did work and read. Went to Muswell Hill with Mummy and Donald. Got Pinocchio and Memo Book. We are going to The Great Dictator tomorrow. Hooray. Went to Finchley with Mummy and Lalla. Bed.

2 January 1941

Got up. Had breakfast and went off straight away. Got to Marble Arch Pavillion at about 10.10. News on. Saw the film. Lovely seeing places I've heard about. Went to Selfridge's for lunch. Marvellous time. Very interesting. Got two Roddie books at Hamley's. Looked all round Selfridge's. Came home. Played game. Read. Bed.

3 January 1941

Got up. Read and did a bit of work. Daddy went to Oxford to see Uncle John. In afternoon read and had a lovely bath. Read and listened to the wireless all to the evening. Jolly good. First raid of the year, guns and planes. 3 warnings all together. Didn't worry, no bombs.

4 January 1940

Got up, read and listened to the wireless all the morning. In afternoon listened to the wireless and read. Wrote a letter to Bruce. Went and posted it. Very cold. Listened to the wireless and read. Bed.

5 January 1940

Got up. Did not go to church because Donald had cold. Read. Pipe burst while we were reading. Landing covered in water. Stopped it all right. In afternoon Laurie (ugh), Lalla, Grace, and Rene came to tea. In evening read good doc - Raid. Guns and planes. Bed.

6 January 1940

Got up. In morning read then went down to the Hall to meet Mummy and Daddy with Donald. Very happy. In afternoon went to Mrs. Baswell's, a friend of Lalla's. Very nice. Started to snow quite thick too. Read and listened to the wireless. Read my zoos. Bed.

7 January 1941

Got up. Read, then went up to town with Mummy and Donald. Got wallet. Lovely. Was having lunch XX went, then Selfridges' XX. Went to basement then went to Bumpers. Got Useless takes command! Lovely shop. Read and listened to the wireless. Got books out of cases. Very good. Bed.

8 January 1941

Got up. Read all morning till 11.30 then went out with Mummy down Archway Rd. Then went to Muswell Hill. In afternoon read and listened to the wireless. In evening did the same. No air-raid. Bed.

9 January 1941

Got up. Read then went to Muswell Hill with Mummy and Donald. In afternoon went out a walk with Lalla and Donald to Hampstead Heath. Quite nice. Saw a few birds Coot, XX duck, moorhen, seagulls. Quite good. Better than I expected. Bed.

10 January 1941

Got up. Went shopping with Mummy down the Archway Rd. to try and find the cobblers'. Got 'Good Housekeeping. Read and listened to the wireless all afternoon and evening. Started an index to my zoos. Hardly started however. Bed.

11 January 1941

Got up. Went out shopping with Mummy down the Archway Rd. In afternoon went out shopping with Lalla. In evening Daddy showed us Alf's Button Afloat. Marvellous. Wish we could seen more of it. Bed.

12 January 1941

Got up, at 10.30. Daddy's Sunday off. Did not go to church. Had chicken for dinner. In afternoon read and listened to the wireless. In afternoon also went for a walk with Lalla over Hampstead Heath. Read all evening. Air-raid in evening. Rather bad. Guns. Bed.

13 January 1941

Got up. Went to Holborn and went into Gamages. Very disappointing. Cheap and common. Went for lunch at Wallis. Quite nice. Then went to The thief of Baghdad at the Odeon, Leicester Square. Very grand. Flash-chromium plate and leopard-skin seats. Bed.

14 January 1941

Lalla's Birthday

Got up. Went out shopping with Mummy at Muswell Hill. Went to see the film 'Strike up the Band' begins. Lalla going on duty fine - watching tomorrow night. Read and listened to the wireless all evening. Air-raid. Guns and planes. Bed.

15 January 1941

Got up. Helped Mummy with packing. Very frenzied. Went to Muswell Hill shopping with Mummy. In afternoon quite thick snow. Had snow-fight in the garden with Daddy and Donald. Read all the evening. Donald and Lalla went to 'Strike up the Band'. Air-raid. Bed.

16 January 1941

Got up. Packed all the morning. Went off at 12.30 to Euston. Train left at 1.30. Met Bruce. Had long talk on the train. Lovely. He had met Daddy at XX. Got to K.S. at 6.0. Had tea. Went to Redgate. Quite nice cubicles in dormies. Bruce met me!!

17 January 1941

Got up. Went to breakfast then came back to chapel and Hall. Had lessons. In afternoon unpacked and tidied study. Then went to Buttery for jam. Marvellous. Bruce at Redgate. Bed.

18 January 1941

Got up. Snowing. Lessons as usual. Snow very thick. About four inches to set. In afternoon read all the Invisible Man. Jolly good. In evening read and had four pieces of cake. Walked with Bruce.

19 January 1941

Got up. Went to chapel. Chaplain. Not bad. Wrote letter to Mummy and Daddy. In afternoon did prep and listened to Ian's wireless. Quite nice. Had 1/2 mug of milk every night. Bed.

20 January 1941

Got up. Quite good morning. In afternoon read and had rehearsal of Junior Sit: play. Went to Buttery yummy, yummy! No games. For a bit anyway. Marvellous! Much nicer this term. No bullying, no games. Prep quite good. A nice day. Bed.

21 January 1941

Got up. No P.T. because of snow. Very good. In afternoon read and had rehearsal of Junior Sit: play. In occo. went to the Uppingham Library. In evening got my socks wet coming back to Redgate. Had a good toast however in the day room. One thing about Redgate. It is warm, like it very much. Bed.

22 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Got bread. No milk, just buns. Dental inspection this afternoon at 2:55. Went and cleaned teeth. Nothing wrong with my teeth. Thank goodness. Read. Bed.

23 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Rehearsal in Museum quite good. In afternoon went to Redgate and read. Blacked-out. Have to all week. Great nuisance. Not bad periods. In evening parcel came. Bottle for Donald, socks, powder and handkerchief. High jinks in the dormy. Bed.

24 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. No P.T. Did Greek instead. Am up to the others now. In afternoon there was a rehearsal in Museum. Went to Redgate. Parcel had come from Ken Hot-water bottle some food. Also sponge. Very good. Good preps. Bed.

25 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Had to see Miss Gough to sign name in big book. In afternoon had rehearsal for a bit. Went to Hawthorne's and got some things. Went to Buttery. Goody!! Bed.

26 January 1941

Got up. Went to chapel. Marvellous preacher. Went to Redgate and read and did prep and learnt part. Went to chapel again. Very good. In evening did some prep. then read a bit. Wrote my letters and learnt some of my part. Bed.

27 January 1942

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon rehearsal in the Uppingham Museum. Did scene 3. Horrible. Forgot my part. Horrible humiliation. How I don't know. Had been learning it for ages. Not bad preps. Bed.

28 January 1941

Got up. Good morning. In afternoon another rehearsal in Uppingham Museum. Scene 3 again. Knew my part a bit better but not much. Haw and Keeley laughed a lot. Hate them. Really must make a big effort to get it all known. When I don't know. Oh! well. Quite good preps. Bed.

29 January 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. In afternoon went to Bursar's office with Bishop to get new Noah's toy mice. Took him to Redgate and showed him round. Donald came in during preps and said he was going to the San tomorrow as he was feeling Ill. Bed.

30 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon rehearsal in Uppingham Museum. Much better, I mean my part - know, but I still hate this scene, all that kissing! Donald has gone to the San. Oh!!! Bed.

31 January 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon had rehearsal in the museum. Jolly good. Said something about Ian when I didn’t know he was there. He was very peeved. Still I would have said whether he'd been there or not. Bed.

1 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon rehearsal not bad but we seem to be having so many. Went to Redgate and listened to the wireless. Jolly good. Ian not back thank goodness.

2 February 1941

Got up. Went to chapel. Benson Perkins preaching. Christened me and Donald. In afternoon read and did a bit of work and wrote my letters home. No rehearsal. Thank goodness. Bed.

3 February 1941

Got up. A bit of a sore throat. Went off after a bit. In afternoon a rehearsal. Not bed. Took up most of the afternoon, though. Not bad lessons. Had another hour with Jan. Wish I could get away from him. Always arguing. Bed.

4 February 1941

Got up. Asked Bruce if he would study with me next term and he said "Yes."!! Hooray! I do love him. Anyway took Donald some handkerchiefs to the San. Shortage. Bed.

5 February 1941

Got up. In morning not bad. In afternoon no rehearsal. Thank goodness. Wandered around. Wish Donald was out of the San. So dull. However, mustn't grumble. He can't help it! Bed.

6 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Rehearsal in afternoon of Scene 4. Better than 2 and 3 anyway. Ian came out of the San: Hurray! I don't think. Awful boy. Donald coming out Saturday. Goody-goody! and I mean it, too. Bed.

7 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon did Public Works. Cleared away snow from the piece of gravel in front of Redgate so that the laundry lorry could turn. Got that over for the week anyway. About first this term.

8 February 1941

Got up. Donald came back. Told him I was going to study with Bruce next term. So he said why not do it now. So I said Oh! yes, if we can. Hope so, anyway. Bed.

9 February 1941

Got up. Read and wrote letters. Then went to chapel. Rickman Johnson preaching. Very good indeed. Donald arranged about studies. XX going with Hatton. Broadbent going with XX. Donald to Ian ad me to Bruce. Bed.

10 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon went to Redgate and read then went to Buttery with Bruce, Seacombe, Hatton and Hargrieves - had a jolly good booze. Yum yum. Bed.

11 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon read and did some writing. Donald says Grouchy won't share. Oh!! how awful. I can't stand it much longer. Ian is terrible. Anyway, it must be alright. Bed.

12 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Terrible however that Grouchey won't share. I don't know how I can keep up much longer. No games. Imagine it no games yet this term. Hurray. Read and did work. Bed.

13 February 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. Got teased a lot by Grieves-Smith and Osbourne. Feeling very dismal. However, must to optimistic. Hope there's no epidemic this term. There's one of 'flu already. That doesn't matter, though. Read all afternoon. No games!!! Bed.

14 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. P.T. much better as did not have to change. I've lost my things. Didn't know. I really had, came to use them and found them already lost. Rather good. Shan't find them again till end of term. Bed.

15 February 1941

Got up. Rotten morning as it always is. XX XX potty as usual. In afternoon read and did a bit of work in the classroom. Went to Swords Club at 5.0. Jolly good. I think I might join next term. Bed.

16 February 1941

Got up. Not very nice weather. Raining. Went to chapel Service of Praise quite good. In afternoon had rehearsal. Not bad, but How and Keeley are very bad. Always pinching you or hitting you. Horrible jam for tea. Think it's a mixture of gooseberry and strawberry. Bed.

17 February 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. Got teased a lot by the form. Why, I don't know. Had rehearsal in occo: Rotten. Read a horrible book in afternoon, did some foul work, and had terrible preps. Altogether a rotten day. Bed.

18 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. P.T. things still not found. In afternoon did Public Works. Got soaked. Had to change my trousers. Decided to wear them without braces. Jolly good. Much better. Have to change back when dry. Bed.

19 February 1941

Got up. Snowing again. Good. Not bad morning. In afternoon free. Hooray!!! Read and listened to the wireless. Went to Society Class and chose hymn. Society Class very helpful as a mid-week service. Although Mr Barnes. Moral Re - XX devotee and pacifists. Still very good. Bed.

20 February 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. Did badly in maths test. Told Trump, and he quite understood. Thank goodness!! In afternoon read and did work in the Uppingham Library. Not too bad. Tried to brush up my trousers. Think they'll be alright. Bed.

21 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon tried to clean my trousers. Didn't do too badly either. Another brushing up will be very good. They aught to be all right after that. Nearly clean, now. Bed.

22 February 1941

Got up. Bum morning as usual. In afternoon did a bit of work. Then read King Solomon's Mines by Rider-Haggard. Jolly good. Read in preps. Bed.

23 February 1941

Got up. Read and wrote letters at Redgate. Went to chapel. Dixon not bad, but a bit pacifistic. In afternoon read and listened to the wireless. In evening had rehearsal in Museum. Bats flying round. Dame scared. Bed.

24 February 1941

Got up. Not too good to begin with but we went to Hall after chapel. WHOLE - HOL!! Hooray!! Went with Bruce, Hatton and Hargreaves and Seacombe to Kirby. Got bottle of Tizer. Never got to Kirby Hall. Just went round villages. Very good, indeed. Read. Bed.

25 February 1941

Got up. Bit of reaction after whole hol: P.T. in gymnasium. In occupation went Archeological Society. Not bad. Duthie on the 'Burial Ship.' In afternoon read in the Uppingham Library. It isn't a very good library. Xx have been bequested. Bed.

26 February 1941

Got up. Rotten mornings always on a Wednesday, somehow. Think it must be absence of occo. In afternoon had a run instead of games! Not so bad as I expected. Quite nice, in fact, did me good. Bed.

27 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In Occo: read in Uppingham Library. Not good. In afternoon no games. Hooray!!! Lovely this term. No games at all. In evening rotten preps, but alright. Bed.

28 February 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon had rehearsal, rotten. Not bad, really. Was late for Surgery Sister said if I was late again I'd have to report as if I hadn't been at all. Hatton came into dormitory because Courtney had been misbehaving. Good. Bed.

1 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning as usual. In afternoon had rehearsal. Not too good. Scene 5 absolutely absurd. Still no embarrassing bits. One comfort anyway. No preps. Bed.

2 March 1941

Got up. Read and wrote a bit of my letter. Dr. Harrison in chapel. Jolly good. In afternoon went to concert at Leicester. Myra Hess. Marvellous. Wonderful. Had rehearsal of Scene 5 and I. Waller watched. Awful. Looked as if he thought he was listening to children of four. Not at all good.

3 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In occo: went to Jun Lit. Not bad. Pretty ignorant some of them. In afternoon had rehearsal. Not bad. Went to Redgate. Lots of people been sick. Bed.

4 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In Occo: went to Jun: XX: Chips on Modern and Ancient Greece. Jolly good. In afternoon had to watch a match. Not too bad. Dunkerley got hurt. Bad.

5 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Game for us. Changed but could not find my things. Went as I was. Could not play in my own game, played in 4th Club. Terrible players. Not bad time, however. Bed.

6 March 1941

Got up. Not good morning. Raining, pouring. Rained all day. So no games. Lovely. Read and worked at Redgate. Jolly good. In evening did no prep. Bed.

7 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In afternoon was going to do P.W. but it was raining so cancelled. Am going to do two lots next week. Bed.

8 March 1941

Got up. Not too good a morning. In afternoon had to go to a three hrs. Det for Tubba A for some silly thing or other. Bed.

9 March 1941

Got up. Read and wrote letter in morning. W.G. Hindley preaching. Not bad, a bit bookish. In afternoon had rehearsal of Scene 5 and 1. Waller watched. Not good. Bed.

10 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. In Occo: had rehearsal. In afternoon read and did work at Redgate. In evening not bad preps. Have new arrangement about bowls. Can borrow every night. Bed.

11 March 1941

Got up. Quite a good morning. Did P.T. in ordinary clothes which was a very good thing. In afternoon did Public Works in Redgate. Digging with Donald and Ian. Not bad. Bed.

12 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning as usual. Got teased as usual. Games cancelled, Hooray! Read and did work in Uppingham Library. Good. Bed.

13 March 1941

Got up. Quite a nice day, though freezing. Ian said he was feeling sick & stayed in bed. He's gone to San. Good. In afternoon played games. Was goalie. Bed.

14 March 1941

Got up. Lovely morning. Ever so warm. Went up without my coat. In afternoon did P.W.second time. Digging in garden. Not bad. Read in prep. Bed. ONLY 3 MORE WEEKS!!!!

15 March 1941

Got up. Very misty, but cleared up marvellously and became nearly as warm as yesterday. Got teased terribly because of Latin. I feel awful. Ian came back. Bed.

16 March 1941

Got up. A bit chilly, misty and frosty. Mr Leggett preached. Very good. Services and meals times changed. Rehearsal in afternoon. Not bad. Work. Bed.

17 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Rotten weather may clear up, like Saturday. Hasn't cleared up at all. Cold all day. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library and XX. Bed.

18 March 1941

Got up. Everybody thinks there is going to be Whole Hol. There isn't however. Bucket at dinner gave extra half-hol. Good. Went to Uppingham play, The Critic. Very good indeed. Bed.

19 March 1941

Got up. Had to make new sheets into bed. Was slowest of all. Not bad morning. In afternoon went to get pads and kickers. Was goalie. Jolly good. Went to Society Class. Chose hymn. Read. Bed.

20 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In Occo. had rehearsal of Scene 1. Had to do embarrassing bit. In afternoon was goalie. Jolly good. Let through none. Bruce spilt jug in dormy. Bed.

21 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In Occo: went to the Chaplain for Communion instruction. Very good indeed. In afternoon borrowed XX's bike. Went to Public Works. Very good. Bed. ONLY 2 MORE WEEKS!!!

22 March 1941

Got up. Had Singing Practice. Not bad. Sykes. Trump was pleased that there's no prep tonight. Lecture on personal protection against gas. Good! In afternoon stayed in classroom. Very good. Bed.

23 March 1941

Got up. Read all morning. Jolly good. No prep. Professor Jessop preaching. Not bad, but very bookish. In afternoon had a rehearsal forgot my part. In evening had bath. In evening P. Jessop better. In evening read and wrote letter. Bed.

24 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Had rehearsal with Long in occo. Jolly funny. In afternoon was going to do Public Works but Unsworth told me that people who were in Xx lit. needn't do Public Works. So I cut them. Couldn't find Smith to tell him. Expect he'll blow one up. Dress rehearsal of play. No prep on masters. Pillow fight. Bed.

25 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. My watch got broken by H.F. Smith in P.T. Took it to Sharpe's. said it would cost 116. Read at 4.0. In afternoon read in K.S. Library, then in Uppingham. Went to Sharpe's to get watch. Said it was to be ready at 12.0. In evening saw Sen. Lit. play "Speed the Plough." Marvellous. Bed.

26 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning as usual. In afternoon no games, hurray!! Went into Uppingham Library and read and worked all the afternoon. After I'd been to Surgery, went to H.S. Library and got a book or two. In evening after we went to bed, was expecting a raid. None. Went down to Xx with M. Bed.

27 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. in occo. went to Chippy's Communion class. Quite good. In afternoon read at Redgate for a quarter of an hour. Had a game. Last of term. Raiding. Foul. Was goalie. Let through about 500. In evening went to Buttery. Yummy!!! Expecting raids again. None. Bed.

28 March 1941

Got up. Very good morning. Were weighed i P.T. then did game. In occo went to Uppingham Library and read and did a bit of work. In afternoon did Pubic Works in Redgate garden. Digging. Finished off a plot. In night lecture on XX of rocks. Bed. ONLY 1 MORE WEEK!!!!!!!

29 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. Scripture B. Biology B. History B+. Latin B+ Greek B. French C. Not too bad anyway. Very pleased about Greek. In afternoon stayed in Uppingham Library. Read and did work. Ian complained of stiff jaw. Hope he doesn't get anything. Bed.

30 March 1941

Got up. Ian swollen terrifically. After breakfast, while making his bed told to go to surgery. He's got mumps! Oh! If I get it I shall be angry. End of term service quite good. Mrs. Rose. Very good. In evening worked in Donald's study. Bed.

31 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. Still feeling shaky. I do hope I don't get it. In occo: had a XX rehearsal. Not bad. Because he didn't come. In afternoon was going to have Public Works but XX never came. Did prep in day-room. XX yet. Bed.

1 April 1941

Got up. Not bad morning, but dull. In occo went into Uppingham Library and read. in afternoon gathered things in case and came to Redgate. Perfect XX! Got packed at last. Tired. Bed.

2 April 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. IN afternoon just wandered around and was thoroughly bored. Just went into Library. Was feeling ill. Took a pill. Went to bed at 9.0. Was woken by music people. Bed.

3 April 1941

Got up. Very good morning. No lessons! In occo: went and read in the Uppingham Library. In afternoon read in Uppingham Library till 5.0 then went to Redgate. Had a bath thank goodness!! Then went round absolutely bored. Films marvellous. Lovely night. Bed.

4 April 1941

End of term.

Got up. Hurray!!! At last!!!!

GAP

19 May 1941

Got up. Helped Lalla to finish packing trunk. Packed cases. Hank came just as we were going. Train full. Had to stand for a bit. Got seats at last. Daddy left me at XX Harbour. Got train all right at Seaton. Empty. Raining wen got to Uppingham. XX gone fro R.G. Bed.

20 March 1941

Got up. Ian here. Good. Still raining. Lessons quite good. XX XX XX. In afternoon rehearsed. Not bad. Then went down to Redgate and read and listened to the wireless. Very good. Bruce only friendly. Never goes out of his way to speak.

21 March 1941

Got up. Quite good morning. In afternoon had no games as XX are on. I've got off sports I think. Read and listened in to 'The Gang' again. Ian nice this term. Bed.

22 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In occo went to Redgate and listened to the XX Read. In afternoon went to Redgate and walked about the garden. Lovely now. You are allowed to pick flowers now. Beautiful flowers now. Read a new Penguin book I bought. Ordered Xx. Tea. Prep good. Bed.

23 March 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. in occo rehearsal rotten. In afternoon did Public Works. Digging. Not bad. Got blister on my hand. Didn't hurt much. Cut it in class. Hurt. Jolly good preps. Fair arrangement now. Bed.

24 March 1941

Got up. Good morning, now. Xx Occo: In occo: went to Redgate and listened to the wireless. XX XX Awful. In afternoon had rehearsal till 3.0. Awful. Didn't know my part. Scene 3.

25 March 1941

Got up. Lovely morning. Read and wrote my letter. In chapel Prof. Murray of Hull University. Jolly good. In afternoon had a rehearsal. Terrible. Didn't know my part at all in Scene 4. Very miserable. Better tomorrow, I hope. Bed.

26 March 1941

Got up. Rotten morning. In Occo: wrote a terribly mournful letter home. Felt very bad about the play. In afternoon XX up my part. Knew it. Hooray! Much better, today. Got letter from home. Donald back on Friday. Bed.

27 March 1941

Got up. Quite good morning. In occo: went with Bishop to listen to lecture on 'China' by Bray. Awfully funny. In afternoon another rehearsal. Good. When finished walked in the garden at Redgate. Lovely. Found black-bird's next in shed. No eggs. Read. Bed.

28 May 1941

Got up. Not bad day. Sports Day. In afternoon went up to Middle and walked around with XX. Not bad. Upper were third. XX was Victor X XX again. In evening hardly any prep at all. Bed.

29 May 1941

Got up. Quite good morning. In Occo: rehearsal in Museum, Scene 4. Very good. Quite interesting for once. In afternoon went into Uppingham.

3 June 1941

Got up. Not bad morning. In Occo: read in Uppingham Library. In afternoon had rehearsal of Scene 4 and 5 till 3.0.

4 June 1941

Got up. Cloudy, but fairly warm. Not bad morning. In afternoon cleared up wonderfully and was awfully hot. Much better. Cricket. Went on with same game, went in and came out fourth ball. Good. Had nice read then fielded. Not bad. Hot. Bed.

5 June 1941

Got up. Quite good morning. Still raining. Everybody thought there was going to be a whole hol. but there wasn't. Had rehearsal in afternoon. Scene 5. Absolutely absurd! But no embarrassing bits. Thank goodness! Went quite well. In evening quite good preps. Bed.

6 June 1941

Got up. Not too bad morning. Still raining. No whole-hol. Again. In Occo: went to Redgate and read. In afternoon had to go to Mrs Sackett's and tried on a lion cloth for XX. Had to take everything for her to look at it a minute. Peeved. Bed.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY FROM SATURDAY AUGUST 4 1945

BUDBROOKE BARRACKS WARWICK

Back Diary

Thursday. Aug. 2nd 1945

My last few hours as a civilian passed by very quickly. I thought in the train, "I shall not be looked at like this for at least 3 years. People will see not me as I fondly imagine I appear in civilian clothes, handsome, artistic, imaginative, or so on. (How vanity leads astray!) But it is a real feeling, for I know I myself do class everyone in uniform together, as vulgar, common and probably ignorant and perhaps violent. From what I have seen here I am probably right. I must set down my feelings about joining the army - the feelings I had before I actually got here though as yet I have not had occasion to change them. I have never worked as hard as I should - for various reasons, which I shan't go into now. But my last three terms at school, and especially the last one, I really had not only got hold of something real, but I had realised that I was meant to read and feel and criticise and perhaps write a bit myself. This is a private diary, so I can praise myself if I like. I am as wise as anyone to my imperfections, I know. I have always been able to furbish up other people's ideas, and make them into something better and formed and sometimes quite different - in other words to write I needed some direct and explicit stimulus. But last term I have been able to write sometimes of my own, my 'Undiscovered Country' (see XX Lit. journal.) I have a terrific and luxurious joy in each and every piece of literature (except Sir Walter Scott and Galsworthy.) I cannot put my passion into explicit words.

I have lingered over this, not to trumpet myself abroad, but to picture myself and myself. It isn't a question of superiority, but of difference. I am about to be catapulted into a world completely foreign to me, with your men of my own age who have no conception whatever of the atmosphere in which I have been brought up. I may say without prejudice that I do know something of their conditions since it is easier for me to imagine their baser conditions of mind with my richer mind. This all sound disgustingly complacent, I know, but it isn't really After all, I have yet to discover what they have to offer me, for undoubtedly they have much to teach me unconsciously. Mention of the word 'unconsciously' calls it to mind that describes these people they are probably 'unconscious' of almost everything, almost animals, in fact.

Friday. Aug. 3. 1945

I waked up in my bunk for the first time. Army boots are a shock. Fortunately the same merciful unreality broods over all. We made up our bed-cots absolutely immaculately and swept the hut, and then loitered around the hut and then marched. I for one refuse to admit that I need army discipline - now. I didn't, but I feel it is of 'so much more use to arrive at it oneself. Self-discipline cannot be imposed from outside. We had an XX (where's my

spelling?) inoculation today. The left arm began to swell towards the end of the day. Astonishing how angry one is to be inoculated against one's will. After all it can do nothing but good. Infringement of personal liberty and other pedantries, but then this whole venture is such an infringement. Still very strange around the camp.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 5

Bournemouth 1946.
to June.

London. June. '46
& July 1946.

'His play is not without distinct merit, and I would much rather see it than one of the little drawing-room sinfuls guaranteed to run 3 years with one winding!

Eve Punch

I have returned today to the task of choosing a good pseudonym. At last I seem to have been really successful. Maybe I wasn't quite old enough before. My own is obviously quite impossible though perfectly all right in itself, unless I want to sing 'Auntie Laurie' in a belt, I must think of something else.

Reading Grierson and Smith's Critical History of English poetry? a line or rather a phrase from Shakespeare caught my eye, 'a ribaudred hag! Immediately 'BAUDRE' struck me as possible. But it wasn't quite right. I remembered the also unsuccessful MAUFRY of the year before, and combined them. Again not quite right. MAUDREY OR BAUFREY. So I went on further and produced MAURE, nearly there and finally MAUREY. This is it, plus my ROGER to which I have long been faithful. Away with A.L. Mackay. Or even Angus Mackay.

Roger Maufr (there I go again)

Roger Maurey holds the stage.

He looked out of the window, between a forest of twisted glass. Spirals of raindrops started a sober journey, met another and coursed madly down together.

The sky was dead black or rather alive black. As if the whole sky were bright gold and had had tons of soot sprinkled all over it, leaving a few bits shining through.

I don't know very much. But I do know that only through pursuit of beauty lies safety or security or whatever it is Uno's seeking. What a weak phrase! Pursuit of beauty!? What pedantry and self-consciousness!! I mean a real sense of values, a real cultivation of all the senses, and real knowledge and practice of the creative thought as necessary for appreciation as inspiration. Real and not 'Shakespeare-and-the-Universal-Encyclopaedia-in-the-cupboard' type of culture. Unavoidable but hopeless.

Not so definite as I'd hoped. I change again. 'Maurey' seems too affected. I wonder if More would be better.

Roger More. No, perhaps Roger Maure. Yes, that's it, after all. Oh 'dear'. Have found some more. --MAURIN, MAVER, MAVIN, MAULL, MAULE, MAKIN,-- MALIN. MAVER no good, ends in 'er'. Maurin, must abandon unpronounceable 'au's. And Maull and Maule, as well. Mavin too like MAVIS. Makin too like making without the 'g'!

How does ROGER MALIN look? Very good.

Original companies of Black Watch Raised in 1725 wore various. In 1739 1st colonel wanted uniformity. B of company commanders were Mackays and the tartan minus a blue strip was adopted. Sombre appearance gave name of Black Watch. Other authorities state it is tartan of Chief Campbell with red and white over checks removed - tenable case.

Found a new line of names. Roger Shane, Roger Drafe. Roger Soult. Roger Soulte. Roger Syme or Symes. Roger Matson. Maton. Matin. Rober Foley. Cambon. Gambon. Roger Blaire. Blude. Monde. Roger Condell. Longdell. Lonsdale. Roger Lonsell. Otway. Fende. Crocker. Madel. Mann.

Russia Only Communist party and non-party because classes on which parties rest have been removed. People elect after all. Creche system. Women equal. Two houses. 1 represent. per 1000 people.

'Oh, yes, I remember! It was the day I 'ad me 'air permed! Cor, that's month, no 3 weeks, no a month. 'Cos I washed me 'air a fortnight later and then a fortnight again and that's tonight. Keep it free from scurf yer know!

Barbara Ward. Picture Post Margaret Scott.

How old people look when they're asleep! Merciless sleep that deepens wrinkles and hardens the mouth, and shadows the eyes.

How to make one of the static quiet world within, of sleep and matchsticks on the floor, and the colourless, devilish lives and XX clattering past outside.

Feb. 19. 1946.

Today my father came back from a little village called Auckley in Doncaster, and told how he had met a girl who comes to the church who had taken him to see her great-grand-father, who lives in the same house with her and her father and mother, and grandf and grand-m. The great grandfather's name is Ainsley. He is 90. He had 3 brothers 2 went to Canada. The other was the father of Henry Ainsley, the actor.

Sign on a hut door in Bournemouth: CARMEN ONLY. How rarely is must have been visited! What an operatic occasion.

Viscountess Byng very hardy and east to grow, flowering from Autumn to December:10s a dozen.

Queen Mary, rich blue, 2 1/2 ins across, in large trusses.

'He lived in that visionary world where nothing is but what is not.

G.L. Peacock

Saturday. March. 9. 1946

I am very troubled. I am nineteen. I am growing up in a world full of paradoxes, of conflict. My father whom I believe in, says many things of which he seems very certain. Friends I meet elsewhere hold opposite views of which they seem also so certain. We ride along in a bus which passes under a lamp-post every now and then, but the light always seems to show us something different. If only we saw the same under every lamp, and got to know it better each time....

If there are no such things as good and evil, heaven and hell, at least there are two forces of some kind at work in me. All my actions might almost be divided in to two classes. If I only had someone to turn to, to keep me alive; I'm slipping. O send me someone who would be a listener. I am too weak to read and work alone. But I must. From outside there would be no real help.

What nonsense! I must be writing in a sort of trance. I don't really talk like that - a sort of vile mixture of Ursula Bloom and Jeremiah. All the same now that I've woken up, I am very weak-minded. It helps to put it down. Today I went to a film because I was feeling my morning-after feeling again. Not drunk anti-climactic. I didn't want to see the film. It was 10 years old 'David Copperfield'. Interesting for a moment, but only from the time point of view. Quite indecently worthless. I cannot understand how I can be so passionately in love with words and yet not read what I ought. It's no use saying I will. That's easily done. I must not allow myself to think I must read this. If so I'm sunk. Well, to work.

--The swan's neck of the sea
The lung of patted sand
The rest forget
But I remember
Let me remember the rubber shoes
The knobbly asphalt, the trousers
The ice-cream cone wet with sand
Everything for-- DON'T POSE. It's silly muck anyway. I am alone, am alone, alone.

Sunday. March 10. '46

Preacher at St. George's Mr A. Glyn Amos told of the childhood of Emlyn Williams when he walked five miles to school, and then worked harder than anybody like a nigger.

Tuesday. March. 12 '46

It was a bright day, that day, but Paul didn't feel bright. The brightness didn't shine on sprouting leaves or anything new, just on winkles and cracks and dirt. The dark was nicer everything looked glamourous. He thought of the poetry, the essays waiting to be read and written, all things worth doing. They were too real. They reminded him instead of letting him forget. He meandered down the road, the smart shops tawdry in the sunshine. How was it nobody else seemed worried, at least not about the same things. Why had he been born now of all times? To dare to do anything which let you think was to start such a turmoil....

He could not go. He turned into the cinema.

Wednesday. March. 13 '46

Flo Preston remembered seeing Gerald Du Maurier in 'The Ware Case' about 1916. Rubbing his hands along and along the dock, as he told lie after lie.

Thursday. March. 14. '46.

Bishop. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

-Arriving- Hope arrive 9:54
Angus

Passed through Southampton in the evening. Some liver or other was in the dock immediately behind the station. Its red tunnels floodlight and surrounded by many smaller lights were like two lipsticks in some unpleasantly enormous advertisement.

Saturday. March. 16. '46

by J. Walsh.

'Undiscovered Country' by Imoinda. I found 'Undiscovered Country' the hardest contribution to judge of any, and no doubt you will differ from me as to the way in which it is to be interpreted. It obviously comes from deep and honest feeling and there is not the slightest trace to be found of any attempt to be clever or sentimental. The problem that the author is faced with is "how to live", how to grasp that beauty which he sees round about him

everywhere in the wind of primavera, or in the soft touch of a mouse's fur, in Traherne or in an Elizabethan sonnet, but which he can never capture for himself or define and express to others. It is the lack of this beauty which causes the pointless and foolish existence of man whose futility one can see in the life of any city: it is this lack of beauty which has made the world what it is today, 'old and dark with the dimness of disillusion'. He ends abruptly, but on a note of hope.

Imoinda writes with sensitivity and simplicity which combine to put this experiment above any in the journal, both in subject and execution.

Thursday. March. 21. 1946

Oxford: R.M.T. Raikes (Radley and Trinity), R. Turner Warwick, (Bedales and Ariel). J.R. Barry (Dulwich and Queen'), R.M.A. Bourne (Eton and New College), J.R.L. Constains (St. Edward's and Christ Church), J.R.W. Gleave (Oppingham and Magdalen), P.N. Brodie (Oundle and Oriel), A.J.R. Pursell (Oundle and Oriel) (Stroke), R. Eboworth Snow (Bradfield nd Magdalen) (Cox)

Cambridge

J.S. Paton Phillip (Pense and Lady Margaret) (bow) T.J. Sullivan (Oundle and Clare), P.L.P. MacDonell (Upper Canada college and Trinity hall), D.J.D. Perkins (Dauntsey's and Jesus), G.E.C. Thomas (Shrewsbury and Jesus), J.G.Gosse (St. Peter's Adelaide and Trinity Hall), M.S.A. Wand (Oundle and Christ's), JH. Neame (Lincoln High School, Port Oregon and Trinity Hall) (Stroke, G.H.C. Fisher (Kingswood and First Trinity) (Cox).

Sunday. March. 24 '46

A piece of paper with the writing of school upon it.

Thursday. March. 21 '46

Attended a Primrose League Ball at the Pavilion under the party of Miss Smith. Very dull evening, till it was announced that Miss Elizabeth Allan and Mr Robert Douglas, the stars of 'Lighten our Darkness', then playing in the theatre, would present the spot prizes.

Miss Allan appeared to better advantage than most; her hair looked neither scrawled nor greasy, neither permed nor died, her face reasonably fresh and her figure natural and unpinched. Mr Douglas looked as he does on stage.

Tuesday. March. 26. '46

A wild boy, with flying legs and a face uncontrollable, slipping about all over the place, extravagant, very Irish, how very tall, quite poised extravagance carefully controlled.

Sunday. March 21 '46

What do I go to church for? to stop people talking I suppose. Or to hear an uneducated and insincere humbug deliver an abortion of bad grammar and worse logic. I hate XX. What wooly wuzzy lives all these people lead. Nothing clear or even straight about them. They don't want anything and they don't go and get it. 'They' say in a town where everyone's well-off, all will be well. Let 'them' come to Bournemouth.

Tuesday. April. 2. '46

'A man must live'.
'While he can live honourably, naturally, justly, certainly; no longer.' From T.L. Peacock's 'Head-long Hall'.

Wednesday April 3. '46

'Theatre Today' ed. M. Slater. 2XX Fore Publ., 28/29 Southampton Street, W.C.2.

Thursday. April 4 '46

'Les traductions sont comme les femmes. Lorsqu'elles sont belles, elles ne sont pas fideles, et lorsqu'elles sont fideles; elles ne sont pas belles.' Anon.

Monday. April 8 '46

Why will <u>things</u> have so strong a hold? Just because I can't get enough clean clothes and have to be cold or dirty, I can do nothing. Why?

And where can I find some power to carry me over such small things?

A young private in a hut of rough diamonds some of them, keeping flag of reading flying six weeks course, new suits Mugs etc.

April 9. '46

'It is the stalls that keep the theatre going today, and the stalls will continue to keep the theatre going, till the theatre is gone.'

Sean O'Casey

April 17 '46

F.R. Lewis (New Bearings')

'Poetry matters because of the kind of poet who is more alive than other people, more alive in his own age. He is, as it were, at the most conscious point of the raree in his time. The potentialities of human experience in any age are realised only by a tiny minority, and the important poet is important because he belongs to this (and has also of course the power of communication). Indeed his capacity for experiencing and his power of communicating are indistinguishable; not merely because we should not know of the one without the other, but because his power of making words express what he feels is indistinguishable from his awareness of what he feels. He is unusually sensitive, unusually aware, more sincere and more himself than the ordinary man can be. He knows what he feels - knows what he is interested in. He is a poet because his interest in his experience is not separable from his interest in words; because that is, of his habit of seeking by the evocative use of words to sharpen his awareness of his ways of feeling, so making these communicable. And poetry can communicate the actual quality of experience with a subtlety and precision unapproachable by any other means.

Saturday. April. 27 '46

'The movements of common life, dream, heroic action, wisdom, passion, experience and innocence, these are the natives of poetry, with everything which can ennoble, delight, comfort, or fire the soul of man, increase the consciousness of the race, or give us new sense-values.'
Edith Sitwell. Aspects of Modern Poetry.

'The functions of the poetical faculty are twofold; by one it creates new materials of knowledge and power and pleasure; by the other it engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and arrange them according to a certain rhythm, and order which may be called the beautiful and the good'.

Shelley.

Sunday. April. 28 '46

Hymn: 34
Prayer: Hymn 27. Lord's
Hymn: 50 XX
Lesson: St John Chap 20 W. II
Anthem: Benedicite.
Re. B of E (Cox)
Solo: Mrs. XX XX
Prayer: of thanksgiving.
Collection of noties.
Hymn. 843.
Sermon:
Hymn 969

Saturday. May 4 '46

Am travelling home in the train to Doncaster for my third leave in the Army. How quickly time passes! Today Bernard Stevens said goodbye, for he will be gone for demob. when I get back. He said he might be seeing us all again if and when he returns to the office for a little visit. I have valued his friendship, or companionship, more than I can say, more than I probably realise, or certainly more than he will ever know. I imagine he will one day be a truly great person. But he has been so helpful to me that I can never forget how, by showing me how like me he was at my age, and how he has progressed to Marxism and Materialism at 30, he has made me older in a few months than I could have hoped to be. Not that his opinions as such have any importance (except that of natural interest) for me, but he has been able, without knowing it, to arouse a real and lasting consciousness and curiosity about everything artistic, and an honesty about myself and others I never thought I could possess.

Sunday. May. 19 '46

'..... on the shape of that unmoving man,
His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I gazed,
As if admonished from another world.'

Friday. May 31 '46

'Only genius sheds light. Faithful talent receives the plain light of nature, holds it, reflects it.'
Elizabeth Bowen on XX

Saturday. June. 1st. 1946

I went today to the Russell Cotes Museum, a highly fanciful Victorian mansion in a magnificent position on the top of the East Cliff. Apparently Sir Merton and Lady Russell-

Cotes were art enthusiasts and left their house to the town with nucleus of a collection. One would have thought it was almost impossible to amass a collection of any size (and this is fairly sizeable) without acquiring any items of real artistic value, but this museum almost manages it. In an unfavourable atmosphere of stygian gloom and encaustic tiles lightened by an occasional stained glass window of that brand of frivolity usually associated with hell-fire, the arrangement of the exhibits add nothing to the interest or brightness of the place, being quite uninspired and hereby never rising above the crude lining up of 'things' in glass cases. Were the exhibits themselves of any real interest it wouldn't matter. Most of them are of the curio class, some merely curiosities, others hallowed by close association, even ownership, with famous persons. What good reason is there for keeping Nelson's autographs except on matters of importance concerning his life or mind? What possible significance is a round and hideous casket of inconveniently huge dimensions which once belonged to Napoleon? We cannot, however much we cherish historical sense, clutter up our public life with meaningless associations. Justification for mementos of this kind are only justifiable in personal recollections when the articles have a real effect on the remembrance of an important moment.

Next door to the Ladies room, I discovered the Living Room, which I never remember seeing as a child. It is a ghastly travesty of a memorial room to a fine actor, maybe even a great man. Most of the exhibits are of the 'Handkerchief used by Irving' class, passing through 'Lewis Waller's writing outfit' to 'Chair used by Irving always in his bedroom'. I sat on it too, when the attendant was out of the room, so an aspiring and a successful seat have touched by proxy at least. There are some old playbills, programmes, letters and actual relics of stage productions which are of some importance apart from sentimental reasons, for the light they throw on production methods and the attitude towards the stage. These they hung in stiff glass cases. Hamlet by Sir Henry Irving, Costume worn by Lewis Waller as Mansieur Beaucaire, and by Charles Wyndham as David Garrick. Only there did any echo of the living stage creep back across the years. Not in the 'conch-shell set in silver presented to Irving by the people of Exeter' nor in the hideous painted walls, with mottoes and plaque and pictures of this unpleasant little room. The real Irving is not here but in the unwritten annals of the theatre, and in the memories of his audiences.

Tuesday. June 4. '46

Coming to the office this morning, I was foolish enough to state my opinion of the opera last night - appalling. Two or three of the older people rose in defence of it, and said that I was young, and didn't understand that the playing of the D'oyly Carte was traditional. I said that that didn't make any difference to my point that I thought it was very bad. Why should being young stop you from giving your opinion? Youth has at least fresh enthusiasm and vitality, possessions of all youth. Age is not necessarily the possession of anything but a vanished youth.

Wednesday. June 5th 1946

Much talk at the office of the move to London. What is it about some people's manners and voices that makes everything so much more mysterious, direful, positively medioecral, oozing with superstitious delight in someone else's discomfiture? Major Lake seems to take a positive pleasure in coming in and saying disturbing things about conditions at Fort's Cray and that we shall have to work on Sunday to get the place right.

Spent the evening with the Burneys - mother and daughter. Delightful people. So safe. Sure of the old values without that startling ignorance of any others displayed by most of the gentry and a point of extreme irritation.

Mrs Denton, whose daughter is in the food office, told us today that a woman asked for the name of her milk retailers. Said 'Oh! I don't know, but I do know the name of the horse that draws the cart.'

Friday. June. 7. 1946

Tomorrow is The Victory Parade in London.

I sit here writing in my room 12. ft. square, table piled high with newscuttings and the books I try to keep alive on. The enemy I must conquer is that frightening sensation of emptiness if I am not taking part in the most important thing going on in whatever community I found myself. It has dogged me at school, where I wanted, if I could not be in any every play, at least I wanted to be at all three performances. And even when the blitz was on, I wanted to be in London the whole time, because the world's thoughts were centred on that place which is one of the reasons, though I try not to make it the main one, why I find completion in the theatre - the sense of occasion enwraps me, and I feel safe omnipotent.

But I know only too well how childish such primitive notions are. The great men of the world are those who make themselves self-sufficient, who create their "occasion" from within. I <u>will</u> be free from this degrading sense of dependence sometimes on the most worthless things.

Saturday. June 8th 1946

Today is Victory Day. With the world tattered and hungry, the British people gather in London to watch a procession of world forces nine miles long march past the King.

The only people who can really do any celebrating are those lucky enough to have some event to cheer. You can't just stand about and cheer for nothing.

Only in the sudden breaking of tension can mass thankfulness brim over into explicit rejoicing. The long strain of the war resulted in VE and VJ day. Today, the strain of peace is just as exhausting as was the war. Everyone realises we have little hope of averting an atomic war.

In the morning I listened to the commentary on the Victory Parade from the saluting base. One or two thrilling but only transitory moments on the arrival of the King and Queen, Churchill, and Monty especially, but then even nature seemed to feel the whole thing was a bit of an anti-climax and it began to rain.

I am writing again in my room. It is nearly 12 o'clock on Victory night. What has Victory-night meant in Bournemouth? A few cheers from a scrappy crowd. Some singing and the Pavilion fountain playing. Either we must go a-mafficking or have no rejoicings at all. Either we throw our whole heart into thankfulness for deliverance, or we go ahead working for a deliverance not yet at hand.

Returned with all my lost feeling banished. There is no central event to be estranged from.

Drunks making bedlam of lower floors. Thank heaven for my quiet room!

Sunday. June. 9 '46

To church morning and evening. Mr Cox both times. Very Pentecostal. Rather too much so for a little boy and girl playing 'I see you' round a pew end. An unpleasant children's address envisaging tuning in our television sets to heaven in the not far distant future. His idea of heaven one large Boy Scout camp apparently.

To the Lazenby's for supper. She very amusing. Related how an old lady said to her at a church tea that Mr. Fletcher their minister had very much increased the population in that part of Bournemouth! For 'population' one hopes for Mr Fletcher's sake, read congregation!

Monday. June 10th. 1946

Spent the whole day till the evening alone in the office. All that huge building still. I wandered from room to room, half expecting it to be a dream, and certainly not being sure whether anything was really there except the room I was in. I wonder do all the little quarrels and hurts and happinesses of the thousands of people who have passed through that building leave any mark in that particular chunk of atmosphere. To 'Rebecca' at the Electric in the evening after a long queue. See M.D.

Wednesday. June. 12. 1946

Already the office is in a turmoil. Great piles of documents are heaped in every corridor, dirty looking men in overalls parade the hitherto respectable passages, and office girls come down stairs carrying their knitting, their library-book, their cardigans, and all those little adjuncts of a favourite desk, pen-trays, ink stand and blotters, all there to equip their new

room aross the way. They will be rubbing shoulders with the Labour Party. They are to work in Highcliffe Hotel annexe where Attlee, Bevin and the whole shoot are staying.

To Mrs. Lincoln-Herbert's in the evening for supper. Miss Jardine also, elderly, interesting. Mrs H. very clear safe sincere. Sane. After supper sat on the veranda looking across the town where I played croquet when I was small, at the apple trees and the pines against a pearly pale luminous sky. Talked for hours. Fascinating. How rarely do we manage to talk freely even with those we know best and how little we know what we really think till we put it into words. Chiefly me I'm afraid the talking, but listeners did it so nicely I felt for almost the first time I was talking because they felt it was important to know what I was thinking. Chiefly about me and acting. I discovered that every interest of mine was connected with the theatre and somehow every hobby which hadn't been had just died. Mrs. H pleased to hear me so united. Talked of Daddy. Great man to them, and me I suppose, but my privilege to think of him as the silly but very loveable old grump with whom I have frequent and stormy arguments.

Friday. June. 14. 1946

Lying in bed exhausted by day's packing. Bedlam all morning. People saying tearful goodbyes in most corners and others packing untidily in the corners that were left, now have all my kit up, with result that all humiliation is I hope removed.

To the Sherwells in the evening. Implored me to read and sing to them. Much against my sense of the ludicrous consented found myself singing 'Sweetheart Sweetheart, will you love me ever.' To three spinsters, whose combined ages would be about ten times mine. Finished off in rip roaring and water works style with 'Abide with me' tremolo stop out. Many tears, choco, tips etc. Invalid on brink of death hauls herself from chair, to window to wave goodbye to gallant boy in khaki no relation to her whatever. Must stop. Can hardly see paper.

Saturday. June. 15th. 1946

We moved to London. Everything breaks up. Loaded two ten-ton trucks with tremendous heavy cases of binders, racks and other military stuff. Climbed into the back to sit cooped up without an inch of space with the six others all of whom were heartily healthy throughout, eating hard-boiled eggs and ham sanwiches with terrific relish just under my suffering nose. Was very sick most of the time. Journey became nightmare. Sharp edge torturing my back. Sick stomach, eyes aching with speed, shouts of card-players. Ended at last. To Rene's to stay. Went round to Mrs. Jolly's at 7-0 where found that M had arrived already, though D was not expected till half-past eleven. L very bad with tonsillitis.

Very gay chatter, partly about the greatness of D which it did not really befit me to enter, though did so very often. Grace Jolly seems very rude unnec. so to parents in public however difficult. D arrived at 11.30 looking tired but fit. Was very pleased to see him and I think he to see me too. Every day I realise how much more I value him more than every other person,

and what privilege it is to have him for a father. Am not sleeping alone at R's tonight. So must stop. Off to work tomorrow even tho' Sunday.

Sunday. June. 16th 1946

A happy day. The sun woke me up for the first time for weeks at 6.30 and I got up quietly. Left for Sidcup finding the journey took only 1 hour. At the office got things straight for Monday. A nice table by window and fire. Should be comfortable. Journey interesting. Across Thames, with many white-colonnaded buildings lining the Embankment fringed with very suitable trees. Spent afternoon at S.S.A. with M and D. Both very good though church and children awful. In evening D magnificent.

Afterwards met people who may be able to fix me up in their house. Very contenting. To bed early for a long sleep ready for tomorrow's day.

Tuesday. June. 18. 1946

An unpleasant day of insecurity. When our exact position here is crystallised it will be a relief from that ache of something out of place which is permanently with me now. To the Academy cinema to see 'Frenzy' in the evening. See M.D. Great evening. On going back to Nelson's found message saying M & D had fixed up at Mrs. King's for me. (Perfect name for a landlady.) Nearer town anyway. Rang up, but was so tired after rather heavy day that could not call up as much breezy enthusiasm as is necessary to most people when having kind offers accepted. I think M and D thought I wasn't too keen. But I am very. Most convenient situation. Near work and play.

Must begin accounts again, I think.

Wednesday. June. 19. 1946.

An unpleasant day all day. Raining dismally. The dirty corrugated iron huts with their cinder surround only become uglier in wetness.

It's amazing how people will sit on their dignity. We had a new lieutenant in today. Sat doing nothing all day while we all attempted to appear busy. Why can't we do and arrange openly what we all agree inadequately and silently to carry on? In other words why can't we all admit we want to keep a cushy job and do our best only when someone important comes in?

Thursday. June 20. 1946.

Raining again. Flaming June! Consternation reigns in the office. A tightening up of discipline is taking place. Caps must be worn. Trousers creased, and belts and things on Pay day. Still not really very bad. Just blanco them quietly at home, bring them to the office and there you are.

Friday. June. 21. '46

On late duty tonight I sat writing a letter, and suddenly looked up and felt the stillness the calm of the long room stretching in front of me. Nothing seemed real save the words I was writing, and the convolutions inside my head which produced them. I felt in a trance, as if all things were possible to me, as if all obstacles were broken down. I had to pinch myself, to walk up and down briefly, to sit on a table, to convince myself of the existence of solid and material things among which I could take my place.

As I sat down again, the door opened, and in came a charlady. She was short, stout, with bunioned-feet precariously enshrined in swollen shoes, her grey hair straggled from under a shapeless straw hat with a faded bunch of violets clinging to the crown. She announced that she had come to do me. I recoiled slightly, but she reassured me by beginning to sweep the floor. Then she began to talk. She started with the war of '14-'18, and the vagaries of a worthless husband.

Then she told me of Cecil, her youngest, who had gone to the militia in 1939 a boy, and come back, a man and a sergeant major (though I doubt whether the two species could inhabit one and the same body.) She stood in the traditional pose, legs apart, leaning on her broom, and suddenly as she began to talk about the blitz, I seemed enwrapped with the very mantle of London and of England, unpoetical, prosaic, but what XX!

Saturday. June 22 '46

After work, to the shops to buy a pair of shoes and get my hair cut. Visited two shops, in the first an oily young man regretted he had no expensive shoes, and taking down a box to show cheap ones, he inadvertently took down some expensive ones being kept back, and went very red. We were already giggly from thinking beforehand how silly it was to go into a shoe shop and say 'I want a pair of shoes' as if one would want anything else. Rene had been remarking on her aunt always saing 'Amen' very quietly at the end of her (Rene's) grace, and Rene was wondering if she couldn't get it in first. This means a splutter of laughter at the beginning of every meal with wild remarks about sausages or something to cover up.

Sunday. June 23rd. 1946

To the City Temple in the morning to hear Leslie Weatherhead. First service of new temporary home - Friend's Meeting House opposite Euston Station. A very plain square hall, no centre, no embellishment of any kind. Doors all numbered, tip-up seats and so on. After a tem-minute tinkle from a lone piano, with tension mounting all the time (for Weatherhead is quite a hero to his gallery girls) the side doors opened and in came the choir, in that definitely just wrong blue habits. As they sang the introit we all stood up, and a figure in black, with a white hood, head bent, eyes on the floor, moved slowly to the rostrum, as if all the sins of the world were upon its frail shoulders. And one imagines how typical it would be of this

opportunist to do so, were it likely to draw him more applause. His sermon was mainly about the beginning of a new chapter in Church's history. Very attractive, delivered in a very soothing voice. Everyone went home feeling how far they had got on towards perfection. In the afternoon to Mrs. King's to inspect my rooms. From Finsbury Park tube station walked up Fonthill Road to Tollington Park. Fonthill Road is partly rather ugly working-class houses opening directly on the street, and quite attractive early Victorian houses with steps up to the door, but all in a filthy condition. I walked through the streets made hideous with paper and rubbish and the screaming of children at their pitiful games. Many housewives were leaning out of their upper windows, as it was Sunday afternoon, watching the world go by, and gossiping with the neighbours across the road.

I thought as I walked along, how peculiar it was to find myself going without a moment's dismay to take up lodgings in a strange house alone, when not so very long ago I would have been terrified to go out to a meal with my whole family to support me. Mr & Mrs. King very affable. Tollington Park has once been very distinguished. Fine big houses, many trees, stables to all the house. Some of them still quite smart though district obviously falling fast. Their house is big, with fine square rooms. Am pleased with it and felt the moment I got in I could be happy there. Talked a moment and left to go back to Nelson's. On my way noticed on the corner through the window a complete Victorian drawing room, piled with furniture and hangings, every chair elaborately cushioned, quilted and antimacasserred, bobbled curtains, terrific overmantel, countless ornaments, objet d'arts, and aspidistras. Mrs. King told me not to be worried if I heard screams coming from the house as one of the daughters (there are four, who have not touched house since father died 25 years ago) is mad, and lets loose sometimes.

Mr. Nelson no better, Doctor has now pronounced it congestion of the lungs. So am glad to be removing a visitor's presence from their midst, which can only be a trouble at this time.

To the City Temple again in the evening. Am more than ever struck with the effectiveness and efficiency of his method. To take a theatrical simile, it's like Laurence Olivier speaking Noel Coward and making it sound like Shakespeare, only afterwards you wake up and find that it wasn't, or to change the simile, like Irving acting Hamlet in his false version, and getting in between you and Shakespeare.

Monday. June. 24. '46

In evening came home to find Mr. Nelson no better. Began to pack to go to King's. Heard that Ada Adams was to ring me up at 8.0 so waited till 8.30, decided to go, then of course she rang. Talked for half an hour, and arranged to go out to Pett's Wood to her sister's for lunch on Saturday, and then on to a show in town. Good thing too. Then went round to Mrs. King's to take up residence - rather late, I'm afraid. Found washing a bit awkward, but can at least boil water whenever I like. Have a sitting-room to myself, chenille curtains, very shiny brown leather suite, very bright red shiny linoleum, carpet pattern on floor. Bed early after creeping down in dark to wash, which they had apparently not expected me to do.

Tuesday. June. 25. '46.

Tomorrow is Mummy's birthday. The financial situation definitely does not allow of any present-giving until later in the year. Can't be helped. Have been reading 'Allan Quarter-Main' by Rider Haggard. How extraordinary to read now what was considered such a well-written and exciting book 60 or so years ago. Long passages of dull description and folklore alternate with quite briskly written bits of the story. And what a peculiar story! Everything is superlative, best matched with best, worst with worst. At the end everyone but those who aren't dead sidle off in pains, after writing their own bit of personal story-telling. All the characters 'Thou hast and seest thou' each other as hard as they can go - generally much fun is had by all. Attempted to have a bath, but discovered the geyser was to be repaired today, Wednesday.

Wednesday. June. 26 '46

I hope Mother's birthday is as happy as she can make it, with all the work she has to do with Lalla. Raining this morning. Walking to the station was struck by pleasure to be found even in the worst parts of London. House old and dirty, but with very decorated plaster work front, ornate, formal and a little window in the side wall, provided with a minute balcony, and a permanent canopy. Quite Italian. And now of flat fronted houses covered in ivy by station at Finsbury Park. When you see them with the great line of noble beeches lining the opposite road against them they could be in a Cathedral close, for all the sordidness of their occupants and conditions. Am again sitting on late duty, and finding afresh the amazing emptiness of my own mind, when I am forced to rely upon it alone for diversion or even occupation. It dashes around in inconsequent circles, chiefly concerned with the certainty of being able to fetch a suit from one house vital for tomorrow's Pay Parade, after having had supper at another house, returning to this house after fetching the suit for a bath. This is the sort of thing about which my mind gets most frequently and most deeply disturbed. And the successful or unsuccessful accomplishment of whatever is the current problem is the token of my state of mind beforehand, which is either 'comfortable' or 'uncomfortable', 'comfortable' only being present when there is nothing to worry about. 'Uncomfortable' when there is, manifesting itself by a sickly feeling of something vaguely being wrong somewhere. What a child I am. Destroy all self-respect.

Thursday. June. 27th. 1946

A bad start. After last night's crammed programme, ending up with transferring hot water from a copper to a bath by means of a small bowl. I got to bed late. Got up at six to look at the time and crawled back to wait for quarter to 7.

Unfortunately I waited too long and got up at 7. Was out of the house 7.30, and all the way to London Bridge in agony to catch my train. Missed it. Blank despair. Reached office at 8.45 and found to glorious surprise officer, Mr. Dunbar, not in. On holiday for the day.

Providence! Shall watch rest of day carefully to guard against bad luck. Am worried by black spot on my shoe. Try mansion. Today is great day of Pay parade with belts etc. Pooh!

After all my hurry and bother we just lined up in the dark passage just like last week, and nothing happened at all.

Friday. June. 28. 1946

Again, I am pulled down by little things. Why should it ruin my day because I couldn't shave because I got up late? I don't know. There is a vague wrong always at the back of my mind when I have anything to do. Tonight I go to a discussion at our Leslie's church.

To Ludgate Circus at 6.0 to wait for Rene. Too early, so wandered up Fleet Street. Stopped to look in awe at the hideous mound of black glass and chromium which is the Daily Express building. Looked in through the huge and shiny plate glass windows; the hall is square its walls covered with oxidised copper reliefs. The floor is Southsea Blue with yellow wavy lines running across it, which one imagines would be illusory to such an extent as to make one raise one's leg to avoid the bump in the floor. Three or four much-thumbed copies of yesterday's Daily Express hung in dog-eared spirals on a sloping stand at one side. Everywhere XX huge plate glass and chromium doors with terrific chromium letters above proclaiming SUNDAY EXPRESS, TYPISTS ROOM, EDITOR and so on. Going on further up, I came to Reuter's on the other side. Very good big pictures of Lawrence Olivier and Vivien Leigh returning from New York and Dinny Pails at Wimbledon.

Went back to Ludgate C. and met Rene under the police-man's little box in the middle. Walked round past a big bomb square, and up a narrow passage to St. Bride's schoolroom. About fifty women in small bleak distempered building; Leslie comes in. Excited rustling. Introduced three friends from America. Why is it that there is almost always something ludicrous about religious people, or rather people who attend religious meetings and so on. Really rather leads one to the conclusion that only those who are not smart, who are frustrated, who have nothing else to do, go to church. Look at all the spinsters in shocking hats. All 'thwart and frust'. One of the American women looked like a rabbit and 'err'ed a lot. The other came from Georgia and was most attractive. Quite a change. Gave us the usual facts and touching stories of conditions abroad, especially in America, while leaving the only important fact of how many people attended all the things they told us they planned.

Went back to supper with Nelson's again, inside against my will. I'm sick of late nights, and the journey by bus and tube is just too long.

Saturday. June 19. 1946

With Ada at 12.30 to lunch with her sister at Petts Wood. Very spacious. Many trees. Roses everywhere. A glorious black currant pudding for lunch. To town after hearing of daughters' divorce. To see film 'Easy to Wed'. Diverting not worth M.D.

Sunday. June. 30th. 1946

It is 12.0. In a few moments it will be the beginning of the month in which I shall be twenty, and the fourth atomic bomb has just fallen. I heard part of the commentary on the Pacific near Bikini Atoll. I wonder as I write here in my little first-floor front in Finsbury Park, N.4. whether perhaps the atom bomb is the flood of the Christian era, whether we will have to destroy most of the world and start again? Who knows? For centuries the end of the world has been predicted. Here we hold the means to bring it about. I am afraid.

Monday. July. 1st. 1946

Had not time yesterday to write of all day's doings. In morning to Archway at 11. First time back for two years. Mr. Brookes the present minister preaching. 'Very tall man with large corporation wears a frock-coat, so looks as if he were expecting happy event. Extremely loud, over-pitched voice with exaggeratedly refined veneer mostly overcome by his natural vulgarity. He is an Alistair Sim in appearance speaking with the voice of Gordon Hanker. His wife is a human Niagara. Words words words! The daughter sat remotely in the choir, without appearing to see the congregation at all. Might be interesting. Walked home through back streets. Very close indeed. The thick material and restricting cut of Army clothes are very trying. Found King relatives to dinner. Escaped pretty soon, and went off to tea with Rene. Poor Rene! Fat and dreadfully ugly, quite without taste or talent, yet basically sweet, modest and loyal. Yet what a waste of what might have been a productive life, for she is a really good draughtswoman. To the City Temple in the Friend's Meeting House opposite Euston Station by tube. A long rattley journey especially on the cruelly long stretch between Turnpike Lane and Manor House. Our Leslie occupied in explaining phrases of Jesus. Preachers take terrific pains to explain Jewish customs but fail to bother about Jacobean customs or language, which is after all the medium through which we know our Bible. Home to listen to the Atom Bomb tests as above. Stop. Today has been very close to muggy, especially in the office hut, where the slightest exertion calls up floods of sweat. Every one of the military took off their jackets. The same obscure impulse that stopped me at school stopped me here, the desire to be different, or not to show my braces, or my narrow shoulders or something, I expect. Shall have a quite lazy cool evening. Have no energy to write more now. Very hot again. 86 in the shade. The moment the sun rays are focused through a glass they burn. We sat in the hut, and sweated through the day. The thick Army clothes belted round the waist got wetter and wetter, and the wetter they got, the more obvious became a horrible damp smell from some impregnation in the material. Not a sweat smell, that would be all right, but a low smell, about which you can do nothing. The day limped past in a turgid haze. No energy for anything. Going home could not but wonder at the mad bad pattern of modern city life. Up at 7.0. Gulp down breakfast, run to tube, ruin digestion. Stand in tube in purgatory with heat and crowds, run up to main line station, flop in empty carriage, dead till reach end of journey. Run to bus, run from bus to office, flop in office, work mechanically all day, and repeat journey in reverse order. What sort of life is this? Living for the evenings and the week-ends? What sort of a livelihood is it that takes away the best parts of every day in order to earn enough to live through next week? And yet thousands do it, all their lives. Even like Winnnie, who has enough money without doing it.

Found Mrs. King on the point of going off to see the doctor when I got back. She returned with the news that her swollen legs (and they are like bolsters) are forcing her to go to bed for a fortnight. Horrible thought this weather. Hoped it did not mean I should have to leave. By good fortune Mr. King can cook. So I can stay. They asked me to. I don't think I'm very much trouble. Have been reading 'A Farewell to Arms' more for something to do than real interest. This weather is too hot for anything real. His book is good journalism, but with that bald simplicity peculiar to war novels of the personal type, which I personally find very irritating. A rather furtive suggestiveness, allied uncomfortably with an ostentatiously frank style. Stating facts exactly as they occur to one, is not writing, nor art, but reporting. Occasionally, if the author is a trained writer, and a trained mind, a report by its very nearness to the event and its special urgency of phrase and pattern can become art, but journalism always hovers on the precipice of extemporisation, becoming banal. Have been dipping into the report of Anglican commission on church-going and evangelism, 'Toward the Conversion of England.' It is quite the best thing produced by a Christian body I have seen. It is attractive, smart and in line with, and knowledge of, modern conditions and ideas. It actually discusses the cinema for example, for 14 pages, and discriminates between bad films, morally and technically, films morally bad and technically good, films morally good and technically bad and films morally good and technically good. It states quite roundly that all religious films belong to the third class, and are complete failures, while some are so bad as to fall into the first class. Have bought 'Peer Gynt' with Old Vic illustrations. Have never yet read it. Hope and expect for a great revival.

Wednesday. July 3rd. 1946

Still very hot, though not quite so bad however. Managed to cover the window which kept my table fairly cool. Glorious news, the Lieutenant is leaving. No longer an R.A.P.C. officer needed. So we shall be very free. Hope this does not mean any cracking in R.A. Index organisation. Imagine not, but sense of security too strongly developed during safe months at Bournemouth. Must see about restraining it. Less security is better than big and trembling shock.

Heat saps all one's thought. I could not bend my will to read seriously without getting very hot, so I am weak enough not to do it. Mr. King is gradually being revealed as an inveterate talker. Granted I was already dividing my attention by listening to the wireless and writing an unimportant letter at the same time. Nevertheless his interminable war experiences (as a cook) consisting entirely of recitals of conversations of a banality to be heard to be believed, coupled with much lip-smacking of the conversational agility of a hippopotamus are hardly the best background for concentration. Shall gradually wear him into silence, I trust. A long and irritating path in front.

Thursday. July 4th. 1946

Cooler today, thank goodness. Went to the pictures for pure sake of going for once. What an agreeable relief to find a pleasant programme and thoroughly restful evening.

Friday. July 5th 1946

To the City in the evening to attend the Friday Fellowship of the City Temple in St. Bride's Schoolroom. When the train reached the Bank station I thought I might as well walk, so set off through the city and walked in an irregular circle round the Bank, Gracechurch Street, Lombard Street, Threadneedle Street, King William IV Street, the Royal Exchange, and finally was set on my right path up Bishopsgate to St. Paul's. Streets and streets of large and imposing buildings, nearly all in neo-classical style I suppose mostly the result of the flush of Victorian and Edwardian prosperity. Only in the narrow alleys and side streets can one find any relics of the London which has stood on the same site for very little less than 2,000 years. About this time in the evening (6.15) the city was fairly deserted only a few black suited men with Anthony Eden hats and despatch cases hurried along to their suburban trains. I couldn't see any bomb damage as I walked along and every street I looked down presented an unbroken facade of cut stone and gleaming glass. As I made my way nearer and nearer to St. Paul's, I could see more and more spaces appearing in the buildings (shops and offices for the most part) lining the streets. Suddenly I walked into a completely open area surrounding the great black mass of St. Paul's, approximately a mile around St. Paul's which was, I suppose packed tightly with towering office buildings, is now a flat piece of waste land covered with bricks and weeds. They only things left standing are the dreadful skeletons of what were once the most beautiful accumulation of churches in the world. I counted as I walked along. Approximately 15 in that square mile, all burnt out, some toppling in ruin. Out of the desolation St. Paul's springs in added magnificence, more of its spacious dignity and calmly lovely lines than ever before in its history. I find more and more that it is becoming increasingly difficult to <u>fee</u>l anything at all when looking at some great beauty, especially when it is old and famous. Only in the theatre can I find that <u>full</u> sense of reality, that almost overcoming awareness, of being there of something vital and life full happening in reality and truth before your eyes. I find myself so often in a state almost beyond the grasp of the material world, nothing is real but my own thoughts.

St. Paul's stood there, with the remoteness of two centuries to withhold it from my brain's comprehension. The road was quite deserted, and I walked on in a hurry, unable to stop and grapple the great building and its beauty to me - the inside me.

Arrived at St. Bride's and settled down to discuss 'What should be the attitude of the strong-minded to those of weak character'. The discussion group was mostly composed of women, who are incapable of conducting an impersonal discussion, and if I even contradicted somebody, and said I didn't agree in what I hope was a fairly humble manner, they looked most offended, not intellectually but socially as if they had been insulted. They are so personal about everything. There was a little too of that 'you're-too-young-to-know-what-you-think' look which is so galling at 19. It's about time people stopped being patronising to

youth, and make them feel they must assert themselves when they get old enough. It is definitely dangerous to laugh at adolescent cocksureness. They should be taken quite seriously, and made to feel not that they know a great deal (of course not) but that the fact that they are learning persons and as such quite as important as someone of more years who has learnt little from those extra years. Adolescents are notoriously unsure of themselves inside, which shows up as a cocksure pose on the outside.

Saturday. July 6th. 1946

After office at 11.30 to catch Swanley bus. Had had dry throat all morning and curious spasms of choking sensation kept on overtaking me. Thought I might be sick in the bus, but felt all right; through once lovely country now petrol-pumped and council-housed, to St. Mary's Road. Usual station road, long straight with no shade from sun or shelter from rain. Uphill too. How is it that every station is uphill? Caught the train at 12.19, due at Stford at 12.28. Had pulled open the door of a carriage, sat down, before I realized it was a 'ladies only' compartment. There were two plump ladies of fairly mature years, with ankle socks, sensible shoes and 'good' clothes; they protested it didn't matter a bit and that they hadn't noticed it either until they got in, and wasn't it an anachronism these days? I agreed that it was, and legitimate communication now being established, we talked about the weather and the country until we had passed through Shoreham and Eynsford and were slowing down for Otford. Certainly the country is very lovely in these parts though not, I think, as wonderfully luxurious of trees and shrubs and flowers as Warwickshire. But the swelling lines of hills and valley, woods massed on the skyline, and streams making formal valleys, leave little to be desired.

As the train ran into Otford I looked for Michael Bishop, but could see no-one. It is only a little station of two platforms. The train was between me and the main platform. I walked over the bridge and saw Mike's pale white face and pale yellow bristly hair just round the door talking rather nervously to the porter who was taking the tickets. He was wearing a grey Harris tweed coat, which fitted him well, and he looked stronger and better than he had done at Cambridge. We were very glad to see one another, but as usual constraint and natural embarrassment reigned until we got into the bus at the village green. Otford is a smallish village, but well spread out. It shows already signs of developing into a hideous suburb. Many of the old parts are beautiful, most of all part of the Archbishop's palace, one of the many residences of the Sec of Canterbury, long since fallen into disuse or ruin. The red brick tower still stands, very reminiscent of the main gateway of St. John's College, Cambridge. We got into the bus, a Green Line one, and when the conductor came round, Mike said, 'Two tuppennies to Twitton.' which set us both giggling and made us easy of conversation for the rest of the day. The bus ran on down the road, through what little of the village there was. Mike pointed out where the post-office was, right at the end of the row of shops furthest from the village, and said they had to call for their letters as there was no delivery. We passed into open country, and I saw we were in a wide valley, very green, with smoothly curving hills heavily wooded on the skyline rising on either side. We were looking down the valley. The effect was one of spaciousness, of calm, of abundant and lasting beauty. But cliches will not tell of the England that still is for those who will see it. After about five minutes, we turned

off the main lane into an even smaller lane, with a signpost marked 'Twitton' 1/4 mile. The people in the bus were I suppose country people but they might have been from anywhere so little individuality does the twentieth-century allow us. Most of them were youngish mothers of families in slightly worn clothes just 3 or 4 years behind the mode. I should think there is nowhere that one so easily vegetates as in a country suburb. We were now chugging between thick privet hedges in a lane scarcely wide enough for anything to pass. As we turned a corner by a large tree, Mike said 'Here's the house, by the two oast-houses.' On the left of the road over a large potato field, were two pointed-roofed oast-houses, very common around here, I believe. Between them and the road was a thick belt of large trees. Mike said the house was surrounded by them. We got off at a little pub called 'The Rising Sun' with cream-washed walls and green seats along its front. We passed a telephone box ('their nearest phone' said Mike) and then I saw the house. It is three houses knocked into one. The middle one is a 200 year-old cottage, the right hand a 50 year old Victorian house, and the left hand a Regency stable, coach house loft, and the coachman's rooms. The whole of the woodwork is painted white, while the bricks present a pleasing contrast, red, mellow rust and play grey. The three parts are on different levels and yet are indubitably a whole house. The whole effect is one of complete harmony with quite satisfying internal contrast. the part facing the road is really the side of the whole house, the cottage door being the side door, leading to the central passage off which the kitchen, the dining-room, the den, and the study open, and which go straight through into the garden. The garden is large, with a wide lawn edged by rose-beds, backing the whole of the house. The house is framed by the chestnuts around, and its straggling length gives a homeliness and cosiness to the garden that I have never felt anywhere else.

The paddock which is on the right hand side (looking from the house) of the lawn is all long grass which they hope to make hay before the autumn. This is divided from the lawn by the Plum Walk, an avenue of plum trees and rambler roses. The kitchen garden is the other side of the lawn, full of all sorts of vegetables and fruit. There are all sorts of fascinating and tumbledown outhouses on this side of the house, one a tumbledown cottage which Mr. Bishop is trying to repair in his own untidy way. As we walked in the side coach-gate, where the wall is tumbled down, because Mike's brother-in-law left the car with the brake off, Mr. Bishop came forward and shook hands. He is a gentleman of medium height, with very white hair, a heavy face, and bright blue eyes. His usual expression is a perpetual smirk. Rather unpleasant suggesting smug self-satisfaction rather than a happy disposition. He is I suppose about 65 or so. He summoned up his greeting that he used so long as a minister, the post he is just on the point of relinquishing.

He seemed to have very little interest in me, not that I minded that myself, but one expects a father to bother about what sort of friends his son keeps. Mr. Bishop gave Mike front and side door keys, and wandered off. We let ourselves in at the side door, and found ourselves in the stone-flagged passage with the garden door open, and the lawn straight ahead. Mike shepherded me into the kitchen where lunch was in hectic preparation. There was a pile of freshly-cleaned shrimps, some runner beans cut, some jelly, and some cherries on the table. Mrs. Bishop, a youngish looking woman of about 55 with very thick glasses, looked up absentmindedly from the oven, shook hands with me, and murmured 'Take you friend out of the smoky atmosphere' and we drifted away. I had a confused impression of numerous

females flitting about both in the large kitchen, and in the various sculleries, wash-houses, and boiler rooms. We went up a narrow flight of white stairs, and I found myself on the top floor of the Regency house, above the coach house, I judged. Mike pointed out the conversion of the upper loft into a bathroom, then turned two corners rapidly and vanished through a narrow doorway into a little passage floored with blue green lino and flanked by airing-cupboards. His room was once a bath-room, and the planked walls and pipes are still as they were, but it is light, and fresh with white paint, and the basin is a great boon. We talked for a little about nothing. I said how delightful I thought it all was, and he said "O yes of course' in that tone he uses when you tell him that he's clever, and that one of his drawings is especially good. When I said what a distinguished looking man his father was (more for something to say than anything else) he said in what I thought at the time a strange tone, 'Oh no, he isn't at all.' which was definitely not his usual tone. At this he got up and said 'Come on. I'll show you the house.' We went along the passage and up two or three steps instead of going down the narrow flight to the kitchen passage, and found ourselves in the main part of the house with many bedrooms opening from it, all large and light. As we passed one door, an old gentleman with a funny bunched-up face, very red, with a round nose and spectacles, came out, and stopped, looking at us in rather a scared way. He was introduced at Mr. Haggadick, someone who had come down to lower his blood-pressure, and who had to drink lots of water, and could only do it by taking it with orange flavouring. He asked my name, said with emphasis what a good Welsh name it was, and how did I pronounce Mackie, the name of a friend of his, and walked off, vanishing quickly round one of the many corners. We walked on, and came to a white staircase with a rich dark cerise carpet down the middle of it. We found ourselves, at the bottom of the staircase, in the hall into which the front door, reached by a drive from the lane almost parallel to the lane, opens. We were just crossing to the drawing room when the front door opened, and in came two strange looking people. The man was tall, grey-haired with a worn and spotted grey double breasted suit on, an open-necked shirt, and very worn cracked brown shoes. He was very thin, and the coat gave him a very ill-proportioned look, enlarging his hips enormously. His face was long, with a resigned withdrawn look of complete acquiescence with anything which might happen. His wife (for so she turned out) was short with a very wrinkled face, pince-nez, a silver-bound walking stick, funny bits of fur all over her dress, many strings of beads, and an auburn wig. Mike had told me of her; he had not exaggerated. He told her I was Scotch, and she immediately began retailing an anecdote of her stay in Scotland. We murmured that we mustn't keep her, and drifted away. Found the drawing-room very pleasant. Black polished wood floor, window-seats and upholstery pink quilted. Creeper all round the window, intertwined with a grape vine which covers the whole of the back of the house. We sat in the Sun Room, a pleasant glass room opening off the library between the drawing room and the Den, until the gong rang for lunch. About fifteen of us sat down for lunch. Mike's sister is a very pretty woman of thirty or so, with an extraordinary son of 5 called: Christopher. When told that he could not have a toy on which he had set his heart he said philosophically 'Oh well, we'll just have to do without it, I suppose.' The two Swedish girls came in glowing from their walk, and talked very earnestly all through lunch about the discomfort of the British soldier's uniform, and what could be done about it. All this from a chance remark of mine about how hot the uniform was. I have noticed before the relentless and humourless way foreigners devote themselves fiercely and with complete seriousness to any question that arises. Mr. Bishop displayed an irritating side of himself at dinner, refusing to call anything by its natural

name, and asking for Sodium Chloride and white wine instead of salt and water. The whole family have a curiously unsociable taint to their nature. They lack completely the faculty of making a guest feel 'wanted' whether in fact the hosts want him or not. This is most unnerving in a time of among most people and superficially at least social pretence for the comfort of all parties. Presumably they keep some interest for their real friends, but for a casual visit The Bishops are definitely not the family to try.

In the afternoon to Sevenoaks, and characterless 'XX' town, of straggly shops, and meandering streets of ugly bungalows. Went to tea at an 'Olde English' cafe, all false beams and mock earthenware china. Buns, scones, jam, cherries and strawberries with cream, and meringues, with cakes to follow. Walked round the town for hours, the only real privacy we could find. At one point went down a little lane to a break in the hedge where Mike pointed out some chimneys and windows which were part of the largest private mansion in England. I forget the name. Tudor, very lovely. As we walked Mike told me the whole tale of his affair with Brian Nicholls. I sympathised as honestly as I could, though I feel he makes his life doubly hard by imagining all sorts of moral issues which in fact are simply not there. His 'depth in vice' is not very deep, and yet he could not believe there were many more 'sinful' than he. He seems better than he has been but he still jumps unnervingly from one contradiction to another, and is still prone to say 'Oh I give it up' in a dangerously hopeless tone. He's right when he said he should have gone in the Army. He wouldn't have had so much time to brood, and (soul-destroying though it can be) it would have strengthened him against himself.

Ran back in bus to Otford, had crash on corner, shaved running board and wing off small saloon, no one hurt. Gathered up goods and chattels, and tootled off with Mike to meet Bartle (Bobby) at Euston, coming to spend a week with Mike. Arrive at Euston five minutes before the 9.45, on the bit of the station I don't know at all. A long deserted platform with no gates and no ticket-collectors. Bobby looked very well, and more lively talk than usual. Mike very nervous lest they should lose their train, an hour and half hence! Went to Coventry Street Corner House. Had a 'Help Yourself' supper, cheap and filling. Mike hurried us off much too quickly and we reached Victoria at 10 to 10, to catch the 10.18 and then found there was another at 10.24! Saw them off, and arranged to do a show with them sometime during the week. Just moving away from the platform, chap with shirt half torn off and face streaming with blood dashed past, hotly pursued by a dishevelled soldier with a black eye. They were followed at a discreet distance by two women of the type usually described as actresses! In their flight, they just reached a police box (C.M.P and civil) just where I was standing. They were hauled in and separated. A crowd immediately collected, and in spite of being told repeatedly by harassed policemen that 'there was nothing to see' they were still milling round just as excitedly watching the duellists arguing under constraint. When I left a few minutes later the length of this account gives evidence what a full day it has been.

Sunday. July 7th. 1946

Very tired. Day proceeded on accustomed lines.

Very hot. Slept in service.

Monday. July 8th 1946

After office at 5 went up to town for a booking expedition. Have arranged with Rene to go to something on my birthday, and of course with Mike this week. Went to Whitehall Theatre, where just managed to get last box for 'Worm's Eye View'. Am concerned lest this should be bad seat, and whether play will compensate for bad seats. Mike touchy like that. Got two good seats easily enough for 'the King Maker' at St. James. Too good a play to be very popular. Had called in at 'Sweetest and Lowest.' Asked what she had for Monday. She said 'Well, it's a long time since I was asked that. I have nothing till the middle of August'.

Have begun 'Peer Gynt'. Find translation a little trying, though less than most. Awkward phrases can surely 9 times out of 10 be overcome. But a story of amazing power, depth and scope.

Thursday. July. 11. 1946.

To Whitehall Theatre in evening to see 'Worm's Eye View' with Mike and Bobby. (See M.D.) Met them outside and immediately told them of the box. Fortunately they were rather thrilled both with the box and the play. It was quite a pleasant little cubicle, with an outer door opening directly on the bar. Mike an I went in once feeling very grown-up, but when we saw a lot of seemingly terribly smart and assured people all drinking with genuine unconcern, we retired precipitately. In the next interval we plucked up courage once more, and had a light ale each, which I didn't like much. It just tasted like flat bitter cider to me. Mike and I very merry all evening. Retailed my list of funny extracts from Army letters over supper and he nearly choked himself.

Friday. July. 12. 1946

Another very hot day. The slow hours drag by. The hut gets hotter and hotter, and energy, first physical and then mental, slips away, until I lie like a sodden newspaper edges curling in the sunshine. How idiotic! I must be hot. To St. Bride's in the evening again to the Friday Fellowship. Sensational announcement by Minister's assistant that our Leslie has met with an accident, and had concussion, a cut head, and was in hospital. Disappointingly enough he was in little danger; nevertheless we prayed for him for some 15 minutes. I hope all those present had more faith in their efficacy than me. Question this week was 'Does immortality matter?' Another ridiculous question. Once you decide on your stand point the question is answered. In other words if you are a Christian it's de facto(?) all important. If not, well it depends what your standpoint, it may or may not be important. Which does not alter the fact that this is not a question for discussion, amply enough proved by the talk which went as usual round and round and round covering an extremely small circle of rather sterile ground. In my group there is one woman of the type I find most maddening. She is completely self-satisfied, affected, complacent. She kept throttling the discussion (such as it was) by telling, at great length, personal anecdotes reflecting terrific credit on herself. I joined battle with her when she said she had a 'little something' which told her she was on the right track. I said

how if her 'l.s' was different from someone else's she said she didn't care. I felt frustrated because it takes quite a deal of courage to be truthful in a present day church. Youth is always regarded as rudeness. I wanted to say 'what damned impertinence to take upon your own very imperfect self an all-sufficient judgement.' But I just watered it down. She then actually had the impudence to say 'When you get older, perhaps you may understand what I mean.' Had she been a woman whom my judgement told me was worth listening I wouldn't have minded, but her - ! I just said, 'I suppose you mean when I have lost my high standards, my demand only for the best, my uncompromising zeal, and when I have found the compromise of adulthood, with the consequent lowering both of hopes and standards, then I can judge. How many people today are better at 40 than they are at 20.' Not that I wanted to boost myself, at least I don't think I did, but I have a real urge not to let a discussion run away on sloppy lines like that. When we came out that peculiar calm had settled on the city that comes when the offices are shut and the workers gone home. Every building is clear of noise and bustle and hurry, and stands very clear very clean against the clear spaceless blue of a July sky. As we walked I munched a meat sandwich Rene had brought in her bag, and belaboured her verbally with libels on her fellowship. I have come to the conclusion I must have a whipping boy to beat, to beat my ideas straight on his unresisting back.

Saturday. July 13. 1946

In the afternoon with Rene and her cousin Norman to the sports organised by her firm, Standard Telephones and Cables Ltd. ,in which she is a draughts-woman. Norman very pleasant scientist, research in I.C.I Intelligent, not patronising, very quick to perceive an atmosphere. Was horrified by the factory. Very large, very streamlined. Everything mass produced and controlled 'for the good of the workers.' The atmosphere was so antagonistic to all individualism that I want away feeling as if I had had a stand up fight the whole afternoon. There was a huge sports field laid out in white lines squares and tracks, with a monstrous growth of loudspeakers in the middle, which announced results in two voices, one very 'refaned' board school tone, the other 'one of the workers.' People were lying about everywhere eating ice-creams and drinking bright green lemonade. Bits of paper and orange skins were all over the place. Teas were served by a vast mechanical 'help-yourself' counter, giving you tasteless cakes and greasy bread. Queues wriggled their unending length everywhere for ice-creams, for drinks, for tea, for the boxing match, for the flower show, for the lavatories, for the baby show, for the bus home, and so on and so on and on. Were they enjoying themselves I don't know. But what sort of a background does a factory give the ordinary person? It must crush his personality unless it's unusually tough. Came home as soon as we could, and washed and went up to Intimate Theatre at Palmers Green to see 'The First Mrs. Fraser.' (See M.D.) Very pleasant little theatre, only way in which you know it was once a hall, is that the seats are in straight rows and there is no carpet.

Sunday. July 14th 1946

Very tired, so slept in till 9.30 when Mr. King called me with a cup of tea. Wandered out for the 'Sunday Times' (Agate) and the 'Observer' (Brown) and drifted back for a long quiet

morning. The wireless had failed, which made just sticking up my book a bit dull. Morning and afternoon drifted away. Have peeped into one or two of Mr. and Mrs. King's books, in large glass fronted bookcase with millions of knick-knacks to be removed before you can open the doors and then all the books are of that mixture most aptly termed 'Villa Variegated', a mixture of classics (in Collins clear-type edition, eleg. cloth, fully illus. 220 pages.), love-stories of 1923-8 vintage (Warwick Deeping great favourite, much talk of "her man" etc.) and hearty adventure stories (Rider Haggard, Captain Marryat and so on). Read a few examples of middle type, and found they ceased to be funny after the first two. Modern slop has a little more zip, at least. To Rene's in the afternoon about 3.15 where I had been promised a birthday party. Rene hauled me upstairs saying she must show me something, and explained when we got to her room, that her mother wanted to have the table set when I came down. I though this a bad augury for the arch atmosphere which would greet me, and my worst fears were realized. There were strawberries and cream, and an iced cake which took a bit of their interest from me, but I was the embarrassed recipient of oceans of hearty good wishes which I found only less agonising than the thanks I was forced to utter for five minutes on end. I wonder if in my independent life later on, whether I will have sufficient sensible friends to overbalance all these idiots I have now? If I say anything like that now, a chorus of 'O but they're so kind.' greets me. What is the use of kindness which makes the receiver less contented than before? It seems pretty selfish sort of kindness to me. They do not bother to find out what you want. They merely say what is to happen, and know you are bound by politeness to accept. I'm sick of people I am ashamed to be seen out with. Rene is ugly, 15 years old then me. Do people think she's my sister, which is bad enough, or my young? lady which would be much worse. All Daddy's friends needn't be mine. We are tied to them all, and have none of our own.

After which petulant outburst, we get rid of impurities and go to bed.

Monday. July 15th. 1946

Today I am 20. And yet what can I say? I have imagined myself writing some deep powerful aphorisms on youth flowering into manhood and so on, and when this diary is published (as my vanity hopes in every other line) that many should read it amazed. That isn't the way to write a diary - definitely for publication. A diary is private, for you and you only, into which you can pour the you that is held in concealed, driven into hiding, in public. I always thought I would feel so old at 20. Everyone does. But it is usual to say that you feel no different. I do. Not suddenly, today, now, of course not. But I have felt the slow growth of the conscious 'me', the me that can look at itself and attempt to steer a definite course towards some definite point. I stand at the crossroads. The 'teens the adolescent formative years behind me, the twenties, the years of promise before me. The 'teens lie largely wasted. The twenties must be great.

Tuesday. July 16th 1946

I am always a little ashamed as I look back at my writing down of what was to me a very real and important moment. It must be because I am a bad writer, I suppose. Maybe to someone else it might look all right, I don't know.

Today Daddy arrives. I meet him tonight at the Westminster Central Hall at 6.0. I never realised I could look forward to anything so much, and a few years ago I would have been annoyed, and certainly bored. How could I ever have thought him boring or old or carping. No wonder he was so furious with me and how right he was, and what a difference he made. The difference is not yet what it should be, but I should have been writing how had he left me alone. From 15 onwards I realized grudgingly at first then with amazement and finally with delight and almost humility just what sort of a man my father was. I remembered the full church at Boscombe, the many presents from people I didn't know, and later on the friendship given me for my name. And the last year how much better do I know myself and him. And how like him I find I am. (Apologies for objectionable style. One of my definitely off days.) I was so pleased to find that he never advertised himself and though infinitely richer than L.W., will never be so well-known, because he will not stoop to publicity levels.

Later.

Again I look back on what I have written, and I go prickly all over. So pompous, and so pedantic, so much so as to get very much in the way of what I wanted to say. Got to Parliament Square just as Big Ben struck six. Ran round to the Central Hall, found it its usual hideous stone and black domed self. Inside a hive of activity. Collars running up and down stairs everywhere. UNO's clever conversion of the hall into something effective all done away with of course. A bookstall, buffet-bar and cloakroom arranged on large if dull scale upstairs. Found Daddy in front hall. Very pleased to see him and he me I think. Very well rounder-faced than I've seen him since Bournemouth days and much less tired looking. He got his coat, and we repaired immediately to Charing X where he put his bag, large and heavy, in the cloakroom. Then we were walking along Duncannon Street (off The Strand next to St. Martin's) when we nearly trod on a parcel lying on the pavement. Daddy picked it up, and peeping in the end (it was round and soft) he found it was undies and <u>pink</u> too. We walked about trying to find a policeman to give it to, but though we walked all round Trafalgar Square and halfway up the Strand, we only saw one or two directing the traffic and many C.M.P.s for whom I had to assume my cap or show my pass. We asked in the end where the nearest police station was, and were told 'Go up the Strand, turn left at the traffic lights' This proved to mean go the whole length of the Strand to where it joins Fleet Street, and turn left. This brought us into Wellington Street, and I was glad because we passed Covent Garden Opera House back entrance, all mustard stucco and glass canopy like a railway station, the old Lyceum, now a dance hall despite protests, and Drury Lane (at a distance). Walked up to the policeman on duty, and told him about the parcel. He was very official and no matter what we said refused to be dislodged from his official formulas. He 'took our names and addresses' and said that 'we would be informed if owner did not claim goods after elapse of 3 months, in which case we would be entitled to claim for goods.' He opened the parcel, with murmurs of foreboding, and Daddy hoped there would be nothing compromising in it. The policeman must have thought clergymen weren't supposed to know what they were, because he put his back between us and the parcel. All the same I could see

a set of undies and a length of very good white silk. Daddy and I passed out, giggling. We drifted back to the Strand, popped into a News Theatre on the south side and sat through an hour and quarters shorts, of which the best were the showing of the Bikini Atom Bomb experiment, and Walt Disney's 'Ferdinand the Bull.' The Bikini film appalling. 'Only a tiny bomb' they said. A flash pushing aside the clouds, a column of smoke rising 30.000 feet and an explosion shaking the sea. This is not 'just another bomb' of bigger velocity. This is something completely untried now, different not in degree but in kind; and horrifying with the horror of the unknown. The unnatural jolt of the Bikini film was offset by one of the very best Disneys, (Ferdinand the Bull) exquisitely ridiculously, and beautifully drawn. After we came out, we went up to the Strand Palace for dinner, but when we looked through the arcade to the door of the restaurant, and saw a head waiter waylaying us and the sign 'Dinner & Dancing' we felt somewhere a little more humble would suit us - Lyons Corner House. As Daddy said it was all the same firm anyway. So we went down to the Strand Corner House and walked straight in and got a table easily, (it was only 8.0). We asked for rolls with the soup, thinking it might be as well since we won't have much hope of getting it after July 21. When we came out, we went to Charing X, where Daddy got his bag, and then we crushed ourselves into one of those objectionable telephone boxes that they have on London stations with doors that fold inwards. It got hotter and hotter and then I had to go out to get more pennies, and then in the end we couldn't ring Winnie and Glen at all, because they were out. We decided the best thing to do was to go home as we had some late nights, probably, ahead of us. I went up to Archway with Daddy, and as we walked up the ramp from the station to the street (for the first time for two years) I reminded him of the first time I'd done it with him six years ago all but 2 months. In September 1940 we were in London for 2 nights, on the way back to school at Uppingham, I for the first time. It was the first time my dreams had been disturbed, and how good it turned out to be for me. We ran into the Hall for a moment, and Daddy greeted Sister Edith with a kiss. Scandals in the ministry! and spoke to a number of old friends(?) and then I left him to go up to Crouch End, and took a 210 bus to Finsbury Park myself. To bed, rather tired.

Wednesday. July 17th 1946

Raining again, and really quite chilly. If this sort of day should suddenly appear in January, we might say 'what a nice day' but now. To the office, with all usual routine. It is very seldom that anything of interest happens. Had arranged to meet Daddy at London Bridge. He did not arrive until 6.0! I was there at twenty to. Usual chump! We went straight to Leicester Square to the New Theatre to book for 'Crime and Punishment' with John Gielgud and Edith Evans. Was thrilled to get two, front dress circle. Then we went to nearest call-box, and rang up Win and got through this time. Arranged to go to 'The Guinea-Pig' at Criterion Picc. Circ. and she told me to get good seats. So I got four quite good 13/6 ds. Very pleased with myself. Went for supper to Strand Corner House again, came out about 8.30. Walked down the mall past St. James Palace and back and then home the same way dividing at Archway.

Later.

Feel that I am not writing an adequate impression of these days with Daddy. It is not so much what we do. That matters in one way little. Just walking round the infinitely varied streets of London is enough for both of us. The real stuff of these evenings is what we say. And when you know someone, or someone knows you, so well, (in fact your Father) that every twist and turn of your minds, which are in any case very alike, anything is interesting. And for the same reason, I cannot rewrite talk.

Thursday July. 18th 1946

This of all days was marred by a jolt to my peace of mind in the office. I had every cause to be happy, going to a great production soon after its first night with Daddy. However I suppose we never have any undiluted pleasures, and at Pay Parade we were told that we had been transferred to the strength of Field Pay Office. I hate a nasty jolt that comes indirectly, and when Jim Dennis tells anything, it's always ten thousand times worse, and no one seems to understand why I should so hate to go abroad, not that I suppose it's really any more likely than at Bournemouth, where I was expecting it every minute, but it seems more so in this atmosphere. Why must the Army make matters so difficult? But why must these things disturb me so? I shall be pretty uncomfortable for the travelling part of it however long it may be, but then I should settle down all right. But then I think of the things from which I shall be entirely cut off, and things I won't be able to get or do. But however uncomfortable or inconvenient these elements in the move abroad may prove to be, nothing can justify the wild unreasoning sick sick fear that I feel whenever a change is predicted in my way of going on. I am paying the penalty for a sheltered childhood now, in being frightened to take a plunge which is never as chilling as it looks beforehand.

However away with all this worry. It hasn't come yet. Worry then. By the evening managed to throw off the dark feeling, and met Daddy at the New. There was a long queue at 6.15 for the performance at 6.30 in the top gallery. When we got inside and saw the height of it we pitied he people up there. The approaches to the auditorium seem to be all stairs and corners. We foolishly took our hats and coats down to the stalls cloakroom and were forced to wait while the stalls streamed out. Our seats were at the extreme left end of the dress circle next to the boxes. This unfortunately shut off a small but very important portion of the stage, the room of Raskolnikoff (John Gielgud.) However by craning my neck as much as possible, I could see most that went on there. One place away from Daddy was sitting the actress who played the mother in 'The Last Chance' (see M.D.) I was able to thank her afterwards for a wonderful performance. The play was very very good (see M.D.) but was not received by a packed house with the attention it merited. In the very middle of a tense repressed laconic scene someone actually had the insensitivity to light their pipe with much flaring and scraping of matches. At the end clapping was fairly good, and I saw little of the 'let's-get-out-quick-or-we-won't-get-a-taxi' attitude until the last curtain. We came out, and after having supper at the Maison Lyons in the Strand rattled up home on the tube. See M.D. for full details. A good day. My happiest for many months.

Friday. July 19th. 1946

Another rather gloomy day at the office. Sensation of yesterday dies away, and one can forget about it easier. Some day when I find time I must come to this book and tell of an office day. It has never been necessary to mention any but the most outstanding incidents. Every day's events are the same, and in any case it is the atmosphere rather then any particular incident that is important. The people who make up that atmosphere change very little, one day I will try to put them down in writing.

Went straight from the office to the Criterion Theatre in Piccadilly Circus, next to the Criterion Restaurant, and nearly on the corner of Lower Regent Street. Daddy and Winnie were already there, having just met, and while we were waiting for Ken they had brought some cakes and two bananas for me because I wouldn't have any supper. We went round into a little side street where I uncomfortably munched some cake and a banana, while Winnie and Daddy nearly died laughing. Then I recovered a bit, and laid the banana skin (O rare XX) on the pavement with a short dedication to whoever should slip on it! We then walked round the corner back to the theatre from Jermyn Street, and found Ken, looking incredibly funny as usual, with his tiny little face under a very round trilby hat, sitting absolutely straight on his head. After we had said 'Hallo' and talked a moment we decided to enter the theatre.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 6

A.L. Mackay

Being the second volume of this diary.

London July '46 to October '46

Friday July 19th 1946 (cont.)

..... enter the theatre. This theatre has a small foyer, with scarcely room to stand still if there is a crowd coming in. There are stairs going down to the level of the theatre, which is I think mostly underground. The walls of this staircase are tiled with while tiles surrounded by a design of brown and green tiles, with many names none of which I know (MacInder Sutton and so on) inset in the pottery. The theatre, (judging from the main staircase mentioned already, which also has an elaborate brass handrail) must be fairly old, but has obviously been redecorated lately, though I imagine in fair imitation of the adornments replaced. The colour is a dusty pink, very agreeable to look at, a design elegant and graceful, though never weak or merely echoing a style long past. A theatre where nothing of shoddy quality should be allowed. The play we saw 'The Guinea Pig' (see M.D.) was certainly of sufficient merit and charm to deserve every bit of background the theatre had to offer. We had a very merry evening. Winnie was as always very amusing. She told us that her title in the post office is being changed from 'Supervision' to 'Overseer Female'. Daddy laughed almost as much as at any of the play. Winnie is rather a chump, but very loveable. I thought this play would be best, as it would be funny for them, with the added advantage of a real problem for Daddy. It was one of the most carefree evenings I have spent for a long time. When we came out we went again to the Strand Corner House, where practically everything was 'off'. A loose-lipped young waiter served us with croquettes (sausage meat in risole shape) and vanilla mousse, (papery blancmange). In the end we took out what was left of the cake and chewed that, to the amazement of the other customers who were attempting to look as if they were getting enough. We said 'Goodbye' to Win and Ken in the tube, until Sunday when they will come to the service.

To bed as quickly as possible, very tired all of a sudden.

Saturday July 20th 1946

Thank the Almightly for half-days! Had arranged to meet Daddy at 12.45 at the Garrick Grill in Charing-Cross X Road. Arrived there at 12.30 waited till 1.15. Barrel-organ playing a confused jumble of modern dance tunes and old time music hall songs. Spent most of my time standing by a shop full of very lurid magazines and books, such as "Sixteen" the frank unexpurgated diary of a young adolescent, telling with complete realism all his problems and worries etc. etc. etc. Made quite <u>interesting</u> looking. At 1.15 decided to give up thinking Daddy could no longer come. In a sense quite glad. Why I don't know and was angry with

myself. I think perhaps because I have not yet had an afternoon in London free. Enjoyed myself I must confess very much. Spent most of the time in the Charing Cross Road bookshops partly in Foyle's where I spent my book-token. Felt very guilty when went into New Gallery Cinema in Regent Street to see Walt Disney's 'Make Mine Music'. Dare not tell Daddy, because I know from experience he would be quite sure I had gone there by design and had not meant to wait for him at all, which wasn't actually the case. Once I genuinely believed I'd missed or he wasn't coming, and I realized I shouldn't be able to contact him anywhere, I thought I might as well be happy as not. In a way I was glad. I feel there must be something wrong with me somewhere, for no matter with whom I spend my time, sooner or later I find them a drag. I suppose it's just arrant selfishness. At least not exactly a drag, perhaps but a hindrance as far as getting to places quickly is concerned or stopping when I want to stop, and for as long as I like. I don't mind them so much as persons to be with me and to talk, but physically they are annoying. Very muddled, but I think I know what I mean. Rather an underhanded thing to do really. I could and should have waited longer. I found myself hoping he wouldn't come. Had a heavy pile of books. Drifted in and out of shops and tubes and Corner Houses and finally went up to the "Help Yourself" to help myself. By dint of much juggling I managed to get my tray on the moving belt, and picked out some scrambled (dried) egg and some chocolate trifle, some coffee and a roll. Carried the tray to a table with one hand, nearly breaking in the attempt. [N.B. Feel very strongly this diary is becoming too factual. If I begin to reproduce in detail exactly what I do every day, I shall never be able to do it for one thing, and for another it is not what a diary is for. I begin to write this diary to record the events, the people, the activities, and the social scene generally, that I see, hear, touch, taste, and smell around me. To record the important things that happen to me, to record therefore only a few parts of each day. To record above all my thoughts my hopes, my fears, that in this book I may find an outlet through which I may find relief from the heaviness of the life I am forced to live.

I want to remember myself as I am today. I must translate myself into words.

After tea struggled back to Archway, feeling a trifle apprehensive about meeting Daddy. Found him in the office with a small spectacled minister, who ultimately turns out to be the secretary of the Music Committee, and Mr. Brooker. Settled everything with Daddy; we both agreed misfortune had overtaken the meeting, and left it at that, both much disappointed that what had promised to be a fertile afternoon together had fallen through. All three of them now began to talk of the pros and cons of women in the ministry. All three in agreement that it wouldn't work, though G. and B. quite hazy as to why not.

Scheme madness in any case, since it would mean enforced celibacy for the woman. You can't have babies in a pulpit, nor cook and wash out the lectern. Soon after this Brooker went to the Hall, and I asked him if I might leave my things in Mr. Brooker's office. I had a huge load of books. As well as my writing compendium, M.D. Vol III, the C of E report, and Peer Gynt, I had my three new books, two vols of the Arden Shakespeare, 'King Lear and 'Othello', and the Tillotson edition of 'The Rape of the Lock' Am hoping to get down to them, but when? Oh, the waste of time. Daddy and I went up into the gallery and sat through a tiresome and muddled programme of past songs and hymns and choruses and solos which had no relation to each other, either in length or content. Rev. Noel Hutchcroft was the

soloist, apparently. Precentor of the Methodist Conference, a fat little man, who fingers a cylinder of paper as he sings with his head on one side. A husky voice which frays to sandy dryness on high notes. Yet by some curious hypnotism (presumably the result of thinking for years you are the best singer out of 600 or so who are, did you but know it, ghastly corncrakes) he makes you think while he's singing and while you're applauding that he was quite good, and of course after anyone's applauded him, human nature being so, they do not like to go back on their applause. The choir sang indifferent well, though quite workmanlike in the Beethoven 'Hallelujah'. Find this just as inspiriting and much fresher then the Handel 'Hallelujah'. This very much more solid and less theatrical, with sensible recognition of fact that high notes do not make for impressive climactic sonority. Got away fairly quickly after the concert, and had to go right down to Strand for Daddy to get some supper. Evening nearly collapsed in frustration, but fortunately got in to Salad Bowl and had quite a pleasant meal, finding up there many things that would have been off downstairs in the a la carte room. The waiter had just served the coffee when Daddy leant forward, and said in the most bubbly sort of voice 'I want to tell you something, a secret!' I'm never prepared for secrets, especially from Daddy, and the usual sick feeling of shock came over me. I said 'Is it a nice secret?' He smiled in a nervous way, and said quietly 'I hope so'. My mind raced through all sorts of alternatives, he had got me out of the Army, or he was going to divorce Mummy (only that would hardly be a nice secret), and then he said, 'I'm going to have my book published.' I did not know what to say. I could only say 'Oh!' He went on, 'Now you won't tell anyone, not even Mummy or Donald or Lalla'. I said 'Why did you tell me then?' And he said. 'Because you were with me when I got the news.' And then, looking at me with very bright blue eyes, 'I'm glad I've got something published before you did.'

And so I knew.

Sunday July 21st 1946

A warm, still day.

Ran to the tube to get my Sunday papers as usual. Got to Hall in good time. Mr Tanner had asked me to go in the choir, and I had said I would, though why I know not. Found Daddy plus gown and bands in the office, talked for a moment or two, and he told me the Bernard Blacks had asked me to dinner. It struck me how apprehensive I would have been of an invitation like that only a few years ago. Will all my fears go with the years as imperceptibly as the smaller ones of childhood? Paraded into church with the choir, and found myself looking down from behind Daddy onto the audience of 150 in a hall that holds 1234 people. Of course that is an unusually good Archway congregation these days, so I waited for what the evening would bring forth. For some reason I can recall no detail of that service, even Daddy seemed a little daunted by the empty spaces, and the singing was leaden and thin. After the service, we soon got away, and catching a no. 41 bus just outside, soon found ourselves on Crouch End Railway bridge. We set off down Coolhurst Road. Daddy told me as we walked that it had been at one time one of the most exclusive roads in London. I could well believe it. The houses were vast, with great mock-Gothic front doors with roses curling everywhere, and big gardens. The Blacks house was on a more ordinary suburban pattern

and did not look very big. The garage obviously converted from a basement, had a runway of only 20 feet at an angle of 45 degrees! Apparently it can be used. Mr. Black was in the garden, an upright firm-featured man of about 65 to 70, I suppose. He greeted me in rather a Yorkshire accent, I thought, and we talked for a few moments about calceolarias, hideous bunchy bright yellow flowers growing all over the front garden. We went into the house, which is not so much big as very well planned so as to give the impression of size. The whole ground floor is panelled, which again enlarges a room. We had been sitting in the lounge for some minutes when Mr. Black said 'Let's go round the garden'.

We went out through the French windows into a tiled conservatory, and from there under a gloomy and ramshackle wooden loggia which they hope to have pulled down. They have only been in this house a short time, and the paint is very badly in need. The garden is delightful, a fair-sized lawn (tennis-court size) and a lot of stone paths and XX XX and pools and so on, with a decently wild wilderness at the end from which rise a stately row of poplars. There was a curious arrangement of pipes to supply the pool, as the underground pipes had apparently gone wrong. When we got back into the house, we went straight in to dinner, and found Mrs. Black ready for us in the dining-room. She is about the same age as her husband, medium height with a clever face which twitches with eagerness and curiosity and lots of white hair which falls about all over the place. We had a delicious dinner, during which we all talked incessantly, and settled down in the drawing-room for coffee. Only two of the four sons (who all got double firsts at Cambridge) are at home at the moment. One, the barrister, a heavy featured man of about 36, talked intelligently of literature mostly. Apparently he puts his faith in Mr. Joyce Cary to rise to the front rank of novelists and to keep the flag of English fiction supremacy flying. Can't say I agree. Reason he gave, I have never read anyone who says so exactly what he wants to say. That's not enough. You must have something important to say before you are great. After about half an hour I went and sat next to Mrs. Black. She has known many interesting people in her time, and could therefore scarcely help being interesting were she not already so by nature. She said, 'I went to see Charles Wyndham, in 'David Garrick' once! I said quite unthinkingly 'Oh yes? I saw his costume in a museum the other day!' Everyone roared. Most confused. Daddy and I got up then to go, for it was now 3.0. Mrs. Black said we must come back for coffee and sandwiches after service and so we left. We went for a short walk up Highgate Hill, past Dick Whittington's Stone, and up to the Roman Catholic church and back. On getting to the office we found Winne and Ken already there and looking a bit lost. We comforted them by our arrival and sat down to wait for tea and the Courtenay-Wellses. They arrived soon after. I remembered them then, a tall bald man with an aware rather mocking look, and a plump rather silly looking woman with indistinct features and a lot of fluffy grey hair. The tea party was gay with the usual jokes between friends, and we quite happily trouped into church. Ada joined us in the crush hall amid greetings, and when we got inside we found Rene and her father and mother beaming from the row in front of us. The hall filled gradually up, until it was fuller then I'd ever seen it. I imagine there were about 7 or 8 hundred people there at 6.30, remarkable indeed for London. The service seemed to run of its own accord and Daddy was electrifying. It's useless my trying either to analyse or precis his service or his sermon. There's too much of my own background in it. Enough that it always seems fresh. After the service it was a continual parade of people to be spoken to, and people who would speak to. Just a maze of tiresomeness with little or no sense of any of the fit things to say among them.

How is it that verbal diarrhoea is a universal complaint? Would that physical d. was the same, might keep some at home.

Got away at last, and said goodbye in the office to Winnie and Ken, and Ada. Winnie said they might have some seats occasionally suddenly, how could they get in touch, so I gave her office address hoping that it would be all right this end. When we got to the Blacks we were told that the barrister son had gone out, but that Kenneth (the doctor) was coming down after being in bed with a cold. After five minutes or so, he came in. Young about 30, with a clever thin face very sharp, but more than sharp, very penetrating too. One of the most charming men it has ever been my good fortune to meet. Perhaps because I am young and uncertain, his equal treatment of me was pleasant, but such an unusually clear mind, and such a precise turn of phrase are not met with every day. I had one of the most helpful discussions I've had since I joined the Army.

I am not very sanguine of his opinion of me. I like to be thought well of (who does not?) but for the right reasons.

Monday July 22nd 1946

Very little to write for today. Went up to the Nelsons and found Daddy there already. After a thoroughly unsatisfying evening, Daddy and I left amid goodbyes. We got on the bus and when we got to Turnpike Lane we got on a No. 41 which we found after about 10 minutes was going the wrong way. Eventually we were rattling along Crouch End with the amber street light making orange splashes on the wet road. At the station Daddy got up and said, 'It's been lovely to see you.' Inadequate words, but I understood. The bus started up, and I watched him walk across the road and vanish into the darkness. I suddenly felt very alone. Tomorrow I must go back to the Army office, and there what might not happen in the next few days? The dirty roads of shapeless houses scuttled past, the lamps showing up here a door there a dustbin as we chugged past.

Tuesday July 23rd 1946

The office still quiet, though ominously. Shall in all probability not be here much longer. Walked into the long low hut as usual about 8.20. Said good morning to everyone. Mrs. Warner, a smart bronze headed young woman, dusting her desk and putting her face in order, said 'Morning' back. I gave my usual greeting in cockney to Mrs Denton, a lady with frizzy grey hair, all bottom and no shoulders 'Morning dear how are you this mornin' All right in yerself? Got your XX this mornin!?! She likes it, I suppose. Miss Mayne, a pleasant 'forty nineish' Devonshire woman, whom I like, smiled. She has only been with us since we came from Bournemouth but I like her a lot. She is coming with me to a play on Saturday when I get the free tickets in Trafalgar Square. Then there is Miss Cantwell, a large-boned, soft tongued lady of some 50 years, with sparse hair which must be grey, but which is always tinted a fiery auburn. She comes on the same train home with me, and has everyone in their place. Mrs Ludlow is fair and fortyist with two sons, a plump figure, fiery blue eyes and a

habit of getting quickly on her high horse, which makes her laugh at herself almost immediately, and say with a toss of her head, 'Oh fiddlededee' which reminds one of Scarlett O'Hara. Then there is Mr. Denton, Mrs. Denton's husband, a small stooping man with thinning hair and a little moustache. Hen-pecked? Quite the reverse. Talks like Horace Kenny, is a Roman Catholic, and has a will of iron. Then Mr. Brown, a tall ex-Guardsman of 65, with a deeply wrinkled face of quite mistakenly stern aspect. The mildest of men. Then Mr. Lawrence, fortyish, well set up, eternal grumbler, terrible type, supposes he has bad luck, mere escapism, degenerate. Miss Brown, flabby shop-girl type, vulgar, touchy, distasteful, young, engaged to Jim Dennis, wears thin blouses that show her slip, and wangles her way through life. Fit companion for Corporal Jim Dennis, an orange headed clerk. So busy wangling for everything, mostly money, that he has no time to enjoy results of wangles. Will be very unhappy. Finally Mr. Bennett. ex R.S.M. complete fool, moral coward pompously futile XX XX civil servant taking a large salary for doing literally nothing. I ought to know, I sit next him. Those are the people that I have to work among, for the time being at least. In the evening to Islington to Sadler's Wells with the Swains. Arrived early, and was waiting in the foyer, and noticed unusual number of evening dresses and suits. About 6.30 a small crowd, about 20 each side of the main doorway, had gathered, rumour had it, to see the Queen. Sure enough, about 6.38 a large car drew up, a gentleman in a top hat got out, took off his hat, opened the door and bowed, a smallish lady in white with gold shoulder embroidery and magnificent pearls got out. A white haired gentleman, whom I learnt later was Lord Lytton kissed her hand, and escorted her in. It was the Queen.

I have never before seen a member of the Royal Family before, and I was immediately struck by the natural majesty of her bearing. It was not just the result of her certainty that everyone must show her respect, it was obvious she had gathered to herself the importance of her position and made herself a fit person to receive that position without any sort of pride. Charming, gracious, elegant, qualities that can neither be learnt nor acquired. The performance over (see M.D.) she left amid cheers of thousands gathered to see her.

Wednesday July 24th 1946

A very ordinary day. In the evening to Open-Air theatre, Finsbury Park. Bandstand converted. All the disadvantages with none of the advantages of the natural scene. A tiresome evening. A short entry because I am worried about office. I fear bomb may burst any time now.

Thursday July 25th 1946

The murder is out. We are all to be posted away, with apparent uncertainty whether to the Pay Office over the road, or to somewhere unknown, which now leaves more fears than ever. At least if I went to Field Pay I should know that only one more thing could happen to me - overseas Now, who knows? I feel so wretched, and yet so ashamed of my wretchedness. What are my poor little troubles of carrying a kit-bag, or giving up some of my pleasures, compared to the horrors of wartime? Nothing and yet I cannot help feeling so miserable. I

say to myself 'You are not used to it, you are of a finer clay than the others, more sensitive, more vulnerable. You cannot help it. We are not all born to be soldiers', as some of sloppy friends say to me. But I feel dirty when thoughts like that come to me. Nevertheless my mind thinks them.

It goes round and round in endless tear-soaked circles 'Why must I bear this, why should I who should have a gay carefree life elegant free suffer this degradation?? But what after all have I done? Passed a few paltry exams in a mediocre way, failed a scholarship, written a few good essays, articles, acted quite well a few petty parts. Not read a quarter of what I ought.

What right have I to think myself anything more than a mollycoddle for disliking dint and disorder. None at all. When will the time come when I can look forward without fear, and wish for every day to come and go in happiness?

Friday July 26th 1946

Last night I returned to my occupation of almost exactly a year ago - 'blanco-ing' and 'brasso-ing'. I did it in comfort, with hot water ready to wash afterwards. This morning I brought the results of my labours back to the office in my case. Am always worried about pay parade in case I make a fool of myself. All passed off well. I was paid nearly first, and got my new-rate back pay. With that and my birthday money, I am well in hand. A quiet evening. Have now finished 'Peer Gynt' which I have forced myself to read slowly. The translation makes up in humour and vitality something I imagine of what it has obviously lost in poetry. Nevertheless for all our lack of touch with nordic mythology, the power of the book is overwhelming. A store of wisdom and wit, experienced and sure.

Saturday July 27 1946

Waited all morning for actual blow to fall. Nerves racked for nothing. Left at 11.30. Arrived at Trafalgar Square Information Bureau at 12.30 to get my free tickets. Stood till 1.0 watching the pigeons hundreds of them being fed by fascinated children. Once a car backfired, and a fog of pigeons shut out the light as they circled round the great black column white-spotted and strawy, that was Nelson's memorial. Then one by one they settled. About 1.30 we got to the desk and found matinees only. The girl told us that the evening ones would be in later. We went back at 2.0 and I got two lovely seats for St. James' 'Marriage a la Mode', which only opened on Wednesday. I sent a wire to Miss Mayne saying 'Meet me 6.30', and went off to see the 50 Years of Films exhibition, now showing in Dorland Hall, Lower Regent Street. Most fascinating. After a strictly factual, very well arranged and documented history, with specimens of early cinematographo and technique, it blossomed out into a complete reconstruction of an old time film show. 'Amusing, moral, suitable for children, not shocking to Ladies'. These delightful posters refused to be ignored and when I got inside, I found a long low room, (such as you might find in an Oxford Street basement, where in fact many of the earliest cinemas were) with pink walls, bracket lamps, aspidistras

each side of a red-curtained screen, and a lady with piled-up blonde hair, a whale-bone collar, and huge lace bishop sleeves, sitting at an upright piano playing 'In a Monastery Garden'. There were bare benches to sit on, and a marvellous commissionaire with a nose like a lighthouse and a suit like linoleum. The only modern note was the projector. An old projector coupled with old films would be intolerable. We saw the funeral of Queen Victoria and Earle Roberts, unveiling a memorial, 'Ladies Ride Bicycles', Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, scenes from the life of Charlie Peace, and many other joys. Upstairs there was a complete layout of a film studio with a scene from 'Great Expectations' in the making. I wandered fairly quickly round, and came out to find Picc. Circ. and Picc. itself lined with people waiting to see the Motor Show. I worked my way through it, and walked briskly down Picc. to Albemarle Street. It was dizzying slightly as I got to No. 7, a beautiful house, spacious, light, exquisitely proportioned. The National Book League has sponsored an Exhibition there in celebration of Bernard Shaw's 90th birthday which fell of course yesterday. Last night I listened to the broadcast celebration, which included parts of Shaw's broadcasts in 1932, '34, '37 and '46 including also one made that afternoon. A soft quick agile voice, with an Irish brogue to give it a bite. Now at 90 only a little slower, as full-toned as ever. His message told parents that children always became what they did not hope to be. He had wanted to be a great actor, speaker, politician, above all a great painter, but never a great writer, simply because writing came so naturally to him that he never noticed his gift. I was very queerly affected by the sound of his voice which I had never heard before. I simply could not connect up that voice with the tall fuzzy figure which had looked so stirringly at me from newspaper and magazine as long as I could remember. Just how had I imagined that voice, I do not know. Imagination always outruns actuality.

The exhibition was very fine, comprising every aspect of his life. As one newspaper report said, 'Though the expert bibliographer may be perturbed by the imcompleteness of some of the exhibits, the fact remains that here are all the important and interesting relics of a man's life, likely to interest a public unconcerned with academic completeness, and the expert will at least see here many exhibits that he will never have the chance of seeing again, at least not for many years.' There were programmes of all the first nights, a book in which Ellen Terry had copied down Lady Cicely's part in 'Captain Brasbound's Conversion' in her own handwriting, the part which I of course played a year last Easter, many pictures and bronzes of him, including the famous Rodin bust lent by the R.A.D.A. A whole frameful of the famous postcards and many letters, signed editions, photographs and so on. His bound novel manuscripts, lately presented to the city of Dublin were on show, and many relics of famous productions lent by actors, actresses, stage managers and producers. Sybil Thorndike's sword as 'St. Joan', the original drawing for the 'St. Joan' costumes, and so on. There was a full set of every edition of his works, in every language, including the one published that day, in Penguins. The whole sum and atmosphere of the exhibition brought home to me, as nothing else, even in this age of recording, wireless and television could, that Shaw, the Shaw who knew Wild, who was unbelievably 30 in 1886, is a living man, a real man a great man. When I came out of the cool of Albermarle Street into the bright sunshine and noise of Piccadilly, it was nearly 4 o'clock. Crowds about 4 deep lined Piccadilly's pavement, and huddled all round the Circus to watch a parade of motors from 1895 and the present day. I had missed most of it, and only saw a lovely silver Lagonda of 1938 build glide by. They had unfortunately not stopped ordinary traffic, so that one was never quite sure whether taxis and

bicycles and milk carts were in the procession or not. Went immediately to have tea, and afterwards, sat in St. James' Square. At 6.30, wandered along past the William III statue into King street. I met Miss Mayne wandering along in the opposite direction. She very pleased to have evening out, I think.

Found our seats quite good dress circle. Much enjoyed ourselves, (see M.D.) Was satisfied to have opportunity of completing visits to this repertory. Miss Mayne a delightful companion, laughs and enjoys herself with unaffected and unalloyed joy! No mention of supper thank goodness. I wish I knew somewhere nice to go. The trouble is I know no one to give me any introductions anywhere. I'm much too nervous to go to any strange restaurant. I know all the people are ordinary, and most of them would turn out to be nouveau-riche, but that doesn't help. I gradually am getting better. Even compared with a year ago, I hardly know myself. To bed; thank heaven for Sundays.

Sunday July 28th 1946

Morning as usual, though when I get a little more settled, I shall not stay at home on Sunday mornings. I must have more time to arrange things, and get things straight. Spent the morning writing letters, listening to the service on the wireless, and attempting to get up to date with news-cuttings.

In the afternoon to Nelson's. Played a few records (the Emperor, and 1st mov. of 8th Beet.) and sang a bit. Quite characterless afternoons. Very boring. Norman the only bright spot. Lively and still able to be objective. Trailed off to the City Temple, again. Leslie Church today. Have not heard him before.

Small man, thin, weedy neck, a longish bald head, but yet with a certain dignity, which would never let you laugh at him. A wise and witty sermon, mainly on a theme of personal repentance. His only unpleasant trait was an objectionable habit of mentioning some fiendishly famous person in such an artificially casual tone that I guess immediately he must be a little snob, and so he was, for he kept on saying he had the privilege to move among certain circles which.... and so on. Not very good. Back home to bed.

Monday July 29th 1946

The blow has at last fallen. I report to the Pay Office on Wednesday. Thank goodness for some certainty. Now at least I know where I am. I shall hardly know myself away from the Index. It seems a pity to leave when I have been there so long, and leave my place to someone who's just come. Am fairly sanguine about getting a good job, since I have always been on Clearing Wing cause if the Index were in a Pay office, it would be in Clearing Wing. Spent the rest of the day trying to go on as usual, and did not succeed, at least not inside. I hate changes and some just don't seem to care.

In the evening home to work a little. 'Poetry Direct and Oblique' by E.M.W. Tillyard is my latest. Can say little of it till I have completed a reading of his argument. Fascinating enough anyway.

Tuesday July 30th 1946

Have heard from Donald that he will be in London tomorrow night, so have decided to book for a show for him. 'Better Late' I think as I know 'S & L' will be booked up. Shall feel strange with him after almost a year of separation. A pity it should come just when we were both growing up and might be more expected to grow together rather than apart. A pity he should come on the night when I will probably be at my worst. My last day at the work I have been doing for 39 weeks yesterday. How quickly the time at Bournemouth went by. Because I was happy. I did little there, I know. Two or three good things came out of it, my M.D. this diary, one or two short stories, an essay, a good deal of valuable reading. It seems much longer since my last leave than the time between that and the leave before that. Moving to London, and then moving to the Pay Office, has made it seem a long time, with various visits to spin it out the more. A dreadful day.

Wednesday July 31st 1946

In the morning reported at the Pay Office. Was of course walked around everywhere. When they heard I had only been in a Pay Office a month and then on Clearing Wing, they put me straight on Clearing Wing. Ration Rolls section are the honoured company. I was as usual overjoyed to find how well everything had turned out.

There are no military on this side of the main office, which means a good deal, as it is at least a hundred yards square. They are all women on our section, two or three of them young and cockney, as empty-headed as they come, finally infuriating. Opposite me is a woman of about 35, Edith Anderson office London type, lives in Croydon. A certain common sense and warm humour about her that makes her a pleasant companion.

Section-leader to whom I sit next, is Jean Graham aged 19 and as Scotch as they come. She is in the A.T.S. On the whole, quite a pleasant lot. I have charge of ration rolls, crediting the whole of Field Regt with ration allowance for leave etc. Not bad at all, and I feel quite important. I am very lucky things always turn out better then I expect, or nearly always. I'd better not say that too often.

Arrived at Garrick theatre too early, so went down to tube to meet Donald. Am not really sure whether he wanted a theatre or not. Whether he imagines I am trying to keep him at arm's length? I don't know. He should have said so. He was leaning in one of his usual too artlessly casual undergraduate pipe poses against the escalator side. In the theatre we chatted amicably, then a man came in front to announce Bea Lillie was ill. I was desperately disappointed, and evening lost its swing after that. I tried to tell Donald a bit of my feelings at supper. Hope he understood a bit, anyway.

Thursday August 1st 1946

It is exactly a year today since I joined the Army. Exactly a year since I sat in that train in my last few hours of civilian life watching a rather blousy woman playing with her baby. Exactly a year since I undressed and put on the thick stiff Army clothes in front of a whole room of miners, engineers, errand-boys, tool makers, abattoir assistants, blood-collectors all staring. Not one of my sort, though some later turned out to be kindness itself. Exactly a year ago since that Thursday night in August, when I walked blindly up and down, back and fore, fighting desperately against complete engulfment. Exactly a year since I came up against real life, and the problem of my own weak self. Exactly a year since I discovered how very important I was to myself, and how it seemed the end of the world because I, the great I, found myself actually in the Army with no support, no guide and no appeal but myself, and I thought my suffering terrible; suffering, for an experience undergone with immeasurably greater suffering and far less concern by millions of my countrymen. Exactly a year since I sweated and toiled digging a trench only to fill it in again, on a sweltering August day.

When I look back on that six weeks which seemed at the time to last forever and still seems twice as long as the other part of my Army service, I am ashamed. The smallness that I was revealed appals me. I am appalled not because I have endured worse since then: quite the reverse, things have become successively better, but I know that had I to do the same again tomorrow, I should be just as broken up. I cannot stand dirt and discomfort when they are easily avoidable, nor to have to suffer them in an atmosphere where it is considered 'sissyish' to adhere to the simplest rules of hygiene.

Such pomposities! I mean them, in one way, but they aren't really me. I know I am a broken reed, and I can't quite figure out why, and so often stop halfway to bewail the difficulty I find in things which trouble others not at all. Why is life seemingly so easy for most people, or do they hide it better?

Sunday August 4th 1946

The Kings were in fearful stew trying to get ready when I left. Went at 8.20 to London Bridge, and just missed 8.58. Hope Mr. C.W. won't be angry. Didn't know tubes would be so few. Eventually arrived. Placated him with excuses. Very warm and clear. Wallington only too ordinary. Very suburban, though fairly open, but in rather too studied a manner. Was welcomed at the house by Mrs. C.W., their son, Peter, a silent farmer and his wife, a bright if gawky woman of about 27. Was, partly through nervousness and partly real high spirits, in my brightest vein. Can never help feeling proud of it, and also can never help feeling immediately afterwards I've been too pert and forward. I think they've really liked me. I'm not going to bother.

Church about a quarter full. They say this the best congregation they ever get. Poof! Was interested to observe Marvis from K.S. sitting in pew near front. I suppose they live here. He stayed to communion, and we could not wait. The afternoon we lazed merrily away in the

garden, playing with their dog, a lovely spaniel, and eating huge slices of a delicious Italian melon, with lots of sugar and a plentiful supply of paper napkins.

In the evening to church again. About 3 there besides us. Olive quite unsolicited, said I had a lovely voice and would I sing after supper? Could not resist glow of pleasure, because however puffed-up I seem to myself sometimes, I am always astounded that people like anything I do.

Monday August 5th 1946

Always a horrid day, August Bank holiday, with everyone else on holiday too. Pottered in the morning, then went to town for lunch, and booked for 'Red Roses for Me' (see M.D.) A good seat. In afternoon dropped in for an hour or two to see absurd film about Brontes (wonder they're not call Bronts) called 'Devotion!' Never have I seen such an absurd travesty of fact. Surely even Hollywood has now reached its limit! Was walking about after tea, trying to lull time, and found I was late for the theatre. Unheard of. Still it was late too!

Wednesday August 9th 1946

To the Sadler's-Wells opera-ballet in Finsbury Park Open-Air Theatre in evening. Had no time to stop for bite of supper, walked and ran, saying 'Why can't I get there' all the time to myself. (For performance see M.D.) It was a bit chilly, even for me, and some of the performers as gods and shepherds, in nothing at all but a small pair of trunks, must have been very cold indeed if they had to stand still for any length of time. On the whole a fairly good crowd. Quite a sprinkling of intellectuals, very few I imagine though of much fibre since, as they obviously did not live in Finsbury, and would not come distances to see this company if they are balletomanes; they must be either homos or lesbians according to their sex, or sex maniacs.

Thursday August 8th 1946

Again to Finsbury Park, (see M.D.) This day it has rained continuously, but in the evening it cleared up in amazing fashion, and was clear and blue to the end of the performance. Again I looked round the place, and thought it a pity they had built such an ugly corrugated iron concert party stage. Why not build a proper theatre on a glorious site like this? Just the place. Still no one with money will do it. We need an experimental theatre right in the north of London. Theatre was even fuller this evening because the brightest stars, Leo Kersley and June Brae, from the real Sadler's Wells ballet, were performing tonight.

Friday August 9th 1946

Went to Lyons' for real meal tonight. When I arrived home about 7.30, saw hat on hall-stand, and coat on peg. Went into dining room and there as large as life, Mr. & Mrs. King - returned early! I am too full for words. Just as I thought I had another whole free week in front of me, and they come back. He is an obvious murderee, and utterly maddening, filthy dirty savage. And she should see a doctor and not cough on like that every night.

Saturday August 10th 1946

I have just returned from my Saturday outing. At 12.0 I left my office. At 1.0 I had lunch, from 1.30 to 2.0 I waited for a free theatre ticket, starting at 5.0. From 2.15 to 4.30 I went to a cinema, from 5.0 till 7.30 I was in a theatre. From 8.0 to 11.0 I was in a cinema, and at twenty to twelve I am back in my Finsbury Park billet.

This afternoon was a clear bright cool August afternoon. It shone even in the sordid Leicester Square; it made the neon lights in the milk bar look cheap tawdry bodiless. The paint sprang up from women's faces. The dust caked on men's suits. In the parks the grass was green, the walks were shady, the quiet side-streets were beautiful in the sunshine. Even the Berkeley hotel had been repainted. The book-shops were open, the exhibitions were free, just to walk would be renewal.

And I went to the theatre once and the cinema twice, all in an afternoon and evening. And to the theatre to see an unlikely muddled play about fraternisation, under-rehearsed and over-applauded. And to the cinemas to see two magazine stories brought to life, one about a woman reunited with her illegitimate son after 20 years separation, the other of the difficulties which prevented a husband and wife from consummating their marriage for a whole week after the wedding. The very fact that I went to more than one shows neither were any good. I hope I am not entirely insensitive - yet. It was of course their subtle sex interest, left to your usually fertile imagination to supply, which provided the interest in the films and (the only redeeming feature) what I know to be a genuine love for the living theatre which prompts to wait in a queue for 2 hours every Saturday.

But I waste time. I came out of the theatre, and immediately began to look for the times of another film. I was directed to the picture house (a French film) a long way off, in Curzon Street, behind Piccadilly. There were huge queues. I walked past. I found myself walking past beautiful houses, tall flat-fronted, with window boxes and creepers, for this was Park Lane and Curzon Street, once the most distinguished residential area in England. I wandered about for half an hour. There was so much to see; many of the houses were empty, falling apart; some were tatty offices with carpets over the typewriters, others clubs or art galleries. I said to myself 'When I am famous - .

And then I knew I would go to the cinema again.

Yes I know, that's funny. It seems such a little sin to someone else. All my sins are mostly just not doing things. My life isn't what I want it to be just now, conditions aren't good, but if they were, would it help? Others have made triumphs out of much worse defeats than mine.

Others have conquered life, why not me? Oh if there is anyone anything to hear me, I do know some of my faults. Is it possible to try again?

Sunday August 11th 1946

Sunday is a very restful day, and even if we have no religious concerns, we should be thankful for one day a week off. I always seem to spend mine the same way - up, shave, get Sunday papers, have breakfast about 9.45, work all morning and afternoon, interspersed with listening to the wireless, off about 3.30 to Rene's, spend time till tea (4.30) reading in garden with her, then off to City Temple after tea, and back to supper, then home to bed. I feel Sunday's plans become formal too soon. You would never think of doing the same thing on the same weekday. Why on Sundays? Still, it's very pleasant. I feel happy at the Nelsons', where I can feel a swan among geese very pleasantly. I must enjoy it, because I always feel desolate and lonely when I leave, and think of Monday morning. And this Monday I go on guard, too. I hate to think what embarrassments may be in store - meals, shaving, sleeping and so on. Still it's only for one night. If it were anything like that nightmare at Warwick, I might go mad by tomorrow, but it won't be. Come to think of it, that must be almost exactly a year ago, nearly to the day. Warwick a year ago!

The preacher was American. He threw it at you in defiant pailfuls. Trying, and hall very empty. 'Our Leslie' expected back on September 8th. What excitement!

Pleasant evening, though still remembering the guard.

Monday August 12th 1946

A blowy, cool day, with grey clouds puffing slowly across what you can see of a blue sky. Hope to get a bit of sleep tonight. Am already so tired. Ordinary day, very ordinary. Reported at 4.45, and was overjoyed to find we only did an hour and a half up to 12.0, and then from 6-8.30, and a regular dormitory to sleep in, and a wireless! Luxury! Drew no. 2 watch, from 7.15-9.45, very good. Even if I did early morning watch, would only be getting up half an hour earlier than usual!

Later.

Have been able to get a lot of letters written, and my diary filled up, and two or three chapters of 'The Elizabethan World Picture' read.

Thursday August 15 1946

This is the anniversary of VJ day, final peace all over the earth. A year ago I was watching 'Anthony & Cleopatra' at the Stratford Memorial Theatre. Today I have heard I am to be sent to India. To India from everything that is dear to me, and from all this world of England. Still so new and wonderful, that I am just beginning to know.

Please let me not feel.

Friday August 16th 1946

Today I woke to find a bright sun glinting through the green of the trees scraping my window. Although yesterday was not a very good day, and this morning saw all my kit (army) packed up in course canvas stacked against the dressing table. I felt little of that shock of depression disillusion which usually greets me on a morning of discomfort like this, and by the time I was all corseted with green webbing and laden with kit-bag and pack, that sensation of unreality, so rarely forthcoming in moments of pain, so often in moments of unusual and important sensibility, and I went off to the station quite happily. I reached Sidcup without serious mishap, my apprehension being mainly for the laughs of any of my section, rather than for the blistering of my hands and the stiffness of my arms and back. Arriving, I set out my kit in the stores for inspection. Fortunately it was a fairly vague inspection, so we did not have to unpack everything. My concern about missing exchange was removed, by a wholesale replacement even of garments that did not need changing. I had one article though 'Drawers, cellular, pair, one, soldier, private, for the use of'. One pair had no legs at all but were just a sort of tattered skirt with pieces of various lengths handing round in an interesting if wayward pattern. More cellular than drawers.

After getting my warrant and ration-cards from the Orderly Room about 11.30, now relieved of all reminders that I was a soldier except my uniform, which I have learnt now to ignore, I went straight up to town for lunch. Popped in the Walt Disney show for a laugh, and back to Finsbury Park about 2.30. Was just sorting out books etc, even though I had heard I was on waiting list with Norman Sevells rather than the actual draft (which probably means we won't go at all), when Mr. King looked in and said he would put everything in a large box, and send it by Carter Paterson. So that was that taken care of. I doodled until it was time to go to Nelson's. That morning I had bought Gertrude Lawrence's 'A Star Danced!' It is a gay, charming inconsequential but never loose book, not one the puritan would approve, but nevertheless a book with principles. Also 'Vic-Wells: Ballet Progress' by P.W. Manchester, a book of much elegance and information, but with an aggravating air of over-absorption in his subject and a habit of leaving the reader in the air, as when he says of Michael Somes '...and now we may never know what heights he might have reached. it was all over', and yet never explains. Puzzling in view of the fact that in this year's season at Covent Garden, Michael Somes was one of the biggest successes. Queer. Spent the evening with Nelsons. Seemed to find pound notes everywhere in envelopes, in the folds of my napkin, everywhere. Very kind, but very empty. To bed.

Saturday August 16th 1946

Am writing in the train for Edinburgh. The journey is an uncomfortable 8 1/4 hours. I am sitting in a corner of a compartment, crammed with humans, most of them in questionable state of cleanliness. The most unpleasant, for whom try as I will, I can never find pity or even tolerance, are a woman, her children and her mother. The children, especially the elder girl, are dirty with the greasy dirtiness of the face long untouched by water. Water is cheap.

I am sitting with my back to the engine, and as I see the country receding from me, the fields yellow with corn just now, the wooded patches, the heaths, the stony embankments, the railway yards, the factory chimneys, the dirty smoky towns, with their mean houses and empty empty lives, I wonder at myself for being loath to leave such a place.

We are slowing down now through a longish town, the train trickling along, almost on tiptoe as it were, in case it might wake the town up. In the distance, is a tall slim tower and spire, caged in with a crisscross of scaffolding. I don't know where this is at all.

Later.

We have just crossed the Border from England into Scotland. I had been wondering how near or far we were from it, and whether in fact I might have passed it without noticing. Even if it had not been for the sign, I think I should have known. The country strangely enough at this point changes completely in character; rugged red cliffs falling in perilously steep cragginess down to the curved grassland, with short firm turf, and a little white fisherman's cottage perched halfway down the cliff.

All my life I have resented Scotland. And whenever it was mentioned, become aggressively English. Now watching the sun go down in the clear wide Scottish sky, I can feel that were I to get back to those Highlands from which we come, there perhaps I might find my answer.

Later.

So I am in Edinburgh. Walking back to the tall house in a graceful crescent of stone houses in Belgrave Place. I saw Edinburgh in the moon and starlight as a city of wide streets, cobbled roads, bracket gas street lamps, tall terraces, and many churches. We stay at the house of one Mrs. Scott, a grey-haired soft-voiced Highlander, with firm ideas about punctuality and shaving water. I shall not have time to know the others of the house, I expect. To bed in a big high room with soft bed and a wardrobe smelling of lavender.

Sunday August 18th 1946

With this change of scene and of company, Footscray seems far away. I had almost forgot that when we went back to Doncaster, I must tell them of India. However 'sufficient' and so on. The city this morning was quiet and very still.

It was the ten-centenary of the death of Andrew Henderson who was instrumental in drawing up the Convenant in 1638, and Greyfriars Church where it was signed still stands as it stood then. The service has a pleasing touch of ceremonial procession about it, and the unusual dignity which can be called forth from the Scots on special occasions was well to the fore. An impressive and beautifully clear address on the history of the Covenant and the man who made it, ending with the famous last words 'All will end well'. To the castle in the afternoon to catch a glimpse of the terrific sweep afforded by a visit to the battlements. In the evening

to the church of St. Giles, where two anaemic curate-like creatures, and a boring D.D. performed pitifully. A plain and lovely church.

Monday August 19th 1946

It was raining when we got up and rained all day. My only complete weekday in Edinburgh!

In the morning we made our way damply to the shops spending part of the time in one of the many bookshops by St. George's Bridge. I found to my surprise that they had many copies of three of the Penguin Birthday Edition of Shaw - The Doctor's Dilemma, 3 unpleasant plays, and the Black Girl in search of her God - glad to get them, quite sold out in London. Rain did not abate at all, and we groped our soaked way back to Mackie's for lunch. A pleasant enough meal of braised turbot with oyster sauce, and lemon cream to follow. We were able to buy some of the famous oatcakes, and further along the street (Princess St.) some of Melsome's coffee. After lunch, we managed to stop one of the wilful Edinburgh buses in its wild flight, and rattled away over the cobblestones, leaning over at dangerous angles round corners, and eventually arriving at Holyrood House. The pointers took us first to the banqueting-hall and picture gallery, a long panelled room, with lovely proportions, and the dignity that only years can give. The walls are almost covered with many unique portraits, few of any artistic value, but all of importance, as most of them are the only known representation of their subject. The best portraits of James I and Charles I are here, and many of the early Kings of Scotland.

Went up to the apartments of Lord Darnley and Mary, Queen of Scots. Tried to enjoy them, but they were full of people in wet macs listening to guides, families having a day out, and shop girls giggling at Mary's bed. Impossible to feel the impact of the scene of David Rizzio's murder even in the authentic rooms.

Monday August 23 1946

A week of <u>days</u> has sped by. Tonight we had been in Leeds for the evening to see Vivien Leigh in Thornton Wilder's 'Skin of our Teeth'. On coming back to the house at about a quarter to twelve, I found a note from David stuck in the door. I was feeling very happy and exceptionally well pleased: the little scribbled note said 'Report back at once to Footscray'. The rest of the time has passed like a trance with all three of them attempting to comfort me but they seem able to come near me no more. I write as if I had suffered some great bereavement. Four <u>days</u> gone, that is a loss. I do not wish for greater hardships. I cannot stand it seems a small part of what others call their daily life. O let me sleep.

Tuesday August 27th 1946

A nightmare day. Decided to go only when wire came here. Spent all day expecting it. Arrived about 4.0 just as I was going out with Tom. Am officially out from 2.0 till 12.0.

Will go tomorrow 8.30. Went out for the last time with Tom. Walked back to his hostel with him. A terrible day. Am desperately tired of it all.

Wednesday August 28 1946

Got up at 6.30 to find world dark and rain pouring. Restless misery till the taxi arrived. Could not say 'goodbye'. As the train jerked on spasms of miserable pain swept over me, and grew intenser in the tube and train and bus that took me to Sidcup. I arrived at the door of the orderly room, sick with horror. The orderly said 'You aren't going on the draft. You're a potential officer. Go and see the Sergeant-Major.'

I do not know yet how I got out of the door. A passing civilian must have thought I was quite mad, capering and dancing and finally hareing up the stairs like a mad thing. I hardly heard the last two sentences. All I knew 'You aren't going on the draft' and it was sung shouted screamed muttered and burbled inside me for the rest of the day. The R.S.M just said that I would see the Colonel within the next few days, and sent me back to my billet. I ran immediately to the phone-box, and trunk-called home. They were apprehensive when they heard my voice, imagining me off to India tonight, but wildly delighted at good news. Spent the rest of the day in haze of delight, going in afternoon to 'A Night in Paradise' and 'The Way We Live' (see M.D.) Kings quite pleased to see me.

Thursday August 29 '46

Quite uneventful. Went for a medical in the morning, received form for moral character (Sackett of course). Spent leisurely and pleasant day working quietly in my most congenial section. In the evening was to have gone to Nelson's, but had to put them off for an interview with Col. which never materialised. Just had time to get to Ballet in Finsbury Park (see M.D.) Lovely evening. Rather cold.

Friday August 30th 1946

A fine clear day at 6.30. Whether this will last, I doubt. Hopes for tomorrow night anyway. As have sent off my letter to Sackett I do not expect anything out of the ordinary at the office for a few days. A breathing space at any rate, which is what I mainly need.

In the evening to Nelson's. Had not been there very long before was involved in extremely interesting personal dissection of myself with Rene's acute cousin, Norman. We started on my fear about O.C.T.V., and he told me many details about it, which had the merit of pulling many of my fears at least into the open air, where they were shrivelled from lack of strength. The details would be so circumlocutory and so tiresome that I could not record them here. They concerned mainly my abject physical cowardice and my dislike of a complete inability to think in the terrifyingly fast routine of an active modern Army. He said that were I to get a commission, I would grow up so much the quicker. I do not think I want to grow up in that

way - an unnatural way. Surely it is best to grow up through contemplation and normal human relationships, than through the shock of being thrown willy-nilly among a completely arbitrary selection of people with whom one has to live in unnatural segregation and seclusion, under conditions of unnecessary discomfort, performing actions and undertaking training to fit us for a task which even now every able politician in the world is trying to abolish for ever.

Saturday August 31st 1946

A fine day so far. In the bus this morning met Norman Senells, who was my companion waiting man in the draft. Looks rather down in the mouth. I don't wonder. I hate to think what this morning would have been like had I still been on the draft. Saturday morning always stupid in the office. Everybody is only waiting to get off for the weekend at 11.45. Dashed straight up to town to get a good place in my free tickets queue. How lovely to be doing the normal things. Unfortunately no decent tickets today. Went off to have lunch and decided to go to 'Les Visiteurs du Soir' at the Curzon (see M.D.). This proved longer than I thought and it was time for tea when I came out. I managed tea by 6.0, and went straight up to Finsbury Park. The streets were very wet, and there were large and threatening clouds everywhere. I said to myself, 'After the wettest August for many years, during which I have been to an open-air eight times without it raining once, surely it is not going to fail me on the most important night of all?' Nor did it. I sat in company with about 150 other hardy balletomanes. What I expected I suppose I don't really know; perhaps countless curtains, billions of bouquets, with Ninette de Velois making a speech at the end in a voice choked with emotion. Actually there was the usual curtain and finis. A wiser, but quite happy private me.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased.
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow
Rase out the written to troubles of the brain
Or with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse a stuft bosom from that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

From Macbeth. Written in complete darkness one night on guard.

Friday September 6 1946

Today I return more regularly to this record. I have been in a state of suspended animation since Saturday.

This morning I have been for my interview with the Colonel. Although my opinion of him is not complimentary I was feeling quite nervous while I was waiting. I suppose one is scared not of the man who is a petty autocrat, but of the Colonel who can do very unpleasant things to one. He had a large rather empty room with a huge desk set artfully across one corner on a

large rug, with a sort of roundabout of footmarks where generations of privates have toiled in salutation. He gave me a brisk talk, whose trend was mostly on the lines of those who couldn't use their hands were really no use, and even though I could 'obviously pass exams with ease', he gave the impression that that was of little importance. He had the objectionable habit of posing questions to which he already had long-perfected answers. If you couldn't answer exactly as he had predicted, you were wrong. The result was that I am to stay three months in the Pay Office on the wings 'to learn the work.' Probably he wants another clerk on the wings. Anyway I have three months of fair certainty in London. Blessed release! I may be able to go to the Old Vic now.

Saturday September 7 1946

A very wet today. On guard from 12.30 to 8.30 Sunday morning. Pretty depressing really, specially watching in the dark.

That quotation two pages back written tonight.

Am listening to 'The Liars' by Jones. So very old-fashioned. So peacetime I suppose but that they had little to get worried about but tiny marital indiscretions.

Spent two unpleasant hours in the little hut. Do not relish the long dark winters with nothing to do. Must remember to lay in a stock of candles! Reminders of Warwick inside the hut tempered by warmth wireless and easy duties.

Evening passes pleasantly all things considered. Asleep soon?

Sunday September 8th 1946

Up betimes (good that) and gathered up ready to leave. Seemed so funny leaving bed straight for a train, and at the end of one's journey putting pyjamas away, shaving and having breakfast as if one had slept in that house. Mrs. King had given me strong hint to have dinner out because meat with the Smithfield strike on, was difficult.

Thought I might as well. Unfortunately it <u>poured</u> in very heavy torrents. It was fortunate that the unreality produced by a guard lingered, and the whole morning with nothing to do but tell time, for it was too late for church, would have depressed me to suicidal depths at any other time. As I stood under the streamlined canopy of the Empire Cinema, I wondered how this square would have looked 50 or 60 years ago. Leicester Square, with Daly's and the Empire where Adeline Genee was dancing, Gatti's, the hansom bells chuckling, the road shining, the square deserted, for it was Sunday. I passed the rest of the morning as best I could after it stopped raining taking a walk in St. James' Park, then to Nelson's as usual. As usual means of course arriving at about 3.45, and being absorbed into a home, not much of a one - but still a home, reading magazines and talking or not talking round the fire or out in the garden if it's

warm, having tea and then going off to church and returning for supper, and off to Finsbury Park to bed.

Monday September 9th 1946

Today I was moved to the Posting Wings, the part of the Pay Office which deals with the soldier's actual account. I couldn't care less really what work I do, as long as it isn't too monstrous, if I can stay here.

Actually this is probably the most interesting if the hardest worked part of the Pay Office. It's certainly not monstrous and the day flashes past in a welter of attempts to get things straight.

The people on this particular section are quite congenial. Mrs. Roude, who is to show me the work, being a tall woman, with a very raucous cockney voice, very much greased black hair firmly brushed into curls and waves of a stiff formality most unbecoming. There is a mysterious A.T.S. corporal, Gladys, who has very thick wide lips, and freckles so numerous and so dark they should more be described as flecks of pigment. Miss Andrews has masses of what was once glorious gold hair, and has now faded to a dullish buff. It is still arranged in the style of 1917 or so. She is about 45, I suppose. Must have been a beauty in her day. Now goes in for motorcycling. Sweetheart killed in Great War?

No, these are all right. Those whom I fear are fortunately at the extreme end of the room. In the ordinary way I see nothing of them, but you never know where you may move next. I am waiting for the night when I am on guard with any of them. I feel they are of the same type (though to do him justice infinitely cruder) as Tunley etc. in my first year at K.S. I suppose I can scarcely be made more unhappy than I was then. I see the same look in their eye, and the glances that they pass. (This only on about 3 occasions outside, and it might be complete imagination). I hope so. That sort of thing can make me more unhappy than anything. What is it about me that they find so funny?

What annoys me most of all is the difference it makes to me inside. Lately I have been pleased to discover that I can break away from the fear that made me so embarrassed. Many situations, (almost all I think now) have been completely rationalised and emptied of that almost supernatural drama which paralyses every function in to childish impotence.

I have a much stronger self-respect than I had, and can now by a right start preclude teasing to some extent with some people. Still a crowd of these morons, because I have to be in the same office with them, can have the power to make me dread their appearance, though I am not even sure they have noticed me. I suppose it's an honour to be so out of the usual as always to be laughed at! I will conquer it. Why cannot the me of this diary, and my plays and essays and drama diary and the me of the stage and the me who walks through a London crowd alone, be always with me?

I <u>will</u> be one 'me'.

Tuesday September 17 '46

Again to jump a week. I seem to have been very tired lately. Last night I was on guard again, after having been on Saturday, which is why I got no time at the weekend nor any inclination to write very much this week. Tonight I intend to have an early night and a long leisurely sleep, the day passed in a dream. I become more and more alive to the extraordinary fact that I only seem to come alive through my pen. Material things recede from my touch, everything seems half size beneath a glass dome on whose surface my fingers run and slip with scarcely a sense of touching anything. Spent a quiet night at home. Hope the Kings really do not mind my staying. Sometimes I'm sure, sometimes not. Time will probably tell.

Wednesday September 18 1946

Feel refreshed though still sleepy. On the way to the office caught a glimpse of those others getting in at London Bridge and New Cross, thank goodness in another part of the train. I seem to know them so well although I have never spoken to them, and as I wrote before they may never have noticed me - the rather heavy simple one, who cannot help a little smirk as he walks past, the one who will listen in a rather cringing way to you when you are along with him, and then go and report you with suitably ludicrous additions to it, and the clever popular one, apparently attractive and pleasant, but who usually (though in fairness one must admit not always) turns out to be that worst of all sorts of opportunists, the sort who makes unending capital out of other's discomfiture, and who is never moved to tolerance of any sort. There are the people I fear, for if they once brand you as a fool, as they will if you are outside, and keep yourself purposely outside, their especial clique, it is very very difficult to remove that brand. I know. It happened to me at school, so much so that the masters also were under a tacit assumption that I was a lightheaded effeminate superficial and pretentious ass, and it was only during my last year or so when I was allowed to do something, that I got rid of it. Of course there is the difference that in school it mattered, whereas here it matters nothing whether I see or hear of them or this place again. Nevertheless I should prefer to be as happy here as possible, since I have to be here.

The continual London scene is gradually bringing me a new sense of sight values. There is never a lack of interest in the people and buildings about one in any large city, and especially in London, where you can never be sure that almost any building may not be the important envelope of some significant occasion. In a city which has stood continuously for over 2000 years, it is not likely that it will be found flat or dull. My journey morning and evening takes me past Tower Bridge, innumerable churches, none of whose names I know, mostly bombed, many XX, a few hideous, all interesting, a vinegar works, a baking-powder factory, a gasworks (here one shuts the windows, as an old fairy tale map has it), a brewery, a worn-out looking building with 'Chocolat Menier' on it, a stationery plant, large stores by the hundred, but the largest part of this scene is row upon row of very small houses, one room up, one down, with a small portion tacked on the back as kitchen and spare bedroom. The whole view is indescribably depressing. It is always a shock to see people walking about between the rows of houses, for it seems more like a city of the dead.

Saturday September 21st 1946

To Trafalgar Square straight way. Nearly always meet some interesting people in the queue. This time a ticket for 'Ballets Negres'. Good for me. Had a list of 'Things to be done' in the best tradition, and proceeded to do them by having lunch, and running straight up to the little hairdressers at Alderman's Hill. Dashed out afterwards to get two more volumes for this diary and various other small wants. Managed to catch a bus by a second or so, and popped into the National Portrait Gallery. First struck by the number of useless portraits of people of no accomplishment and little character painted by unknown and inferior artists, and then by absence of chairs. Many important portraits there however, specially magnificent collection of Tudor and Stuart paintings. But spent longest time looking at Branwell Bronte's strange bad disturbing picture of his three sisters. All the many reproductions had not in the least prepared me for the lucid colours, and simplicity of the brush. Disturbing.

Sunday September 22nd 1946

When I got round to Rene's as usual, I found Norman's mother there, and the atmosphere a trifle strained. When Rene and I set out for the City Temple, I found out the reason. Of course I have known for ages that Rene wasn't happy at home, but I didn't know, or wasn't sure that she knew it herself, though I hoped Norman's staying there would make a difference. It certainly has. She has talked it over with him, and others, and now me, and is seriously thinking of leaving home. What a blessing if she does! Of course it's the old story. Mrs. Nelson is a narrowminded ass living on her emotions without a particle of real insight or selflessness. Mr. Nelson gets in the most violent tempers, which I can well imagine. It's all quite quite commonplace, though of course not to Rene. How or why she can habitate for a moment I don't know. It's now or never. Even as it is she dares nothing without asking the opinion of masses of people first. Her parents are well able to take care of themselves, and if they weren't what would they have done had Rene been a boy? It's all so stupid and wearing.

Dear Leslie very affecting about his affliction. Posturing popingay!

Have never been able quite to fathom why my reading has never proved the impetus to criticism that playgoing has. I don't think the reason can be found in my greater interest in the theatre, for it is not that much the more intense of the two. Indeed any intelligent appreciation of the theatre can only be based on a deep understanding of a very wide reading compass. Perhaps it is partly because one can read a book more easily and therefore more often, than go to the theatre. Perhaps a play, being directly addressed in living emotion at you, moves you to direct comment, where a book might make its effect much more indiretly, perhaps almost subconsciously. Whatever the reason, I think I will try in this diary a brief evaluation of the books I read. If it works out well, I may start a separate book, like my M.D.

Thursday September 26 1946

Am somehow very very tired today. Feel filthy dirty after a guard as usual. Must have a bath tonight. And to bed.

Friday September 27 1946

I may as well begin on my resolve straightaway. The last week or so I have been reading three of the attractive edition of H.G. Wells' best known work published by Penguins in celebration of his 80th birthday. Ironically it has turned out to be a funeral edition. The three were 'Kipps', 'Love and Mr. Lewisham' and 'The War of the Worlds'. The first two are in the social section of Wells' work, the section written by Wells the draper's assistant, Wells, the clerk, Wells the young man of suburbia and the more 'respectable' provinces. I found 'Love and Mr. Lewisham' a particularly telling study of a very young man attempting to a great career, falling in love with a girl of much shallower habit than himself as he thinks. I have never read a novel of this situation before in which the man stays with his wife to find his fulfilment in working for her and their child. Many lesser novelists have allowed their hero to sidetrack the main issue of self-revelation, to marry some intellectual and pursue an artistically useless life in the outer circles of Bloomsbury. Not so Wells, and in this book one finds the justification of the small man so often derided. His existence is an integral feature of society. He is every man. This idea is carried out with less humanity but more cogency in 'Kipps'. Here Wells' sociological convictions are more thinly disguised, though never do his characters lose their especial flavour. He can never be less than fascinating, and I defy anyone to put down a Wells novel before he has finished it.

'The War of the Worlds' is of course the famous story of the attack by the Martians on this earth. Here of course Wells is absolutely unapproachable. Such conviction radiates through his narrative, and such sincere lucidity in his descriptions, that never does this book lose its grip, nor waver from its task of showing how pitifully superficial our grandiloquent scientifics are.

Saturday September 28 1946

Some little time ago read 'Othello' for the first time. As this record is for my eyes only, I can say what I think, without doing any false modesty rubbish about a poor creature like me following in such illustrious footsteps. I found a play of Shakespeare for myself for the first time. A play quite free of the exam, shadow of boredom, or the general air of 'I-am-reading-a-great-play-wash-your-hands-and-cover-your-head' sort of feeling which non-theatrical professors have managed to broadcast far and wide. I read it just as I might have read Noel coward or Sean O'Casey or Dryden or J.M. Barrie or Bernard Shaw, in other words with terrific excitement and unflagging interest. This play strikes me as quite miles ahead if only in 'good theatre' than anything since it. A wonderful drama of jealously sweeping through the whole length of the play to its horrible climax in the last few lines. Then I started on 'Measure for Measure' which I am still reading. After all S is hardly, especially in his heavier

moments suitable reading for snatched moments in train or bus. In his own day, perhaps - yes, but now, when syntactical and idiomatic difficulties step in the way - no. 'Measure for Measure' is not a favourite of mine, an extremely unpleasant play, and all the more unpleasant for being unnecessarily so. The morals are so muddled, the complexities of characters so bewilderingly inconsistent even within its own limits. The characters are not only unpleasant, but of so utterly unattractive a nature that we lose sympathy from the beginning. The old skill is there, but it scarcely makes up for the cynical disillusion and the inhumanity of the conception. I shall try 'Romeo and Juliet' next, though not for the first time, it will be first time for a number of years.

I went as usual to Trafalgar Square, but found nothing of any real interest that I had not seen already. Finally went to the Haymarket T.R. and got a standing ticket for Lady Windermere's Fan! Can only hope I shall have some feet left at the end.

Later.

Gallery very low. Had to squat most of the time. Still fairly good. I was the only one standing at the back of the pit. It is quite the loveliest theatre in London besides being the oldest (see M.D.)

Sunday September 29 1946

An entirely uneventful day, except that there was in the evening the long-awaited opening on the B.B.C. of the Third Programme. Was not able to listen till about 8.30 of course. Then heard the concert, mainly of Purcell's Cantata 'Come all ye Sons of Art'. A fine and inspiring work, flexible rich and a perfect choice for the occasion. When I reached home about 10.50, I turned on the wireless (perfect reception, thank goodness) and just caught Max Beerbohm's talk. I have never heard him before. What a master!

The perfection of his style and delivery will not be easily bettered. London was recreated for those of us who remember none of its story.

Monday September 30 1946

Today a year ago I was standing on Chester platform on the way to Droitwich from Anglesey. I always remember what a ghastly hopelessness assailed me when I found a distance of two miles to carry my kitbag, and what a pleasant surprise when a van came for me, and I found a hot meal waiting for me, and a hotel bedroom albeit with Army bunks. It was a happy month altogether the first in which I realised that the Army could be quite free and easy. I discovered the joys of a weekend - I explored Worcester, and renewed memories of the Cathedral, which we visited on Sep. 1. 1939 when we were in Malvern, from which we had to make a midnight dash home.

It had an immense effect on me then, and its extraordinary loveliness had not diminished, but had rather grown in the years in which I had grown up. I went to Birmingham on Sundays to see XX, and the week before I went away, tho' I did not then know it, I went to see the Merrys where Daddy and Mummy were staying. Yes, it was quite happy, the only fly in the ointment being that I didn't like the people in my room much.

Now I am here, and life is good, but less certain. I suppose things don't really get worse, but it does seem that if ever I lean back and say 'Well, everything's lovely at the moment' something immediately goes wrong. I am for ever with nerves stretched to anticipate and thus deaden the effect of unpleasant happenings. I can't go on like this for ever.

Tuesday Oct. 1st 1946

Today I am meeting Mike. Every time I write in this record I am appalled by the omissions I have made. Most of it has been talk of my various discontents, no matter for a diary or rather a diary must have a solid picture of one's daily life, one's hopes, one's ambitions, one's faith. Books (sic) were a case in point. My friends are another. Michael Bishop was at school with me at Kingswood. I sat behind him on my very first day. He is about five months younger them me, being born in December. Our friendship began with bitter animosity, continued between 15 and 16 with gushes of schoolgirl and religious fervour, flared up in an almighty row at 16, all was silence for a time. Gradually speaking fairly coolly was reintroduced, and without saying anything, we were drawn together again by the time we left K.S. We have not a comfortable friendship, we are too alike and alive to each other's problems and worries for that, but it is a tie that I think can never be broken properly again.

We met at Charing X under the clock, and chattered incessantly for a time. Then we decided to walk down the mall as neither of us felt like having anything to eat. we talked and talked and talked, saying all the things we had left out of our letters because they were too complicated or too trivial, noticing everything about us and knowing exactly what we both thought about it. The talk ranged over everything and everybody, books, films, the school, Cambridge, gossip, politics, athletics, gardens, families, art everything in short that two young gentlemen of twenty would talk about, except young ladies. Before I knew where I was, we had gone up the Mall to B'kingham Palce, sat in St. James' Park for a time, walked back to Piccadilly up the Duke of York's steps along Regent Street, Oxford Street down Park Lane and right round to Kensington, and then back

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Wednesday October 1st

Still feel that my description of meeting with Mike inadequate. He poured into my ears the whole misery of his present affaire at Cambridge. He seems hopelessly inhibited about sex, so much so that he cannot even enjoy his affaire, which is after all

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Full two hours with talk of ideas alone? I know of no other. A complete revelation of the absurdities incongruities and inconsistencies of our moral structure, especially of marriage. What an amazing fecundity of illustration, and an absolutely confounding lucidity which leaves one no room whatever to pretend he means something different.

Friday Oct 3rd 1946

Met Mike with Dave Hindley under Charing X clock tonight. So we three are together again. The last time we walked together was on the last full day of term, July 1945, at Uppingham. Only a little over a year ago, and yet it seems another world. I feel as if I have never been free, as if I have always been a pawn in the hands of some cruel wilful player pushed about as if I were a thing of no feeling or senses. The first time I saw them was on my first day at Kingswood when I sat behind one of them and next to the other. Dave looked as like a rather unattractive pin as usual, though as always the very soul of friendship, placid, always the same, loyal as a rock (if a rock can be loyal!) We wandered and talked, and found ourselves as usual at Kensington where we had gone to see the Albert Hall and Memorial. I renewed acquaintance with the latter, which must of course be preserved for all time as quite the most hideous monument ever to leave the hand of man. We walked onto the V & A where we found the plastic model of the 'Britain Can Make It' poster most prominent and attractive. Oddly enough there was no queue and we suddenly thought 'Why not go in?' So we did. It was about 8.30. I can only record what has stuck in my mind particularly. If not, I should be here all night. First the arrangement struck me as the most successful item of the business. Most of it, and certainly the general plan, had a brilliance, an elegance, and finish, such as no thing of this kind has approached. Plaster board and daylight lighting were used really skilfully, and genuinely gave the impression of real sunshine in many unexpected corners. A few individual items were poor, and showed little originality, the shop windows, especially of jewellery, were no more than Bond Street. But as I said the general layout was most impressive and charming. Possibly the most interesting section is that made up of rooms to show off the latest furniture and fittings. Each room has an imaginary family history by it. There were miners' kitchens, middle-class kitchens, rich kitchens, and the corresponding other rooms, palatial bathrooms to my mind beyond the reach of any income, striking sitting-room cum bedroom for a woman journalist and a study for a sports commentator who has on his shelves as his largest book a volume on croquet.

Apart from these and the toys and sports section, and an all too small book section, the exhibits are only interesting. The one thing that one can say about everything in this exhibition is that it does look designed, and not just thrown together. In the hall of the future is a lovely smooth bicycle with every possible fitting, a space ship, an electric streamlined sewing machine, and a gorgeous plastic suit case with a rubber handle. But perhaps the most

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 7

A.L. Mackay

Being the third volume of this diary.
London October '46
Belfast. to October '47

Friday October 3rd 1946

But perhaps the most intriguing section of the exhibition is the huge Hall of Fashion, set out with about 150 models with a central revolving dais set with evening creations of a most exquisite workmanship and taste.

The whole exhibition was most remarkable for a slick smooth elegance, combined at the same time with solid worth and good craftsmanship which are the best known qualities of British work men.

Rather too often in the past I imagine elegance has so often been lacking, and for that reason American mass production, superficial in design and quality, yet of a sleekness likely to catch the eye especially of the young, has all too often snatched the crowd market. If the crowd will take anything provided it becomes fashionable surely it is better that they take up things worth taking, and America is still much too concerned with the dollars.

I saw them off at Victoria after arranging to meet Dave for a show on Tuesday very footsore.

Saturday October 5th 1946

Have forfeited my Saturday night to go out with Ada and two girls from her office. Can expect to be fairly bored, since it is impossible to have a night out with any pleasure without a great expenditure in London today. The streets are so crowded, all the cinemas theatres and restaurants so full, and the people of so unpleasant a type, that (to be superior for once) it quite prevents a person of any sensibility from having any really gay enjoyment. Every walk in London tends to become a social study, ending in a dissection and deploring of the decadence of society. Capitalism may be wrong, but to put it crudely, no one will ever persuade me that 'nice people' are useless. Manners may not make man, but they have a terrific influence all the same. Sloppy manners indicate sloppy morals, which is easily proved by the social decay today. It needs a very strong-minded person to be rude without hurting himself. We fought our way to a cinema, the Tivoli, in the Strand, somewhere opposite the Strand Palace and collapsed into very side seats where all the faces were about a mile long and an inch wide, to see a gangster film 'The Big Sleep' with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. Very smooth, very slick. Quite enjoyable I must admit. (M.D.)

Repaired afterwards to a Lyons Corner House, where after the usual lunch, we sat talking for an unconscionable time trying to make it look as if we hadn't finished by drinking innumerable glasses of tepid water.

In the afternoon before I met them at five, had been lucky enough to bag a ticket for 'But for the Grace of God.' (see M.D.) so was in fairly benign mood. Yvonne and Leanne 2 girls in Ada's office, pleasant enough, though nothing startling. Quite bright to talk to. Perhaps not a wasted day, after all.

Sunday October 6th 1946

I booked today for Petts Wood to go with Ada to see her sister, Rosie again. Shall not find it unpleasant, no doubt, but it will be so much wasted time, I am afraid.

Spent most of the day reading and listening to the wireless. In the evening went to the little church held in a shop which Rosie has been instrumental in starting. Very passably arranged, but none of the atmosphere of novel experiment one should find and would find, in say a new theatre in a suburb hitherto without a theatre; granted liberties can not be taken with the Chrisian service as with drama, which is almost without limitations of any sort, but one could at least expect to find an embryo church not merely longing to be exactly like its longer established neighbours, and indulging in a riot of classes, and bazaars, and jumble sales. I thought it might be quite interesting to visit a church all fresh and new, but found it just as usual, apart from a

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…work. Naturally I do not expect them to be silent in their own living room, but at least I can expect them to leave me out of their persistent yattering. This afternoon to Croydon with Ada. For the first time to the place where we were living when Donald was born, though of course I've never been here before. I found it much more provincial than any other of London suburbs I've been in. Big prosperous shops, well-dressed women, large houses, and a general sense of some corporate community. I was attacked in the same queer way when I tried to imagine Daddy and Mummy walking about here before I was born. There is nothing left of the house but three steps up to the front door, and a foot or two of blue and red tiled pathway. We walked on through fairly wide prosperous looking street until we came to what had once been the high point Croydon, - Birdhurst Rise, and Birdhurst Avenue. In these two roads lived the Rogers and the Kendalls. They were not in any sense of the word real gentlefolk. I know because I've met some of them, but at least there was about them a solid air of worth and respectability. I wonder is it really worth sacrificing the society of inequality with many bad patches and a few bright places for the mediocre society we seem now to be committed to, with no one suffering, either from want or from the pangs of originality.

The two streets were broad, tree-lined, curving and swooping as a real road should. The houses were big family places, obviously masses of bedrooms, huge basement kitchens, stuffy attics and no drainage, ventilation of convenience to speak of. Nevertheless they had

the one thing that a pre-fab hasn't got - stability. Mental of course. This gives an extraordinary stability to one's thought that a jerry-built villa duplicated fifty times over in the same street does not.

Soon after this we turned past the church where Ada's mother and father were married and are buried, (how funny always to live in the same place, I wonder what it's like) and entered Selsdon Road, to which I have addressed thank you letters to Ada ever since I can remember. I was shocked to see her house, which is very small, has no bathroom!, nearly perpendicular stairs going up practically from the front door, no proper dining-room and with one of the three bedrooms opening out of another one. Add to this that it is spotlessly clean, hideously furnished, and covered in framed photographs of the more objectionable portrait style and we have a fair picture. Ada much embarrassed me by saying with elan, that this (a double brass with knobs on) was the very bed that she and Margaret had slept on until the day she died (Margaret her half-sister.) I inquired what Ma. had and on being told influenza which turned to pneumonia said 'Weren't you afraid of catching it?' Ada much annoyed. Stayed there about 20 mins. Arranged to go back for supper. Started to rain, we dashed up to Babs. Babs delightful always cheerful, always and obviously genuinely glad to see you. Douglas, although looking like a drip, is very pleasant in a quiet way. Their daughter Pam the only child of her parents and the only niece of her uncle and aunt Ken and Winnie is, I suppose, a spoilt child. yet she is quiet. I think it manifests itself more in a sort of implacable conviction that she is more important than almost anybody than in the usual noisy exhibitionism. She is fifteen about 5.10, very plump, huge fat face and little nobby nose, gives hideous impression of very small girl with elephantiasis.

Spent a bright afternoon and part of evening. Somehow seemed to go with a swing. In fact all this day did. Sometimes I feel full of the most witty and wonderful conversation and it just comes. I never put a foot wrong and I am a great success. Thank God for a diary which can not accuse you of boasting. I want to gauge what success I make, and where my many awful gaffes and mistakes come. I could have a real charm if I looked into things dispassionately enough. How glorious to make everyone feel what a pleasant person one is, not for personal acclamation or flattery but genuinely and honestly I love above almost anything trying to create happiness. I wish I could write well enough not to sound fulsome.

To see 'Granny' Rogers at 8.0, a lady of the old school, daughters presented at court etc. carriage and pair and huge house.

She is a great admirer of Daddy's, and for that reason alone was very glad to see me.

Saturday December 28 1946

I had some idea of attempting to bring this diary up-to-date, but I have found it hopeless. Soon after the beginning of October the first lesson of a correspondence course I am taking in English Literature arrived from Wolsey Hall, Oxford. Ever since then I have been unable to take breath at all. Naturally weekends away do not help and letters and recording and work of all kinds have piled up. Fortunately there has been little of interest that has happened to

me since October, except one thing. Mother came to stay with the Nelsons for 10 days in November. I took her bag up to her bedroom for her. She turned round from unpacking it, and said bluntly 'I've got some bad news for you. Donald's married Joan Bettison - in September at Oxford - and she's expecting a baby in January.' My first reaction was the usual sick feeling I always get from a piece of family news - I've been badly trained - and the next the silly fool! Of course it has not affected me very deeply. My only care is for Daddy, since he is the only one of the family who is capable of really deep feeling. Lalla will be really hurt, and it will affect her very much, and it is humiliating that my own mother should be capable of such trivial emotions. As for Donald I have little sympathy for him. His ruthless selfishness and complete lack of comprehension of the feelings of others surely needs some punishment. Perhaps this will make him a real person, at last

Christmas is over once again. I wonder if everyone has to lose their gaiety as they get older. Even if people have no more to think about as the years go on, they seem to get so preoccupied and so certain that they have more to do than anyone else, and that it is very very important. Everyone seems to go through Christmas now as a necessary performance instead of a spontaneous excitement. I am so lonely for someone who is young and alive. How disgusting and self-pitying! I suppose it is impossible to find the right words at a moment's notice to clothe a sentiment of such a dangerously mixed nature anyway! This modern age is hardly planned for the writing of diaries.

I have just heard that all leave for forces in U.K. is extended to Jan. 1st. Why, I wonder. I never like the sound of any concession from the Army, it usually means balancing unpleasantness.

This house faces West. I can watch the sunset.

Sunday December 29 1946

Was able to stay in in the morning and have an illegal bath and hair wash. Safely finished by the time they arrived back. Have been presented with a bottel of 'Silvikrin' for my thin hair. Suspicious. A small bottle costs 10/6, so I wonder.

Saw Ada off in the afternoon. Caught the 2.30. Drew in to the station packed tight full standing in the luggage vans, with every door locked. Started to draw out of the station with doors locked. Never saw such flagrant mis-management. Ada wrote that she stood to Peterboro' where they waited 3 1/2 hours ultimately arriving at 10.55, having set out at 2.30! Sorry for her.

In the evening to church. Mr. Kelsey to tea in the afternoon. Completely bald about 40, some disease I suppose. Very plump, portly, simple, fairly pleasant, a thought puffed up with ill digested music. Trains tenor under Bairstow(!) until latter's death a few weeks ago, and thinks Bairstow is last word. Some hope - at York. Mr. Kelsey did not want to walk the mile or so to church, being a bus-loving man, but had to and puffed and toddled and panted and tottered by me, miles behind Donald and Daddy.

Service well attended, but poor thought to repeat in every detail without the only thing that matters, the Chrismas services - the Christmas spirit. Am getting a cold!

Monday December 30 '46

Last day today. Am streaming with cold. Never mind. Fob 'em off, say I'm all right, and keep 'em quiet. Up properly, and out shopping with Mummy. Nothing much doing. Mummy not well, methinks. Headache no doubt. So would I if I worried myself sick from morning till night about nothing. Quiet afternoon - what there was of it. Off at 4.50 to Gaumont Cinema to see 'Great Expectations' (M.D. Cpv). Big queues - Daddy would not wait long enough, and only just after he'd gone we got 3 seats all together. David was with us of course. Very enjoyable. Returned to house where Daddy started protestations of good faith. Quite unnecessary and most suspicious.

I suppose he can never force himself to stand in a queue even if it causes us to feel unhappy and awkward. Still that's not very charitable, and go to bed.

Tuesday December 31 1946

An unpleasant day. Was able to catch the 3.37 so was not forced to break up the morning. Arrived at the station at 3.20, and found the whole station thick with services four or five deep. Secured a good place with Daddy, Mummy, and D. Had just started to talk, when a voice came over the loud-speaker, saying 'This train will be 25 mins late.' D. went off then the others waited. Train arrived about 4.15. Just managed to get in let alone sit down. Stood to Peterboro' then was able to get a place in the corridor and sit on my bag. Arrived after a quick journey (or so it seemed) at King's X about an hour and quarter late (8.0). Always go to pictures on first night back and just got in to the last house at the Academy, 'Day of Wrath' (M.D. lauv). Walking down Oxford Street saw a large Salvation Army band, the women austere in black bonnets with red bows and red-edged XX, and the bandsmen with their music clipped onto their instruments, and the usual flood of people following them. Then I remembered it was New Year's Eve. Stepped over threshold into K's at 1 minute to 12 precisely. Found supper left for me. Knelt down to feel myself with the others at 12.0 and entered 1947 quite unpropitiously. Bed.

Wednesday Jan 1 1947

A grey day. To Nelsons but things are dull.

Friday January 3rd 1947

The Dramatic Society that has been hesitantly formed at the office is supposed be starting work tonight. Their first play is '10 Little Niggers'! Not a very promising start. A moderate detective story turned into a very creaky play. Would be more than relieved to get out of it altogether, for I feel many of the people in it will probably be of the gang which I detest. Still Beck (the officer running it) has asked me to play 'Lombard' (the leading man) or General Mackenzie, one of the 10 murderers. I refused 'Lombard' point blank. I certainly haven't time for it even if I wanted it, which I doubt if I do, but still it gives one a pleasant feeling of superiority to be able to think nastily 'Well you're only playing it because I wouldn't! Went along at 20 to six after a meal, found room empty, though the others had promised to be there at 5.15. Waited for nearly twenty minutes, no one came, finally I went in disgust for I haven't the time to waste. Met them all coming in at the gate, exact gang I thought. Clique isn't the word. That's that.

Saturday January 4 1946

Today I met Mike Bishop and spent the day in town or rather the afternoon with him. He had written from Otford to ask me to meet him to help him choose a pair of pants at Gamages. His second and rather more important reason that he wanted to see me, and third that he had some book tokens to spend. Met at Charing X, had usual lunch in a Lyons Cafeteria helping ourselves from a moving belt of food. Found as usual talk was difficult, just wanted to sit and convince ourselves that we were there. We walked from Trafalgar Square, though the crowds madly hurrying here and there, official girls hair piled high, in cheap smart camel-hair coats with padded shoulders, and pleated back, City men in black stiff-brimmed trilbys and neatly waisted overcoats, with yellow pigskin gloves and rolled umbrellas, mothers from smart suburbs up for a matinee with a teenage daughter, men in dusty working clothes, beshawled and bonneted violet sellers, the seedy hot chestnut man, the family from Yorkshire causing chaos by stopping in the middle of the pavement to discuss which place they 'moost doo' next. We sent up a cloud of pigeons as we crossed the square; they circled round in a curling spiral, gradually peeling off one by one to alight again on the ground. How can so many fly so fast together, without hitting each other? We spent about an hour and a half in Foyle's. By this time we were talking incessantly, laughing most of the time at stupid little things. We had to walk to Gamage's, though we knew it would be shut. Sure enough it was. The great street, St. Paul's in the distance, St. Sepulchre's, and the City Temple nearby, and the only Tudor London left, the half-timbered houses in Holborn, all was almost deserted. After a quick tea, we caught a tube to Oxford Circus, and after negotiating the frightening maze of tunnels that is Oxford Circus tube station, made our way to Marble Arch. There I took Mike to see 'Great Expectations' at the Pavilion. It could stand very well a second viewing. The cinema is pleasant, large, and airy. It is square, with a wide aisle down the middle, and round the walls there is no gallery (in this it is usually unique) and the decorations, though displaying that usually garishly angular crudity associated with cinemas are yet fairly passable. Saw Mike off at Victoria and found myself wondering how much it is changed in the 30 years since the leave trains from France arrived there.

Thursday January 9 1947

A dead week. Picquet today. casts a gloom over the day, and the week.

Sunday Jan 12 1947

Sitting in this front bedroom in this Petts Wood villa, I see a portrait, a photograph, on the wall of a young man, her brother. He is in uniform, young, vigorous, and happy. He was killed in 1918 when he was 20. That body has been dead for nearly thirty years. Yet his fingers felt that chair, that cigarette, he stayed at the camera for that split second, he is there for me to look at, thirty years later, when he should be fifty. That body has been dead for 30 years. What is it like to die?

Monday Jan 13 1947

Monday! And the first 8.30 parade. A stupid business. A spineless staff sergeant and a lot of unwilling privates. On getting back to the Kings after a completely unrecognisable day, started in on my correspondence course lesson due in on Friday. Am doing Prose in S's time this week. Am feeling more and more that it is foolish and sloppy to attempt to answer questions about books you have no chance of reading. I wrote a question on 'Euphues', and got 10/10 for it, and I've never seen 'Euphues'. What I cannot bear is this atmosphere of 'night classes at the Poly' which hangs over a correspondence course. These are not 'spare-time studies'. The part of the day which I have to myself is not spare, it is my day. All the rest of the time is waste, or little better. Tim Coleman, a chap once in RAF previously a broker, was talking to me in all sincerity and telling me I know nothing about 'life'. He had mixed with all etc. etc. etc. What is this knowledge of 'life' but a capacity for bumping someone else on the head before he bumps you, a sort of low cunning worthy only of animals? I'm getting tired of that sort. I don't much, I admit, but I dislike people who know about one side and think that's all there is to know.

Tuesday January 14 1947

Lalla's birthday - her 41st. I sent her a letter - for I did not know what to get her and anyway have not had time to get anything. 41 seems very old.

Wednesday January 15 '47

Foot bad again. Heel cracked in two places. Am bandaged and limping. The early morning is very desolate now that I catch my early morning train. Still - had long and interesting talk with Tim again but find him much too shallow, or rather fervent for my taste. The sort of person with whom it is impossible to argue. Attempted to work in the evening, got some little done on 'The Unfortunate Traveller'. Very racy, but quite horribly fascinating. Bed 12.45.

Thursday January 16 1947

Instead of getting up at 6.15, arose at 7.20, put on my clothes and was out of the house by 7.25. Not by intention, and was wretched all day, washless and shaveless and breakfastless. A poor day. I sometimes think with angry horror when I realise what time I am wasting. Here I cram a whole life into an hour or two every evening. This record has not time to be anything but a journal for the events of the day, and not always even that, in an unrecognisable and formless style and unreadable handwriting.

Friday January 17 1947

It is no wonder I get tired for I live in a perpetual state of unrest, longing for this imprisonment to finish, and yet dreading each new day. Although I have almost nothing to bear, yet it is this very 'almost' that I find so unbearable. To be not quite forced to give up everything I wish to be just able to carry on my own work. How hard this is, much harder to force oneself to work every moment. For with the niggardly time I get to myself, 'every moment' it must be, or I fall hopelessly behind. To the Discussion Fellowship thing. Really it gets more and more pointless. Everyone's mind there works the wrong way, more like a sausage-machine than a lathe. Rather clumsy that. Anyway we began with writing down our thoughts on what was the greatest truth we had come to believe in through the experience of years. The only thing I could put in all honesty was that at 20 one was too young to have found any great truth. This produced a laugh at least. But these things get more and more greyly boring, for no one has any sense of humour worthy of the name. I do not see why I should sit there empty while old women gossip theirs and my time away.

Saturday January 18 1947

I never cease to be thankful for Saturdays. I do not think it would be possible to carry on were it not for that release every weekend. I wonder whether people realise how wearing it is for someone unaccustomed to the trivial normal to be suddenly subjected to one; without any sort of preparation, to go from the most interesting to the most boring. Spent most of the afternoon in Foyle's, which is surely the worst arranged bookshop in London. The books are in departments, true, but in no order in those departments. Floor after floor is covered with dusty bookshelves filled with all sorts of books in all sorts of conditions. The drama and music floor starts off being very respectable with a radiogram for records and glass counter and cash desk. Then a little further to the left are shelves holding slightly battered boxes (millions of them) of sheet music, and round a corner the French Acting Editions fill a bay or so. Then second-hand drama books stand lie flop and pile over a dusty old counter from behind which nobody serves, and finally a little attic room as it were with a hole in the wall under the window, and the whole place full to the ceiling with old bound volumes of the Graphic and Illustrated London News, books of botany, volumes of photographs of the Isle of Wight, tattered Victorian novels, billions of copies of Maritana and The Bohemian Girl songs of England, Scotland Ireland and Wales in unbelievable bindings, Greek play translations and so on. I would very much like to reorganise the shop, for they have a terrific connection both

with publishers and public and it is a pity to see it so dissipated. Scrounged around, found a facsimile copy of Wilson's 'Cheats'. Rare publication, edited by that man Herford, and also a fascinating late eighteenth-century treatise on early morality and miracle plays with a number of etchings of scenes from them - I hope authentic. The trouble about Foyle's is that it gets too many of the non-reading public, the people who regard a bookshop not as a library where you may buy books but a department store to be rifled and fingered and they wander round in a noisy way as if they were in Woolworth's, so that it is virtually impossible to stop and look at anything. Foyle's make too many concessions to popularity by putting all the new and recent books on the ground floor. They should have departments on all the floors - general departments are hopeless anywhere, most of all in a bookshop.

Had managed to grab a standing ticket, infinitely preferable to sitting in extreme discomfort in the gallery. Spent a tolerable time, but while much enjoying the play, was very irritated in the intervals by three young men standing next to me. They were apparently Austrian as far as I could make out from judicious, small inclined to plumpness, with rimless glasses and that blank rude stare apparently the monopoly of the continental abroad. I suppose them from their conversation to have been reading for the bar, but what annoyed about them was the appallingly smug tenor of their conversation.

Sunday February 23 1947

Every month or so I return to this record to write how annoyed and ashamed I am to have missed it for a month. A diary must never be abandoned and to write whether the inclination is there or not, whether the significance of the records is lacking or not, is not my intention for my journal. But to be prevented from writing when there is so much I could and would put out here if I had the time,that is cruel indeed. The ideas I might have discussed, the books I might have reviewed, the London I might have found, the people I might have described for my own delight and literary good, above all the personal record of what I am which has been missing in these weeks. I am even now snatching some minutes from my sleep, I am writing while waiting for my pyjamas to get warm round a hot water bottle. Again I will not attempt to relive those lost days, though I will explain anything as it comes along which has reference to those days. Must attempt to escape here sometimes, even though we shiver in the fuel crisis.

Monday February 24 1947

Last night the coldest for 70 years. 23 degrees of frost in London. The water froze everywhere here of course and at the office the main building, about fifty yards in length, had a continuous stretch of icicles at least 2" thick, running the whole length of its gutters. The cold is intense and biting. As I write sitting up in bed, wrapped in a pullover and scarf and mittens, my breath clouds white all round me. If only the fuel were easier, the cold would not be so phenomenal, I have no doubt. This evening, as I came over Charing Cross Bridge in the train from Sidcup, I could see a thick edging of ice on the Thames wharfs. Can it be that it will freeze over? I'm afraid there'll be no fair this time!

My correspondence course trouble seems to be coming to a solution of itself. They have made no reply to the letter I wrote telling them of their mistake in sending Lesson VII when Lesson VIII was due and their sending Lesson VIII too. I could not do them both at once, apart from the fact that one contained the answers to the other. However I will do them each a fortnight late, and the college seem to mind little.

A letter from home tells me Donald has no heat and Oxford. How frightful to have no heat anyway, but doubly frightful in an ancient stone building. Great news of my release for Cambridge,that I may get in Oct. through Class B Release. Have written to Stationery Office for details of that and grants for univ. Have at last booked to see 'Under the Counter' with Ada. Hope it will please her to pay 10/6. Ha! Bed quick. Bliss.

Tuesday February 25 1947

More rumours running around the office. Now the tale is that India Wing is going en masse to Singapore, and that all those over Group 70 are going with it. At first rumour had it Group 68 and over, now I am just outside the rumour's jurisdiction. Goodness knows what truth there is in it, but hope to heaven that as far as I am concerned the agonies of last August are not to be repeated. Someone asked Gwen today 'whether Angus was running after her'. She laughed and said 'no', but told me she was really annoyed. No friendship is apparently immune from the sneers of those ghastly gossips. It isn't as if Gwen was a girl, she's 30 and she's going to be married in April.

The extraordinary thing about this cold and bitter weather is that one longs for spring in a much more conscious way than usual. When i left Nelsons this evening I was struck by the unusual mildness, though it was still freezing. I really believe the thaw is on its way. But that is by the way. The thing was, I felt an almost uncontrollable desire to run and jump all over the place, and this at 11.0 at night after a day at the office and an evening working. The houses in Fonthill Rd. dirty shuttered seem to lean over on top of one like derisive crowds, laughing as you scuttle past.

Wednesday February 26 1947

Do not feel very verbose today. Rumours ran round first of all about group 70 to India Wing and then probably to Singapore. Now it says 65 and over. Why why why must these hideous moments come bursting in on the fairly bearable daily round one has laboriously built up? As if this whole ridiculous existence weren't hard enough to bear anyway. Please please not overseas.

Thursday February 26 1947

2.0. This has been a day filled with apprehensions and fears, of moments of wild hope and equally wild despair. Rumours run riot. I can think of nothing, do nothing, but say over and over to myself not under Group 70, not under Group 70, please, please not under Group 70'. I don't know why I should mind so much really. All I do know is that nothing really seems to matter as long as it doesn't happen. If only I knew one way or the other. I'm tired out bothering and speculating and worrying and wondering. On top of this, I have a juicy cough and cold.

11.30 the same night. All day swept backwards and forwards by rumour after rumour though the Group question is still (for me at any rate) uncertain. The one good fact comparatively reliable - emerged from today's nerve-wracking events, that even if whoever-it-is is transferred to India wing, it is not going to India Wing until July or August, so by that time I should know one way or another about my Class B Release.

At King's, situation gets worse and worse. Never a moment alone, no quiet. I am so tired.

Friday February 28 1947

March tomorrow. The year rushes past. Am apparently not going to India - as yet anyway. Everyone else has been told not me. Daddy has already written to Mr. Guilleband of St. John's, and I suppose he ought to receive a reply at least next week. If only it's favourable!

Received a postcard from Mike yesterday wanting me to meet in town tomorrow. Difficult - am booked up with plays. Filthy cold. Must sleep.

Saturday March 1 1947

A new month, thank Heaven and an end to this dismal February. The sunshine though not perhaps much warner is certainly immeasurably brighter and more heartening. And for all my cold I feel this to be a good day. I can only suppose that for the moment I am not to go to India Wing, for nothing has been said to me. Who knows what Monday morning may not produce? My fears had largely passed away in the approaching weekend glow. Let's hope they stay like that.

Was due to meet Mike at 12.30 at Charing X. Did not turn up till 1.15. Had no time to tell me. Bless him! We talked and talked and talked. He told me all about 'The Frogs' and what the Arts was like inside and the audience reactions and how the Provost of King's, Sheppland, was hoping to get the Lyric Hsmith for 2 days! and the recording made for the third prog. I was green with jealously by the time he'd finished. I wish I could give some sort of precis of what we talked about, chiefly how we talked, but it would take much too long. After lunch we walked to the Arts where I managed to get him a seat fairly near me for the 1st part of 'Back to Methuselah'. We went to the R.A. for the Exhibition of the King's Pictures afterwards. He had never been before I think. Many well-known pictures but so many of the

painters hadn't the courage to paint the royal sitters as they were. 'Brom' very good in its way (See M.D.) Saw Mike away at 8.0. Went on to 'Caste' at 9. XX (see M.D.)

Sunday March 2 1947

In the morning to Crown Court Church of Scotland. Very lovely church, with huge gilded coat of arms royal above the very tall pulpit. The amazing thing is the atmosphere. It is difficult to free yourself from the idea that you will walk out of the church into Edinburgh. Everyone is so obviously Scotch from the Minister with his bands and shock of grey hair, the Rev Walter Moffett, - to the last of the brethren, the fuel-crisis organ-blower, a small red haired boy. The service was concluded with the communion to which we did not stay. In preparation for this every pew had its full length white napkin clipped to the back of it, hanging down both sides. The people were fascinating and the stewards in frock coats, white ties (in rationing!) the women with such lovely 'Sunday' clothes all dark rich colours, blunt-long-faced tall and thin cheekboney people for the most part, the women small and rosy and bright eyed.

The church backs directly on the Fortune Theatre. Indeed its main door is right next to that of the Fortune. Possibly this accounts for the Fortune's shallowness. We walked back through the romanically named yet gaol like streets round Drury Lane, Macklin Street, Betterton Street, Kemble St, Garrick Lane, Sheridan Buildings. All grey and dirty and depressing. Window after window with its little fern or geranium and lace curtain.

Monday March 3 1947

Five people from Releases to help with my work. Such a bore telling them what to do. Glad today is over.

Tuesday March 4 1947

Colder again this morning. Still people jostling and talking too near me all day. Mr. Rooke young, ex sailor, thin dark and plaintive, Mrs. Davies, young, masses and masses of pretty dusky hair, huge bot. and horrid figure, a giggler, Private Davies a ridiculous and trivial self-important little figure, petulant, Mr. Smith, slow-wittted, completely bald, keeps his hat on all the time to hide it. Mr. Hunt nondescript, curly-haired, thin rimmed glasses with imitation pieces of tortoiseshell on them, and they smoke and smoke and I cough.

Had planned to go to 'Poil de Carotre' tonight! Rang up Nelsons in case they were expecting me. They were, so had to go. Blowing a blizzard, snow inch deep in 20 mins. Fortunately I had to go out very little. All tube trains stopped at Finsbury Park. The large crowd stepped out of the train, and waited. The train, doors still open and lights still on gleamed invitingly. Soon the driver began to call apparently for help. A guard ran up and down the length of the train once and fell down twice. Then another guard got calmly in, and said, down the

speaking tube 'Off to Hounslow' which meant going backwards. The driver screamed 'Come here' and I decided to take a bus. Did so and reached Palmers Green about 7.30. As I ran down the road in the thick snow, I thought how mad I was to be coming all that way in that weather. Listened to the Atom Bomb talks, but appalling reports fail now to appal after so many hearings.

On my way back here after leaving the tube as I walked along the scummy street, a change seemed to come over the frowzy houses. In the dusty laurels and withered privets great white blooms hung, now massy clusters of solid blossom, now a faint starring of each twig. The night turned to day, yet day with a flame whiteness that no day has known. Time had slipped back and from the elegant terraces I fancied I could hear the tinkling of a piano or the laughter of a party. There were no sounds but my own footsteps in the thick snow, and I would not have been surprised to see a hansom-cab come tingling round the corner.

When I got in I found a letter form John's tutor asking when I was coming back into residence. This filled me with strong new energy ad hopes bright yet unfulfilled.

Wednesday March 5 1947

The day of the great thaw predicted. Snow was nearly a foot deep. Arrived at London Bridge about 8.0. Found a crowd waiting said there had been no trains from Charing X since 7.30. Arrived at office about 9.15.

After many trials, rang up Daddy, and told him about J's letter. He said Go ahead so I did. Cannot feel happy about reply. Probably no good. Due to go to 'Under the Counter' with Ada tonight. Hope all goes well. Set out with Gwen and Joan who are going to see 'Eagle has Two Heads' at Haymarket, which I booked for them a fortnight ago. Gwen fell running up station hill and when we were in the train looked at her knees. I said 'Did you hurt yourself?' She said 'I don't know. I was just looking to see my stockings were all right'. Ada wrapped in brown Mackintosh, rubber boots and ridiculously a green plastic pixie hood. Got splashed all up her stocking walking down Charing X Red to the Phoenix. She fiddled about in theatre till I was nearly dotty. However very happy after that.

Thursday March 6 1947

Have been thinking today of coming weekend. What a torment it would have been three or four years ago. Now it bores, annoys and irritates to me think I must spend a whole precious weekend being polite to three people I do not know, have no desire to meet and even less to continue their acquaintance. Rather thoughtless to expect me to go all that way in this weather.

Snow this morning worse than anything I have experienced so far this extraordinary winter. It is now not so cold as it has been, so it is bearable, but the snow was right over my boots,

and the tube train was covered in thick sheet ice. At L.B. trains were not quite so bad as yesterday, but bad enough.

Immediately asked Gwen and Joan how they enjoyed Eileen Herlie in 'The Eagle has Two Heads' at the Haymarket. They said marvellous wonderful, and so on and so on. She must be extraordinary, I think for everyone who has seen her has thought so. Must try and go sometime. Joan said in the Act III costume, a riding habit, she looked as if someone had poured her into it, and then squeezed before she set, tucking in the bits that were sticking out. Another dopey day. I was dreaming about Cambridge in the lunch hour and had got so far as imagining a tragic scene of renunciation of a career because my father was ruined, with a long torment in my room, emerging quiet and calm with the decision of my life taken, when I remembered I had yet to receive an answer to my letter asking whether I could get in!

Friday March 7 1947

Again I ask myself how I can keep a diary. All the little things that one wishes to keep in a diary slip by and get lost in the inhumanly hurried daily round. What appals me is that this is what Ada and Winnie and Rene and all of the London office workers have been doing all their lives and will do till they die. Of course they have never been able to do anything else though what dreams and hopes have been crushed into grey nothing only they know.

Determined to go out tonight, so XX my all to see the new film 'The Best Years of Our Lives' at the Leicester Square Theatre (see M.D.) A good evening. Griffiths weekend faces me tomorrow. Could murder them all. Talking of murder I see Mrs. Cormoda has been acquitted. Quite right. Who wouldn't murder a pervert anyway.

Saturday March 8 1947

Well, here I am at the Griffiths and what a time getting here. I caught the 12.24 from London Bridge to East Croydon, and then on a 405 Green Line to Warlingham. We passed through seemingly miles of flat and hilly half-built up half bare country. I arrived at The Leather Bottle about 1.30. Warlingham has only a few houses and cottages and shops grouped about the triangular village, most of them about 100 years old, though the village is much older. I crossed the green down a long straight road, empty snow-covered fields on both sides. Here and there a house broke the hawthorn hedge, its suburban respectability strangely comforting with the almost savage world around it. The trees and hedges were thick with snow, and on the ground it had broken into thousands of small pieces, as if someone had been smashing tumblers for weeks.

Further down the road turns downwards, and some way down this hill, Bug Hill, stands Watendlath. It stands right next the road, but 20 feet or more down, with a long stone path going right round to the front door. The garage, on a level with the road, is on two brick stilts.

The family is four in number. Mr. Griffiths is bald, very taciturn, rather humourless, has a big nose with a wart on the side, was wearing plus fours and would cut wood. Mrs. tall thin with a shingle and a twenty years old figure, a very low necked zip up the front jumper and a habit of saying 'Did you' and Was it? with a peculiar rising inflection. Of the children, Bernard (18) is tall thin, big-nosed pimply, architectural, gauche, pompous and cissie. Wendy(!) (16) is grubby, loud, immensely fat with great red hairy legs.

Well more tomorrow.

Sunday March 9 1947

Back in Finsbury Park, thank the Lord. Spent all day it seems slipping about on slopes. Very pretty country. As we walked through the trees the ground was covered with straight pieces of ice fallen from the bough and every dry leaf lay in its own cup of snow.

Monday March 10 1947

This evening I had gone to 'The Best Years of Our Lives' for a second visit, to see how good the acting was, whether it was merely its attractive wrapping made it better than it was. It was raining when I went in, and the thick slush paired with pools of thick syrupy water made Leicester Square gloomy and coldly empty. The crowds waiting for the cheaper seats tried to huddle under the awning, or if they were too far to try, gave up the attempt and retreated as far as possible into their coats.

When I came out, just as 'God Save the King' was sounding faintly from the theatre, the rain had nearly stopped and the slush nearly gone. I feel excited afraid and almost sick. I know that the letter much be at the Kings. It must be, now after the weekend. I rushed home; just as I was turning the corner, it came on a swift heavy shower. I came in quite wet, and laid my coat carefully on the settee. The letter, square white solid was propped against a vase on the mantelpiece. I picked it up, and I thought I must sit down and be ready for it. I opened it, and dropped the folded enclosure in my haste. I picked it up and unfolded it, an oblong piece of good paper, headed - and my eye had run over the words, that I could not go. I was not eligible for Class B release; though he himself would be eager to have me come up here was afraid that I would not be able to do so until October '48. While he realised that this must be a disappointment, he reminded me that I would only be coming up with the people who were called up when I was.

I sat and stared at the shutters over the grubby windows; every crack in the wood, every mark on the paint seemed suddenly important. The two clocks ticked tinnily. I fingered the napkin over the bread for my breakfast. I sat for what seemed like years. I gathered up my coat, cap, gloves and books and went to my bedroom. I was in bed and staring at the waves of light swept over the ceiling by each car that passed. Finally they stopped. I did not see them.

Tuesday March 11 1947

Yesterday's entry was really written this morning. I felt so tired so grey that I could not force myself to write last night, and it is so late I must not write much now. I know I should be feeling a dull agony of despair. All I do feel is an ache somewhere, like a decayed tooth. My mind runs here and there and can't get rid of it. I know when I shall feel it - in all those days and weeks and months dragging their weary length along, in which I shall still be 'in'.

Had my photos back today. Not bad. One of them nice looking but not like me. Not surprising, I suppose.

Wednesday March 12 '47

Took my photographs to the office. Everyone seemed genuinely eager to see them. XX impressive of females below thirty; Gwen, Joan, Jean another Joan, two more Jeans, yet another Joan, Marjorie, two Peggies, Ricky, Molly, Ena, Marjorie and yet another Joan besides the women in the Main Card Index.

As I was rattling past in the train tonight, a man waved to the train, to me it seemed, from a great factory by the side of the railway. In the middle of all that machinery, he was able to turn it all into insignificant metal by one small gesture.

Received an invitation from Petts Wood today. Said I would go weekend after next. Better, I think. Also card from Mike. He is to live at Norwood. How wonderful to have someone I know, but to have him. Only hope I can be a little freer to be with him. Raining tonight as if every heart in heaven was broken (Sweet isn't it?)

Thursday March 13 1947

There seems to be a spirit common to the whole country of resigned but not hopeless acceptance of the privations and minor difficulties from which we suffer, and a fairly active state against the major troubles of the world. Since I have been at the office and seen large numbers of people ordinary, so-called adults, working together, I have been struck by the complete (or almost complete) lack of harm among them. The tragedy of the world today is that no one knows how to be truly honestly blackly and XX bad.

Friday March 14 1947

For some reason I felt gay today. A bad omen, something nasty must be about to happen. To the Friday Fellowship in the evening, only for a few minutes. Then off to a film. Somehow tonight I could not be dull or stay in. So I went on impulse.

Saturday March 15 1947

A successful day. Having had my hair cut, had lunch and booked a last seat for 'The Eagle Has 2 Heads' at the Haymarket, went up to Nelson's, got case, went to theatre. Home to bed. Summer time tonight.

Sunday March 16 1947

Sat all morning, and nearly went mad with the talking of Mrs. Something and her daughter Olive. They had brought a little kitten for Mrs. King to replace the cat she had lost. It is a nice little thing enough with a black spot on its nose, a very plump tummy, and a funny,

stubbly little tail. They cooed and giggled over it most of the morning. We finally were free about 1. Got lunch over and Mr. and Mrs. King at last went out for their walk, and I was able to finish off my essay on Webster's dramatic decadence. Off to Rene's for supper only for she has flu. Terrific wind. Strongest I think I have ever known. I saw a cat just blown across the road.

Mummy rang while I was at Nelson's to tell me Daddy had got £4001 since Dec 1 for his appeal for a new church roof, and he'd only aimed at £3500 by the end of March.

Monday March 17 1947

A gorgeous day. Clear blue sky, bright sunshine, warm wind. Coming through the seedy streets to the tube station, I thought how morning after the night before they looked, with their muddy grassless gardens, unequal curtains, blistered paint and cracked plaster. Coming back tonight for the first time since last summer in daylight I was appalled. What sort of a record has a 2000 year old so called civilisation when its children are still playing in the filth of the streets, grubbing in the gutters and pushing each other out of the way with the most disgusting curses to snatch a lumpy ball from each other with shrill cries of rage or triumph? When women, dirty, in dresses thick with filth, down at heel shoes, curlers in their hair, lead a child in a crumpled spotty coat to school? When the road is pitted every morning with thousands of spittle and phlegm patches, at least one every two foot of pavement? When in summer every doorway and alley and dark corner barely hides a pair of lovers actually copulating within the public gaze? When rubbish covers the streets and dustbins overflow? When people if they are people will stand for hours in the rain for the doubtful privilege of seeing some shadows on a screen indulge into unenterprising and inadequate lovemaking whose climaxes must be supplied by the suggestive imaginations upon which most cinema producers and managers rely? When millions spend millions on dogs, horses, boxing, ice hockey, speedway racing and most of all associates football, giving them a position of complete variance to their importance? When a Chief City Librarian with a Library degree gets £250 p.a. while a dustman employed by the same Council gets £5 a week, and no qualifications necessary at all?

What right have we to hope that this rottenness should endure?

Thursday March 18 1947

Rang up Mrs Nelson during the morning, and heard that Rene had developed a rash! Goodness knows what it can be, but I shall be out of quarantine for my leave if it is anything. Went to 'Poil de Carotte' this evening. Came in about 10. Found 3 visitors in. Mrs. King made no attempt to get anything ready and I was not finished until 11.0. When I went to wash I found the basin filthy, my flannel with great black marks on and the chair which smelt strongly of cat has not been wiped. Of course I dare not use it or I shall get the smell all over me. Swilled and scrubbed the basin, asked Mrs. King about my flannel, and she said 'Oh, it wasn't Mr. King'. Of course it was, beastly mucky pig of a man. Why must I stand all this

and how have I stood it for nearly nine months? I'm ashamed that my tasks are so weak as not to XX.

Thursday March 20 1947

March seems nearly over. No entry last night. I was on guard. Another rumour running round the office, all over Group 52 they want names of. Pray Heaven it is not something else to plague us. I cannot stand this much longer.

Friday March 21 1947

Got Donald's parcel for Monday (his 23rd birthday) sent off, and laundry, and letter to Sherwells. When I got home I found letter waiting for me from them. Bother!

Tonight was going to Friday Fellowship, so rang up Nelson's to find out and couldn't get an answer. The bell was ringing, and finally I had to give up. Went to the library instead. Only my second visit, and received a nasty shock. Had just chosen the second volume of Dryden's Plays (I wanted 'All For Love' for an essay), and L.P. Hartley's new novel ,'The Shrimp and the Anemone'. When I went to the counter to get them stamped, she said 'You don't live or work in Hornsey, do you?' I said 'No'. So I can't have any more books out. What I shall do now, I don't know. If only Hornsey were this side of Tollington Park instead of the other. Off to Petts Woods tomorrow. Hurray!

Saturday March 22nd 1947

I have spent a lovely peaceful afternoon and evening. Have done and thought nothing, simply gloried in the feeling of home.

Sunday March 23 1947

I feel nested, but have been constrained by the contract between this and the Kings, perhaps to get a billet in Sidcup, or somewhere nearer anyway. Save money of course.

Monday March 24 1947

A peculiar day. Somehow a comfy quality.

PAGE MISSING

Thursday March 27 1947

Last night I went to meet Mike in town. I rang him up to tell him, and he was terribly upset in his way. We met at Charing X, and walked round by Leicester Square to Picc. Circus, down Lower Regent Street, down the Duke of York's steps into the mall, where we walked via the mall entrance to St. James's Park through the park right round the pond to the steps again. Then we had supper, and decided to go to 'Nicholas Nickelby' at the Odeon, Leic. Square. Curiously enough there was a film all about Ulster and Belfast. Then we walked from Leicester Square to London Bridge, by way of Trafalgar Square, the Strand, Fleet Street, Ludgate, St. Paul's Churchyard and Cannon Street. By this time it was 11.0 and Mike just caught the train back to Crystal Palace. I was so rigid and footsore when I got back (though I had not noticed it when I was out) that I felt I could do nothing but go to bed so I did.

Tonight I went down to his people's flat in Belvedere Place, Upper Norwood, as Mike says 'a stone's throw, if you can throw it half a mile from the Palace itself.' His mother still has terrible cataract. His father is fat after an operation, elderly, selfish, disloyal and peevish. Mike was very happy and really so was I. As we came down to the station, we passed a printer's with the legend 'Lino types, type-cutting, die-stamping', on the window. He said 'What a silly way to die!' and I couldn't stop laughing. We walked up the empty dark platform and I gripped his arm to be sure he was there. He said foolishly 'It's not forever' and I said 'We mustn't say goodbye anyway, it isn't. Then the train was in, I was in it, and moving off, and he cried 'Well, we can't now'.

Friday March 28 1947

Another curious timeless and characterless day, in which I did and thought practically nothing. In the evening booked for 'The White Devil' my last play here, I suppose, and then went back to Finsbury Park for the big clearout. What a terrible lot of papers I've got! I can't lose them now. I must see what I can do about the photos tomorrow. Was going to try and see the Boat Race tomorrow. Some hope now!

Sunday March 30 1947

Yesterday was such a hectic day that there was nothing left but bed at the end of it. The morning journey to Sidcup was not nice. Laden with a kit-bag I tried not to get hot, but of course did inside and out. It makes me so angry to have to carry such a stupid thing. If someone had thought for a century how to produce the most inconvenient method of carrying things, he could not possibly have devised a more stupid piece of equipment. What it will be like tomorrow with the added weight in the bag itself and the extra delights of a case and a haversack, I dare not think. After a morning tediously whiled away by a kit check, after which my three co-travellers talked for what seemed hours to the storeman about motorbikes, football, racing and women. In the afternoon I came back to Kings, and finished off some clearing up. Only big job left to sort theatre criticisms out from a pile of papers about 3 ft high. Then dashed off to order photos at L.G. Got back to town in time for tea; when I came

out it was raining, and all yellow with fog. It was about 6.20. I suppose they were just in the middle of the Boat Race. I just caught a taxi as it was sneaking away down a back street, and arrived in time.

Today was one long rush. I sat feveishly turning over papers for what seemed like hours without getting anywhere. All finished thank God!

Ireland tomorrow. I think it would have been my own choice to leave England for Ireland for the first trip. It is the nearest to being a foreign country and yet near enough to us to be intelligible. I expect happiness from Ireland, but misery from the Army in Ireland.

Monday March 31 1947

Today we move. Up early this morning and rushed to pack up finally. Mrs King up so was forced to say 'goodbye', the first of a long series. I had a large pack on my shoulders, a kitbag, and my case. No one will know the combined agonies I suffered in the short walk. But why I should think my discomfort either greater or more important I don't know. Human I suppose. Oh what a relief to have my diary to turn to for those things which I cannot say to anyone else. All the mean, shallow, selfish, and egotistical things get into it simply because of the relief of getting rid of them. This discomfort has so many repercussions. I smell and get hot, and wet, and get shivery from standing about, wet. I have 'XX' for my journey which is a great deal. I arrived at the Orderly Room late of course. And this afternoon turned up there with my pack on. The others without. It's not fair. I can't help that these people are not my sort. I can't hit people and say 'Hiya Charlie' or call everyone George, or flirt with every woman I meet. What a virtue familiarity is! I should have been in tears by now a year ago. Yet I am, for me, tranquilly accepting. I expect to return to this far into the night.

2.30 a.m.

I write on the boat. We struggled with our heavy equipment down endless wooden corridors and corridor bridges. We queued and walked, and showed our passes and queued again. This brought us over watery boards to the L.M.S. boat - S.S. Duke of Lancaster. We climbed up a steep and rickety gangplank, and I was on board. It is like nothing else, a ship, stairways, and portholes and brass rails and big holes giving exciting glimpses of cars in the hold, and saloons and bars and cabins, and of course the 'rail' of the ship, the side which is more often a broad wooden ledge than a rail. We made our way to the 3rd class saloon, which was a fair sized room about 40 ft by 30', with wide leather seats around the walls and set up in the floor space. These were already full of people, families with children sneaking on their father's or mother's lap, for it was already a quarter to twelve. There was baggage all over the floor, and sitting and lying on the baggage every different mound of humanity that could be found anywhere.

Tuesday May 6 1947

A lapse, but deliberate or at any rate unavoidable.

Monday June 1st 1947

The 1st of June, and a wonderful day! Got up at 7, sky clear and pale blue like a thrush's egg. On a morning like this I could not be silent. The birds were singing loud enough to bring the great sun-plashed sky down on top of them. It is on mornings like this that I feel anything can happen.

I had to return to this much-maligned record. What I meant by the lapse being unavoidable was that, since my move here I have been very busy settling down, catching up on my letters, which all needed answering afresh from Ireland. My correspondence course, the last three lessons arriving all in a lump after Easter, claimed most of my spare time. But also being now in a barrack room I cannot find any moment I like to write, and especially that usual moment, sitting up in bed before it is time to go to bed, is a difficult one in a barrack room. But enough of that.

Although I am in a new country, there is not so very much to tell. Belfast is, to look at, at least, very much like other cities, though pleasant as cities go, cleaner than Newcastle (seen from the train!) and brighter than Birmingham. Otherwise there is a great difference. Naturally I feel a greater difference than I might if I came from the north of England. They are so familiar so eager to speak, so little able to appreciate the value of a decent reticence. Although I am Scotch, I was brought up in the extreme South of England, where the people are accused by hearty northerners of snobbery. What they do not seem to see is that there is a personal privacy that is, or should be inviolable. For one's own sake one must pick and choose. By that I mean not be forced to become familiar and 'friendly' with anyone who cares to speak to you. Their accent here is on the charming though there is a broad and beefy variety which is hideous and slurred. I have attended the church here a number of times. It is the Mother Church of Northern Ireland Methodism. It stands in Donegal Square, the square surrounding the City Hall, and the building itself is older than the average. Outside it is in the Corinthian style, unusual and dignified for Methodism. Inside it sticks close to a Regency pattern and reminds one strongly of some of the churches in the southern states of America. White and cream, it is panelled along the edge of the balcony with mouldings and the twin organ cases are picked out with gold. The choir sit behind the central pulpit, on the same structure, not in a continuation of the gallery, while the organist's manual is sunk back to back with the preacher's chair - a fine arrangement and a true non-conformist building.

Belfast is not nearly as interesting as it must have been once, but it is in any case less colourful than Dublin is from all reports. It is most of all difficult to realise that it is a capital with a Prime Minister and a Houses of Parliament, and I often think I am in a large provincial English city, until I hear someone speak. The shops are good, and sell a lot of stuff, which seems better than you can get in England, though I doubt if it is really. Certainly food is better. Milk is unrationed; I drink pints. So are eggs, and cream cakes are in abundance.

For the people whom I have met, the total is negligible, even in the barracks. At the church only old Mr. Robinson, a supernumerary and his wife, a dignified if precise couple, spoke to me at first. I went to their home once, but since then I have only seen him once, when he introduced me to Mrs. Johnson. Mrs. Johnson is a tall gushing lady of a stupid bluntness and

little real charm. The family force themselves on you and attempt to become life-long friends in an afternoon. I really do not wish to write much about them. They produced no effect on me beyond a certain desire to be gone from them as soon as possible. Steam-roller people.

Monday June 9 1947

Another week gone by, and no more entry. Not that it actually matters, or that every day must have something. The point is that every day I have wanted to put something down and have not been able to find time to do it.

Since I last wrote I have been promoted to the most skilled job in the Pay Office, a 1A clerk. What 'a doubtful honour'. Since the work I do in the office here is always a matter of complete indifference unless it happens to interfere too much with my mind, it does not make much difference to me. It is on the whole however much more interesting for the insight it affords into men's lives, so that their accounts become all of a sudden human documents. Apart from the added variety of mechanical work, which is something of a help to pass the hours, the information proves most fascinating. The awful thing is that no one else seems to care a scrap, and not because they have been on the job a long time either. They are clerkly people, a pitiful business. But then I'm a prig, I suppose.

Have just finished Butler's 'The Way of All Flesh'. What an extraordinary bitter piece of self-revelation! How self-conscious in one way and how little he knows himself in another! I could not help seeing the resemblance to myself. This diary especially I find a great strain on my honesty: I am continually writing something which I suddenly imagine a future editor dissertating upon. I say to myself 'Don't be silly', but the feeling persists.

I was very shocked to see the death of James Agate announced. I've read his articles since 1940 and now there are to be no more. He was so individualist in this leftist spiritless world. One felt that if he said 'This man can obviously write' then it was so. I felt that if I ever attempted to enter the world of letters it must be with his approbation or not at all, so decided was his personality. I suppose that is the first in a long series of well loved teachers who will just fade out.

Tuesday June 10 1947

Attempted to ring up home at about 6.46. Told to return at 7.15. Did so, and the phone rang again at 7.45. A whole hour's waiting for three minutes. Was forced to go to Sandes' and even then did little work. Wrote to Rene such unsatisfactory and hopeless correspondence, writing to someone with so little mind. Am getting along well with last test paper. Farquhar's 'Constant Couple' fairly adequately if rather verbosely treated, 'Dryden's variety of talents, as illustrated by etc etc' next and last. What stupid questions really! To have to write without the text is not only silly, something which you will never have to do later, but also bad for your writing.

Wednesday June 11 1947

Very warm today. A cool wind blows here, and that is the only thing that saves us from frizzling. Have begun 'the Ingoldsby Legends' for the first time. A sad pity I have not read sooner. The first thing 'The Sceptre of Tappington Castle'. Wonderful. A ghost who steals trousers!

Thursday June 12 '47

I could only see
The morning was begun
And all about me
The earth lay in the sun.

The grass drawn round with dew
Lay dark behind my feet,
And in the pale sky
Swam swallows crescents' neat

I wonder it that's any good, even to me. I don't think so really. But it's the first time I've used this book for what I originally intended - a regular notebook. It can, I think, be both. Samuel Butler has a remark in 'The Way of All Flesh' about notebooks. He says categorically that if one has the impulse to keep such a notebook, one has the literary instinct. This may be true, but he goes on to say that if one doesn't keep such a notebook, there is no literary impulse, which is of course nonsense. I find yet very hard to write properly, not just facilely as I write mostly. I have to pare and pare what seems a very small core for the important words.

Went up to the Study Centre for the Music Circle. We had arranged to have the new recording of Messiah played. Last year's I think with the Liverpool Philhormonic Orchestra, the Huddersfield Choral Society Isobel Baillie, Gladys Ripley, James Johnston, and Norman Walker, with Dr. Malcolm Sargent conducting the whole. In fact all the works. I think it's so wrong, this elevating or rather setting aside of certain works of art, so that they assume an importance of a completely unartistic nature, and accumulate to themselves not only a tremendous amount of gradual change and deterioration in performance and appreciation simply from force of familiarity, but also a whole train of irrelevant associations which cloud the work itself and make it in the end impossible to appreciate or perform it truly without drastic revaluation. This has, of course, happened to 'Messiah' possibly more clearly than to any other work. Not only is it performed with full orchestra, gigantic choruses and organs and pianos for good measure, a combination apparently designed to create the maximum amount of disturbance with the minimum of music, but also it is classed in many respectable people's minds, as a sort of compendium of 'The Crucifixion', 'The Star of Bethlehem', and 'From Olivet to Calvary.' Victorian pothooks have nothing in common with music let alone Handel. Possibly the misapprehension about the nature of 'Messiah' has arisen from the many abuses it has had to suffer in performance. That this 'Messiah' degradation is no fiction is

obvious from the undoubted fact that any person who publicly proclaims an admiration of 'Messiah' is, by intelligent people, greeted suspiciously until it is found that the admiration is based on something a little more substantial than a village choir acquaintance. It is not that it cannot be appreciated by a village choir, but it obviously cannot be appreciated fully without study, and if the choir in question think as much of Sankey and Moody as they do of Handel, there is something very wrong. But good performance is at least a good example. These massed choir efforts are stupid beyond words; there is absolutely no defence whatever for them. Every massed choir recital I have heard has, even under the most distinguished conductors, remained a confused jumble of muzzy noise, neither so impressive, nor I verily believe in fact as loud, as a well-picked ensemble that is an ensemble. The heavy Mozartian embellishments are not, I think, although masterly in themselves, good for the colour of the work. The 'Messiah' is in no sense a fruity work. Musically it has always seemed to me a light work. Every performance I have head has destroyed or has rather rendered impossible any delicate touches whatever, except in the soloist work. This was no exception. The recording as a recording was superb, but the performance was terrible. The chorus went after all the old effects with nothing fresh, no fresh spirit that is, behind it, to recreate it over again for us. Whenever there was anything more intricate than simple blocked harmony or sustained chords, the choir might just as well have been shaking its tonsils at me instead of singing for all I could hear. The orchestra was too luscious and twentieth century altogether, and the organ completely superfluous, once the orchestra was already on the go. James Johnston, whom we are to hear next week at the King's Hall here, appeared to my ear a harsh singer. It may be that the gramophone was at fault. It may be that he is not very happy in the smoother field of oratorio after the bravura of Sadler's Wells. We shall see. Norman Walker not only looks like a bank manager, but sings like one. Competent, clear, musicianly, entirely adequate, but completely uninspiring. Miss Gladys Ripley has a lovely soft contralto, yet timid in attack and in interpretation her own self seems held back. She needs sort of retraining perhaps to let off the stiffness. Miss Isobel Baillie is of course true blue at all times, triumphing over the orchestra she gave a wonderfully true Handel, and yet managed the virtuosi effects lesser singers are forced to murder their score to attain. Her 'Rejoice Greatly o Daughter of Zion' must have moved a stone, and anyone who did not feel fresh in every part of himself cannot have a human bone in his body.

Saturday June 14 1947

A year today I moved to London from Bournemouth. I must do something about time. Isn't it funny how often quoted lines nearly always are the best.

'And at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near.'

is both magnificent and exactly expressive of what I want to say myself. Which is all very galling.

Sunday June 15 1947

I did not go to church either morning or evening today. Fortunately I am not the sort of person who makes excuses about churchgoing or I think anything else, though that's dangerous to say too glibly. I didn't go because I didn't want to. Because I couldn't be bothered, I suppose I could say, but I think I could have been bothered at least in the evening. I admit I stayed in bed in the morning. I did feel unusually restless and fidgety, and that may have had something to do with it. But the real point is not why I didn't want to go, for this is the second Sunday in succession I haven't been. (Incidentally the first time that's ever happened in my life except when I've been ill) nor what I did instead, nor whether I think it a sin or not to go, or not. The real question is why I go at all when I am by no means a Christian. Of course I am a moral coward when I'm talking to other people and I say 'Oh I go not because I'm religious, but because it's part of my home life like a greengrocer's shop is to his son'. I say that, and really it's true as it stands but not the whole truth. I also go because I think it is pleasantly different, because it makes me feel at least a bit more dutiful than people who don't, and following from that, because I genuinely I suppose much believe in the mysterious totem value of being 'in with' religion. Very far down on the list I go because I like listening to a good or bad sermon, and appreciating it as tearing it to pieces as the case may be, and because I like singing, and occasionally to meet somebody I want to see. I wonder what Daddy would say if he saw this. Is it too self-interested? I wish I could talk to someone understanding long enough not to say I am talking too much about myself. How can I talk about anyone or anything else until I've got myself in order?

Thursday June 19 1947

The Music circle again tonight. Had expected to hear the rest of 'Cosi Fan Tutte' tonight, but as I might have known, that silly Sergeant had changed the programme to a collection of popular favourites, lumps of Chopin, Gigli singing 'Addio Mignon', and 'The Lost Chord' in English! (a rare treat that one!) Rachmaninoff's 2nd Piano Concerto, which is overdone anyway, and Dohnanyi's Variation on a Nursery Theme or Rhyme I forget which. This last was the only thing which was still reasonably fresh. I mean I like the Rachmaninoff as well as anyone, and I am prepared to admit that if I hear it too many times for my own comfort, it is me and not the concerto at fault. Though actually it is not a particularly profound piece of work. The real point of the evening was that I met a chap in RFME, who seemed quite the most likeable person I have met for some time. We started glancing at one another over the heads of the others, and since we found out that we both made the right faces in the right places, we naturally felt drawn to each other. We joined issue with the sgt. just an odious prig, he lays down the law about music in clichés whose implications we had both passed years ago. We crushed him flat although he didn't know it, and in the mutual pleasant glow of mutual superiority we arranged to meet again on Saturday at 4 and go to some show together.

His name is Donald Bewley, he is tall, fair, with nondescript features, glasses, protruding teeth and a very pleasant voice. He lives in Harrow, and was at University College School

otherwise U.C.S. Has one sister, and a French girl-friend called Rose, a place at New College for history, and an enthusiasm for much the same things as myself. He seems promising.

Friday June 20 1947

This evening I went to some horror films (M.D. q.v.) Their effect on me was negligible, apart from a few shocks at the time, but nothing in the least lasting. George Sardley and Joshua were my companions for this evening and coarse as one is and pretentious as the other, they made fairly pleasant company for an evening when I did not find it necessary to see much of them. I could not endure to be associated with them, especially in public. They have the impossible vice of not being what they pretend to be, besides thinking themselves better than they are, and a cut above most. Have by the way started reading 'The Ingoldsby Legends'. Am not sure I really like them. I see their tremendous energy and enthusiasm, their variety and elasticity of experience, and their capacity to be stimulated by anything is the quality that strikes me. I am annoyed with myself for not attempting them before, for I have many times come across what I now realize were quotations from them. Naturally they are useful for quoting, for there is such an immense quantity of humorously descriptive verse that almost any author could find something for any purpose, if authors were in the habit of looking purposefully for illustrative quotations.

Sunday September 21 1947

I have become within the last few months aware of a change in myself. I call it a change; that is hardly honest enough. A slackening of any little will-power I retained seems to have haunted me these past weeks. I have stopped going to church, which worried me very much. That began after I had decided not to see the Johnsons any more. I came to the conclusion that my social conscience was too sensitive, and that just because people invited one to their house once, and said 'Come whenever you like', it did not mean that I must make myself uncomfortable, or give up time I could not easily spare. So I determined to stay away. Of course I can easily go to another church but as yet I haven't. It's a good regular habit, which apart from its religious significance, gives one a quiet hour or so and a certain restfulness. Now I do not relish giving up my extra time in bed on a Sunday morning. (Only an hour or two) and the time it gives me at the Study Centre, an uninterrupted time from 3 till 8.30. That is of course bound up with my show complex. That is the root cause of trouble, I think. In the middle of a spasm, I feel terrible, lonely, unable to settle down to anything unless I go to the cinema or the theatre. I want at these times to go every night. The thing is like an obsession, a drug. I have even been sometimes to pictures I did not want to see at all, let alone pictures I did not feel I should waste money, though I quite enjoyed some of them. It is the result of a weakening of the muscles of my mind, a pre-occupation with myself, a lessening of my self-consciousness, that has produced this. The failure of my letter writing, of my work, and my entries in this diary and even in my beloved M.D. is only a natural result of the wasting of my time. I think by the very fact of my returning to this record my senses have partly returned (also due I suppose to the dispersal of that hot weather so sapping of energy) and when the Ballet comes next week I shall go strictly in accordance with a proper

desire to get a full picture of its achievement and a full enjoyment of its talent rather than to gulp as a drug to my frustration. I have every intention of beginning my cors. course in Latin tonight at the Study Centre.

Before I finish for today I must relate a most extraordinary incident. After the final performance of the Old Vic Theatre Company I went round (last night) to the stage door. A crowd gathered of about 50. Mostly girls, but quite a few men anxious to see Patricia Burke. The doors remained open, while various members of the company dashed in and out in a state of agitation in case they should not catch the boat. A light drizzle was falling, and the lights from the lobby streamed out on the double row of people. A noise of singing and laughing came from one of the upper dressing-rooms, and with a sudden rush out came all the celebrities - Patricia Burke giggly, and flushed, dressed well in pinky grey alpaca with a new long tunic skirt and a smart toque of brown felt with tight flat feathers. George Relph, quietly melancholically drunk, Bernard Miles jovial and smiling, Treor Howard in old tweeds and a squashy felt hat crammed on his forehead, rolling about. Asked for autographs he said 'No autographs. Write to the studio and you'll get a picture and an autograph', leaning right over one girl's shoulder. They crammed into the bus, Renee Asherson furiously respectable, to the delighted laughter of the crowd. Trevor Howard after an argument about a seat, fell into a seat by the crowd. They banged on the window, and as the bus started up, he took his hat off as a final gesture. He was greeted by a shout of laughter for an hair long straggling over his ears and non-existent on the top combined with bloated purply features to make me feel glad I am an ordinary person.

Tuesday September 23 1947

Last night I went to the Metropolitan Ballet. (M.D. XX) Not good, but good enough to make me feel clever condemning it.

Rearranged ourselves in Hut 12 on the new unit collation scheme. Have a good position with a window behind me, away from the draughts of the door and near the fire. The evenings are already chilly and winter seems almost here again.

We hear that we are to work overtime for the next three weeks, half-an-hour in the mornings and two hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Sandley came around this morning with a petition about the overtime to the War Office. Granted we shall lose time, and my work will be hurt but we dare not complain, for we shall be the only ones to suffer. Surely I cannot go on much longer. Tonight Sandley brought it into the barrack room, and we expressed our doubts about going behind the CO's back. Sandley pooh-poohed it and Geordie Adam tore it up much to Sandley's disgusted stupefaction and our delight.

Wednesday Sept. 24 1947

Today the Sgt-Major gave us a talk about the overtime, saying it was for the War Office Return which had to be in by 30 Oct. and would we put our backs into it. They have a nerve

conscripting us into the Army and then asking us to be enthusiastic about it. Still what must be done, will get done, as long as we can have our grumble out. I daresay we shan't be any worse for a little setback.

In Sander's tonight started to talk to Walter Dowker and Jimmie Wilson. Walter is medium very lithe, very cadaverous haunted-looking, affected unhappy a little wistful, agile brain but no discipline, charm but no culture, will suddenly take you in arms and lean over to be kissed with closed eyes and inviting lips, dances really well, kind hearted to a fault. Jimmie small white-faced, dour, Scotch, wildly exhibitionist and soberly conventional will smile in passing and in the middle of the smile his eyes will cross, his hand will palsy, his leg will halt. Talked and talked and talked about careers a lot of aphoristic nonsense about life. How I wish I didn't over gauge people.

Thursday Sept 25 '47

It is 11.50. One light in the barrack room is out, but the one on this side is on, and four men are sitting at the table in the centre playing poker dice. The light should go out according to the rule we have made for ourselves, at 11.30. The room is square and high, white and green washed, with a wooden stained floor and a board ceiling painted white. The dice rattling, shouts of delight or disgust, pennies ringing on the table, they inhabit the room much more completely than I myself seem to, and are part of the unreality with the unresisting beds and cupboards.

Friday Sept 26 1947

Last night we worked overtime for two hours and again tonight. Both nights I have done a fair amount of work, so much so that the impetus of doing even office work has carried me over into my own work, and given me an urge to work again. The office has been reorganised according to peacetime procedure, and there is far more work that we 1A's will ever be able to carry alone.

I was able to write home and to Rene and Clifford and to finish an article on 'Friends and Relations' for M.D.

Sunday Sept 28 1947

A day to the usual pattern, quiet, pleasant. Up at 10.30, a quick bath, and a good lunch at the NAAFI.

Monday October 6 1947

Everything is quiet and pleasant. I must be careful not to take it for granted. Skating starts on Wednesday - at least I shall get a chance to skate; I've always longed to. I used to watch them so often at Bournemouth. I wonder if I shall stay here long enough to learn. I bet you I get demobbed or something. Demob is speeding up: 450,000 more are coming out between now and March, 1948. Surely that must mean a speed up in release. Then this curious interlude will end, and I will be myself.

Wednesday October 8 1947

Tonight we went skating at the rink at King's Hall. A big queue for the first night soon filed through. I got a skating ticket and a ticket for boots. The hall was transformed, rough boards round the edge of a green wooden coping, surrounding a rink of white and opaque ice about fifty yards by twenty. Many people were already swishing round at a terrifyingly fast rate, girls in short skirts edged with fur, girls in costumes, girls in frocks, girls in trousers, pinkly plump legs ending in high white boots and skates.

I timidly scraped my way to where the others were leaning over the edge of the rink. It is certainly a completely new sensation, the ice is dry and yet slippery, and whole mounds of social barriers slip away with that step on to the rink. It is now permissible to grab anyone round the waist as a last hope against falling, or to bang into anyone, a loud laugh being the only apology necessary. I was most intrigued by the smiles and laughs exchanged between everyone - there's nothing more levelling than ice-skating.

As I struggled off the rink to have a most welcome drink at the milk-bar, a little girl barred my way and said scornfully 'You can't skate'.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 8

A.L. MACKAY

Belfast. 1948

Being the fourth volume of this diary.
Belfast March 25 1948

Thursday March 25 1948

Today I spent my last day in the office. For the last time I sat in the stuffy office with work in front of me. For the last time I forced myself to concentrate on figures and forms and regulations.

Tomorrow is Good Friday, and on Easter Tuesday I leave the Army for good. For good - how peculiar that sounds. Two years and eight months of it - and now at last it is nearly over. It seems to me as though all my life I have been waiting for this hideous extension of the worst side of school, this childish restriction, and I have been placed in the Army at a dull and enervating time in the depths of peace in a dishonourable ludicrously unsoldierly corps. I can see that heavy if elusive problems face both me and home in the next few months.

I have said goodbye to the three civilian women Maya, Flora and Mary with whom I have been working for the last year, and already they have merged and become one with all the women I have worked with. How stultifying it is to work with anyone continually at an uncreative sterile job. How soon you discover how silly you can be, and how trivial others are. If I were a great man I suppose I should be writing the great truths that I have discovered in the Army. But I have discovered no great truths - only the very ordinary ones - that most people are enormously ignorant, prejudiced, selfish, and unreasonable, liking everything that is loud and unnatural, spoiling every lovely thing, ruining every fine thought or action by sliming it with dirty hands. But there is also a real joy in living with people who against every inducement and likelihood, do live fairly decent lives. Not in the moral sense, of course, but in the true sense of the fineness which I may still believe is part of every man. I can still believe with all my strength and mind that natural beauty and truth can and will in the end succeed to the world.

Monday March 29th 1948

It is twelve=thirty, and I am writing in the barrack-room, in which I am sleeping, for the last time. For the last time I am lying between blankets which have made my bed for a year, for the last time see the floor covered in thickening dust, gathering in cotton wool XX, for the last time lie in the dusty blackness under the blankets mainly trying to shut out the noise of drunks, or cards, or dominoes, or the wireless, or someone telling someone else about the

'smashing tart' they had picked up that night. But I will never, of course, see any of these men again, and for that I can be sorry. For besides ignorance that would daunt the strongest-minded and personal habits that would disgust a self-suspecting pig, I have found happiness and (that much sat-on word,) comradeship.

But I am trying to sum up my time in the Army not only without a moment's thought, but before it is truly over.

Wednesday July 14 1948

I have been home now for almost 3 1/2 months. Tomorrow I am 22. In October I go to Cambridge. Since I was demobbed I have done nothing - or almost nothing, beyond live in the house. I cannot even seem to make myself read everything worthwhile, except Bernard Shaw. I have lately for some reason read almost everything of his I can lay my hands on, especially his dramatic criticism and his letters to Ellen Terry, besides of course his plays. I explain my uselessness to the others (and to myself sometimes) by saying that I am at a loose end, with no background, no personalities, no conversation no pattern of work to stimulate me. After all when I was at school I wrote enough, and when I was at Bournemouth alone and completely free I wrote massses, and in London though diminished by lack of fire and time. But I must not disguise my specious arguments all my laziness. I don't know. I don't know. I wish I could stop this wishy dithering.

Thursday July 15 1948

My 22nd birthday. Felt seedy all day though worse round tea. Presents from everywhere usual. Lalla has gone away to P.V. where her nephew has died. Beastly business. Dear me, what a nice little record of events. The day passed muggy and grey, with no scrap of interest. To bed very tired.

Saturday July 17 1948

To Leeds in the morning for matinee at Theatre Royal, 'Jonathan' by Alan Melville. What a help to see real acting again. Leeds is filthy dirty, and full of the most unpleasant crowds of ugly frost slatternly people wandering aimlessly through muck-sodden streets with all their purposelessness and looseness written all over their faces.

Sunday July 18 1948

Usual Sunday, but more rush than usual Lalla being away. To Hainsworth's house for supper. Mr Hainsworth, quiet one-eyed lawyer, calmly smoking pipe in fireside chair, Mrs. H. large fair pleasant, David H. tall fair, small too-precise features, nose-in-the air, Janet tall good figure no head, Margaret H. 17-ish, heifer. Very hearty, very exhausting. Very dull.

Monday July 19 1948

Lalla comes home in the 'van' a rattly battered once-green little affair, with family and grubby Edwin and some unidentified little girl. Spent the rest of the evening listening to Lalla describing G. and M's sorrow and Mummy asking ghoulish leering questions. Hateful deaths!

Tuesday July 20 1948

A very hot stuffy day. Tempers on edge. Went to barber in afternoon where barber himself talked quite too much. Out straight after tea to cinema. Danny Kaye really funny. Bought a book in Boot's 'English Theatre' by J.C. Trewin. Too funny, so I am writing in daily round after all. Oh for the end of this awful waiting! Wrote on D's inspiration (quite against own will) to Income Tax Office for V emp. jobs. So soul-destroying.

Wednesday July 21 1948

Very strong gale blowing all day. To the town in the afternoon with M. and D. to buy a new mac. for D. As usual on family shopping trips, conducted on definitely vague lines, wandering here and there in and out of shops, to an undertone accompaniment of acrimonious accusations that M. had tried to persuade D. to by a too expensive coat, or that D. had walked M. too far and why didn't he plan his shop-seeing. Finally ended up with a good light-weight mac just right for carrying, of course it probably won't keep the rain out, but what's the odds if D. thinks it the right thing? I bought a tie, too, brown silk XX blue. D. off of course to Fort William tomorrow evening on polytechnic tour. Not my idea of fun. Fortnight of freedom for us though. Bit cruel to D. who is no Theobald Butler except on my dog days. Deaf in one ear all today. Bother.

Thursday July 22nd 1948

House in jumble until I left at 6.30 for cinema. How D. can take so long just packing for a fortnight I don't know. He lays all his things out on the bed, and waltzes round them for hours wondering whether he's taking too much or not enough, or the right things, and expending masses of energy and indignation at our expense adding subtracting or exchanging them. He opened banking a/c for me today with £50, so that I can pay off Camb. bill. Made me write to Min. of Educ. to claim the amount first though. Typed letter himself after all. Such a silly letter. I should have paid bill and left it at that. So bourgeois to question everything! What fun I have!

Friday July 23 1948

This morning to Barclay's Bank in Hallgate for the opening of my account. M. came with me of course. Manager greeted us in his office rather pompously ordinary. He copied down some details on a form, took two specimen signatures, got me to sign one or two more mysterious forms, got M. to sign some, arranged for a transfer to Camb. in Sept. and that was that. I didn't understand a word. Still what matters as long as I get the money. Received my cheque-book proudly, pride diminished a little by knowledge that until September banking a/c not <u>really</u> mine.

To choir 7.30. Spent most of the time at Stanford's 'XX XX' from service in C. Shade of D's K.S. service.

Saturday July 24 1948

To town in morning to the Lending Library. Streets were very full for it is race meeting this weekend. Traffic lights are turned off, and traffic is controlled entirely by white-coated policemen. It took me about ten minutes to get across the road, while horse-carriers special charabancs full of work-men - racegoers, hired cars full, private cars with one lolling occupant, motor-bikes, lorries, tandems, and bicycles, and so on rolled past. Listened to Test Match in afternoon. Australia nearly all out, for 39 less than us. V. five innings by Harvey to 111. Mushrooms for supper. Ugh!

Sunday July 25 1948

Roastingly hot day. My head was bursting all day, and I came home from church with my shirt really wet all down the back. Discovered I had left my raincoat in the Palace Cinema, and had to ring up and go and retrieve it. I was forced of course to tip the commissionaire and found to my horror that I had nothing less than half-a-crown. To bed. Tired.

Monday July 26 1948

Bernard Shaw was 92 today. That is the amazing thing - he is really alive. Tonight, somewhere in the Ayot St. Lawrence, he is in bed - alive. It has been so terribly hot today that it has been impossible to do anything but lie down and limp. I went out this evening but was soaked with sweat almost immediately. Have read a book by Pres. of Society for Psychical Research. Shall try automatic writing before I go to bed. No good though, I am afraid. No, as I thought, nothing happened, except a rushing in my head, produced I imagine by nervous tension or my arteries!?

Tuesday July 27 1948

Not quite so hot today, but still stifling. Stayed in all day and did nothing. Feel guilty. Could not do this if D. were home. I mean I never do anything anyway, but today I have scarcely moved except for meals. So hot - so hot.

Wednesday July 28 1948

Not quite so hot today, I think, but still terrible. Put on my vest again to sop up a bit of the sweat. Went to a concert and tea organised by Mrs. Huckett in the afternoon. In the Y.W.C.A. hall, quite cool and pleasant. Audience consisted almost entirely of predatory raddled middle-aged females, elaborately though tastelessly dressed and much made up. Music not only mediocre in quality but in performance. Scrawny harsh soprano and 'our own' Mrs. Kelsey timidly tittering at a high note. Music for me just an interruption for conversation. Quite charming lady from Turin there name Margharita Cobelini, probably only charmed me because she was Italian. May not have been charming really. Art student type girl, fairly full check dress, very wide leather belt, and sandals - going to Old Vic Theatre School to study Stage Designing. Never do much, I should think. All rather silly. Conversed with M.C. about English vowels. Ital. ears must be acute.

Thursday July 29 1948

Every day seems to go past in one long dreamy haze on these hot XX. A little cooler today, but so tired. Listened to the opening of the Olympic Games this afternoon. Imagine bringing the King all that way to say five words or so. To cinema in evening and nearly sat next to those two girls I met yesterday. Must have been that they were arranging. How awful if they had seen me! Still I don't suppose I look the pursuing type.

Friday July 30 1948

Another warm day in which I did precisely nothing. In the evening about a quarter past nine went out a walk with L. A violent argument had been raging between us all about the holiday at Lytham St. Anne's. So silly. I don't want to go away for a holiday at all to a seaside resort with every facility for pleasure in which I have no interest, and every possible protection from any natural phenomenon which might persuade you that you were living upon a vital earth and not in a comatose and artificially insulated city.

Monday August 2 1948

August Bank Holiday. Was invited by Janet Hainsworth to spend the rest of the day after lunch with John and the rest of the young people. We met at Clock Corner and formed such a crowd that we were moved on by a policeman. Went to the Regal - a little flea-house. Saw

'Oh, Mr. Porter' - years old and still funny. Lot of suburban chaff. Trouble is all so chaffy and gay that it depresses terribly after about an hour. I definitely joined in heartily, still depressing. Rather too consistently empty-headed. Quite merry at any rate. Family enjoyed myself. Did the glass and alphabet séance at end of evening and our glass spelled out my name. Then, when asked what its name was, spelled KAT and then a lot of X and Q and things. But through my head went Kathy.

Tuesday August 3 1948

Pouring with rain when I got up, and much cooler for which I was very thankful. Wnt round to the Mays' about 11.00 and to the Gaumont Cafe with Derick May for coffee. The rest of the 'crowd' were there at a corner table and for a few minutes there was a faint recreation of a Cambridge coffee-house, but very faint. To the cinema with Donald in afternoon. What people they let into the gallery nowadays! Black fingernails and greasy hair, and children who stamp and kick and yell. Of course it is holiday time. Still. -

Wednesday August 4th 1948

A splitting headache all today. To the library in the morning, but found nothing. All papers still failed, because of some stupid strike or something.

I have just looked at my diary of 2 years ago. A fine comparison with now. Have I given way altogether? Not altogether, please not altogether. I can still find myself again, as I did under my own steam at Bournemouth, and under the stimulus of London, but not in a crowded barrack room without a moment to myself, nor in a household which is dead and stultifying. I am dying for life in D. Oh - if only Camb. were now, instead of 2 months hence.

Thursday August 5 1948

A nondescript day, until Derick May rang up at about one o'clock and asked me to go to a cinema with him, and afterwards spend the evening at his house. Was most annoyed, as had arranged something else for myself, but had no choice but to say yes. Saw an unlikeable and valueless thriller, and spent the evening playing cards and afterwards singing dance music until about twenty past twelve. Am sure I overstayed my welcome as far as Mrs. May was considered. But through no wish of mine. Derick M. kept me there singing and singing. Whole evening XX too sloppy and formless and giggly to be really pleasurable. I seem sometimes even to myself to have enjoyed it, but when I look on it honestly, I realise that this is because their amusement at my rather ordinary and artificial wit called out all too often these days has tickled my ego. It's not good for me. Standards drop like anything.

Friday August 6 1948

Another nondescript day. Never went outside the house the whole morning or rest of day. Quite manually limp. Couldn't honestly say that a thought came into my head at any time. D. comes home at 4.30 tomorrow morning. What at time to arrive. Hope I shall not wake up.

Saturday August 7 1948

A throbbing headache all day. D. returned, very fit and brown. Seems to have enjoyed himself tho' cannot say I should. He mentioned something about booking up now for us all to go there next year. Can't see me enjoying it. Of course you never know what a year of Cambridge may do. Do hope I get 3 years after all. Ronald said I should. Could not bear 2. Not long enough - 3 essential for experiment, consolidation and triumph! Glad to go to bed. If only this month were over! And to think - once I would have given all to be at home.

Sunday August 8 1948

Again woke with a splitting headache. Probably too much reading. Walked out of house to church in bad temper and met L. Warne going too. Stupid little-red-faced creature; was unable to shake him off so could not try for paper before church. Could not get one after of course, which did not improve my temper. Wandered everywhere, hot and sticky - but no luck. What annoys me so much is that these beastly workmen who usually buy any Sunday paper (preferably the News of the World for the extra attraction of the filthy stories) buy Times and Observer if there's nothing else going, read the sports column and chuck them away. When I think of it. Wrote a fair time up here after lunch. Robert and M. Young and Pauline and Mrs. Llewellyn came to tea. Pauline quite attractive child. Fair with unusually brown brown eyes. Mrs. L. small grey-haired, bustley, 'refained' and V. talkative. M.Y. quite attractive tho' not pretty. Curiously intriguing nose shaped like a dibble or whatever it's called.

Monday August 9 1948

A most irritating day - or perhaps I should say that I was most irritable. Living at home is utterly demoralising. Going and doing a temporary job would, I think, have been more so. I am enough removed from the right atmosphere as it is without becoming office-minded as well. But home is too much for me. M. is hopeless, cannot organise, cannot think talk or act straight. Potters, fusses, shifts responsibility and is general liability. D. is annoyed I think by lack of discipline but is too pernickety and becoming smug. Oh, when I have my money! All too silly. They are not clever enough to be unjust, just vague. My self-control is completely sapped. I did masses of all sorts of work at Bournemouth (all awful, but never mind, still work) where I was completely my own master. Less at London where I had less time and not quite such complete solitude. Less dwindling to none at Belfast where I had no solitude at all. It's partly me, but still results have proved that I have done nothing at home ever,

whereas I have done a lot away. This is a terribly ordinary household to live in. I can't just sit down and read improving literature - I can't. You can't read poetry just anywhere any time. And you can't do anything alone without discussion. Nor am I going to. Don. gets more and more annoying - partly me too again. He has exchanged the highbrow set of prejudices for a sort of hearty lowbrow broad-minded set - most most provoking. XX XX.

Tuesday August 10 1948

M. asked me to go with her to choose pair of shoes. Went with foreboding, for knowing her of old realised how easy it was to put her off with just a word of dislike for any certain pair of shoes. Chose finally bow on top court - black suede. Fine. £3.15.9. Quite dear. A good shoe, I think. Feel much better today though spent the rest of morning wandering aimlessly round after M. whose manner of shopping is nothing if not thorough. Spent 25 minutes in Poynter's, the meat-pie shop, waiting among a lot of nasty dirty women for some sausage-rolls and cornish pasties that never came. In afternoon stayed in until 4.30 when M. asked me to go down for shoes left at cobbler's yesterday. All ready all three pairs - two heeled, one soled and helled. A shock these days. Cobbler large and jovial - too jovial - however. Spent most of evening helping D. with index of names and addresses of Church members. D. is quite hopeless. Takes ages to find a name and writes badly. Still fathers are fathers!

Wednesday August 11 1948

A very gloomy-weathered day. Wireless told us that harvest is in grave danger from rain rotting the grain. Spent the afternoon up here in my room writing to Flo, Rene and Mike. What a lot of unnatural and silly things I have to write to those two, Flo and Rene. No harm in either of them, one a lively little old maid of 54 with a penchant for sculpture and a dwindling unearned income and the other an old maid of 35, longing to be independent of the possessive parents without whom she would be completely lost. I have to say the most sloppy to them, things I am afraid I don't always mean, and write about things in which I have no interest - just whatever comes into my head. It's even worse with the Sherwells - I tremble to think what some of my letters to them were like.

As for my letters to Mike - well, Mike - they are something different and very precious - my only honest correspondence. It is a distinct strain to write to him simply because I have so much to say - everything in fact. But those letters compensate me for all the trouble I take in the answers I get and make up for the silly letters I write to other people.

Bother! We have been able to get bookings in Lytham St. Anne's and I don't want to go at all.

Thursday August 12 1948

Another cold wet day. Put my vest back on, and still felt shivery. Stayed up here all the afternoon attempting to get M.D. up to date. Still feel it to be very je XX To a PYPS (stupid) choir practice at 6.15. Then on to Mr. Jackson's. Desperately boring evening, standing about and chatting with all these people - oh! The young people (Bank Holiday crowd) all there too. I am apparently 'one of us' for they admitted me to their circle with welcoming smiles. Quite an honour! (they are depressing - archly naughty jokes - I get so tired laughing and smiling. Have agreed to go to Sheffield with them to see the play with Dulcie Gray and Michael Dennison in it. At the beginning of the evening we all stood round the swimming pool and watched four people simply blue with cold flopping about in a frozen kind of way. Fortunately the evening was more or less saved by Roger, the Jackson' dog, rushing round and round and finally being cajoled for his swim by throwing his ball into the bath. Most diverting.

Friday August 13 1948

Friday the 13th, but quite a happy day all the same. Janet H. rang up to say only 8/- seats left for Sheffield does that wash me out? It does. I am glad really. Did not want to see two inept film stars. Evening enlivened by visit of two airmen from nearby Finningley Air Station. Came to consult Daddy about some trouble which turned out to be that they had been 3 months in the RAF, and were homesick. I didn't see them, but M. told me they cried copiously. Simply the result of being away from home for first time and being forced to realize suddenly that they are not the most important people in the world nor the centre of it. They'd only have to learn it in real life much more slowly and painfully. That's what we go away to school for. Home and its protecting walls has to vanish sometime. David, my David, dropped in, on his way back from Channel Islands with Mother, Father, and Cousin Doreen. Doreen not pretty, fair, lowish forehead, blunt nose, generous mouth, but charming and clever. About 22. Wish could see more of her. Mrs. Sawyer tall, once fair, very brown, very like David. Rather ordinary but harmless and will not I think impede David's social climb over-much. Father short, stoutish unaccountably like F.M. Montgomery, a resemblance he accentuates by wearing a black beret in Monty style. A silly man, liable to say almost anything, though partly accounted for by the fact that the poor man is deaf. I wish deaf people got a little more sympathy. It is difficult though, it's such a silly disability.

Saturday August 14 1948

A close heavy cloudy day. Nothing whatever happened all day until 7.0 when I went out to Wilkinson's. Another of those evenings. I do not think I really could describe it, exactly like the other ones I've had except in a different room. Masses and masses of very small small-talk. Waiting for somebody else to tell a joke. All very depressing as I've said before, and I can see from this entry what a stultifying effect it has on me. We are going to Lytham St. Anne's after all. Oh!

Sunday August 15 1948

Today the 'young people' with whom I've had the depressingly bright evenings were conducting the services. I was in the choir with them, because they asked me. All through the practices Eric Deacon, a skinny and loud-voiced young man kept on telling me not to sing so loud. We sang well this morning, but I was pleased to hear someone say that the inclusion of E.D. at night (he couldn't get in morning) spoiled the ensemble. Was able to get my Sunday papers today for first time since Aug -1 when strike began. Such a pleasant feeling of-surrounded-by-wealth-of-up-to-dateness again. A very ordinary day though on the whole. In afternoon D., Donald, Lalla and I had 'vast' argument about the Church. L. didn't like young people doing things. Much too complicated and unimportant to put down. Got very heated. Delicious argument. L quite wrong.

Monday August 16 1948

Tomorrow we go away to Lytham St. Anne's. Likely to be a most boring and uncomfortable holiday. Dare not say so. D. very sensitive about not really having enough money to do quite all we greedy ones want. Think we might have stayed home with advantage, tho' L. really needs holiday from washing-up. Train leaves tomorrow at 10.28. That means up at about 6.30. What a prospect! Spent this afternoon and part of tonight packing. D. told me off severely for taking all three pairs of shoes. How he thinks I can go with only two I don't know. Two are brown, one black, and with my feet as they are I daren't wear a pair two days running. I never have been able to. It sounds finicky even to me, but really it's necessary. I wish I could get away from them all. They surround themselves with an atmosphere of pettiness and I get drawn into it. For all his fine talk D. has never done anything nor been associated with anything that wasn't second rate. Whenever he comes up against anything that is, he carefully shuts his eyes and calls it 'affected' or 'posing' or 'highbrow' or 'unreal'. I'm sick of him, and I might as well admit it to myself. I thought for a long time what a lot I owe to him, and so I do in a way - financially for example. Ever if I got into any trouble, I should undoubtedly run to him for protection. Still I find him holding me back either openly or by atmospherics as it were from everything I find most valuable and most likeable. I felt it was just the usual rebellion of sons. But it is his awful secondrateness. His second-rate letters with pompous phrases or too intimate lines, his second-rate loose-spirited writing (I would never never never defer to him for advice in writing) only bearable at its most material and matter of fact, but most commended by its author at its most glibly smug passages, his secondrate ideas, and his secondrate past. He has in his files many letters from famous men and women among them Don Bradman, John Masefield, Sybil Thorndike and so on. Lots of letters all short and sweet answers to requests to lecture at the Young People's Methodist Guild! Oh - what meanness of living! How could he connect such people with such suburbanity, such mediocre lifelessness! The very people above whom the famous have irrevocably risen and he wants them to lecture to them! All - oh! he would never understand how depressing and wearying it all is.

Tuesday August 17 1948

In Lytham-St. Anne's. We travelled most of the day, arriving in Manchester at about midday in a blinding torrent of rain. M'chester looking at its very worst. Grey forbidding and slimy. Caught a connection to here, and arrived about 4.30. On arriving at hotel had to return to station for my little case, only to find that D. had taken it into the hotel. Donald and I are sleeping out four doors away, in a little room full of two beds and a solid old chest of drawers. On one wall is the old print 'The Sunshine of his Heart', on another a fierce Red Indian, over my bed print of 'Bridge Over Lake, Blenheim Pal.' and over Donald's 'Blenheim Palace', both in wide redwood frames. Outside on the landing are a lot of framed postcards depicting street XX of Old London.

Our main 'Guest House' where we eat is full of people, very Lanc. and chummy. Sing and make jokes all the time. Quite objectionable. Have not been able to sort them all out yet, but hope to tomorrow. Owners of house Mr. and Mrs. Middleton. Mr. short, moustached, bristly hair, very cockney, most vulgar, probably quite good-hearted, Mrs. M. very black hair, small, hook nose, wears very high wedge shoes, about 35. Have boy and girl 12 and 10. Girl's name Vanessa 'after Walpole' as Mrs. M said. But more tomorrow. Don. wants to go to sleep.

Wednesday August 19 1948

5.30 p.m.

What a dump this is! Not sufficiently sophisticated or commercialized to give you really civilized amenities, and too commercialized to give you natural ones. We spent all this morning wandering round and round in that peculiarly maddening way D. has. We all follow him like sheep, as if we dare not be separated for a second. If we want to break away, it entails a considerable and heating argument. I don't like seaside places. I don't want to walk on the pier, in the gardens, along the promenade, nor anywhere else except the shops on a cool day and the other places if and when I feel like it. There is nothing for me to do here at all, especially with a number of other people who don't like what I like. I have simply exchanged the comparative comfort of home for the inconveniences of a poor boarding-house and deprived myself of any opportunity to do anything which I can enjoy, all in the name of holiday, without adding any other pleasure in exchange.

11.30 p.m.

It continues as bad. Again the vagueness. To the cinema this evening. Imagine going to the pictures on holiday. Oh! But imagine coming to a place where they cater for amusements and leave nothing else for you to do, as if you could predict an amusement. Everything's false here - promenade, swimming-pool, pier, stone-edged grottos and artificial pools, people. Not that I don't want artificiality for amusement. I do. But I can't stand people, people, people. I'm always interested in them, but unless I can get occasionally during a day get by myself and be quiet I can't stand them. I can't be interested in them when they are, as it were, assaulting me from the outside. Oh! this is beastly. In the lounge again, small room full of people. Guests consist of one family, large cheerful wife, dropsical legs, large gloomy

husband recently ill, a daughter aged eighteen, and her friend, office-types both but have been at Polytechnic, and hoping for University to teach. Another family, very Scotch, father plump, brown, silent, wife smartish, handsomeish, little girl, named Christine aged 4. Three maiden ladies hovering between 45-50, determined to have a good time and don't care who knows it, one, 1930 vintage, bobbed, waved close-to-head peroxide hair, straight figure, second scrawny, white-hair, mutton dressed as lamb, would be sardonic if she knew what word meant, third fat, giggly, given to making very funny (sic) remarks and gestures very obviously not funny and too obtrusive. Another family, father big, nondescript man, clerk of some kind, tall grey haired wife, could be intelligent but I doubt it, and tremendously thin pretty dark child of 9 Suzanne. A Scothwoman, Mrs. Roberts quite passable, and a quite pretty daughter with poor skin. Finally a dark young man and woman engaged, he from Merchant Navy wanted Gov. grant to go to college of Estate Management, but no go. She, unidentifiable but sure I've seen her before. In Army? Attractive.

Thursday August 19 1948

A blustery day, tho' still sunny. Walked to the shops in the morning, and to coffee in the kiosk cafe. then M. and I went to sit in a shelter while D. Don and Lalla bought a ball, and started to play Hit the Penny. All through the day persisted that feeling of unreality, of not-thereness as if my mind simply would <u>not</u> believe my senses which has attracted me elsewhere. It is partly the result of the journey, of moving quickly from one place to another, but not altogether. I feel as if I am abstracted from all conventions, all morals, all embarrassments, all feeling of any kind except that of unreality. I feel that I could do a murder in this state and deny with conscientious rectitude and complete moral conviction that I had done it. Getting very 'chummy' with all the people. Oh! What a strain!

Friday August 20 1948

I find it difficult to write much here, not so much because I have done little materially (tho' actually it is true that we do very little except wander around trying to decide what to do and snapping each other's heads off) but rather that being inescapably <u>with</u> someone the whole time I am nearly mad for a little aloneness. Solitude seems such a precious word these days. I haven't been able to read one sentence without interruption since we got here, and whatever anyone may say or however they may sneer I cannot go on without some time during the day when I can be by myself and think or read or vegetate but by myself. That's what got on my nerves so much in the Army and that's what I fight for all the time. Of course I'm not so finicky fanny as to moan petulantly 'I must be alone. I am dying for solitude'. But I cannot be myself without it, all the same it doesn't matter for this holiday. It isn't long enough. But I couldn't stand it if I could see lots of it stretching forwards into the future. M. actually asked to tell jokes, in front of everybody tonight. I don't mean that "everybody" frightened me. They didn't for I love an audience of almost any sort. But I cannot tell jokes to order, nor really do I even tell 'jokes'. To be really funny you must gently lead the conversation round an ambling path slipping your tales carefully in at the corners and making quite sure that you

don't make what would be a funny remark into a boring story. I'll murder M. if she asks me to tell Fool foot again! How it did make the Baskervilles laugh!

Saturday August 21 1948

Today we moved into another hotel because our rooms are filled from today in the other. This hotel definitely more 'refined', that is to say, a private hotel where you are left alone. Rather more frowsty, I am afraid. No one in the 'lounge' in the afternoon, but we met the proprietors, Miss Simondic and Miss Bland. There is another one but she never appears - named Miss Bupham. Miss S. flustered looking - limp white hair and overall, Miss B. small sharp-nosed, spectacles, floppy figure, intensely energetic, and loose dress. In evening lounge filled up - first Miss Sedman, whom we have named Fraulein Kofundschpit because she has a terrific cough old, white-haired ,plump, thick moustache and beard, then an Irishman and an English lady relationship uncertain, agreeable, then in Bounced Miss. Bird or perhaps Byrd, large female about 30, slightly affected, gym-mistressy, though office-worker. Finally a fair fat woman and dark thin man, relationship again uncertain, with a dog. This seems awfully wooden. I am writing after a short but exhausting argument with Donald. Main trend that I can't live my life just as I want to do. I repudiate others, I'm a snob, I've made myself very awkward about this holiday and so on. Cannot bear this sort of talk, especially from him than which a more selfish person never breathed. Vindictive! Will write more tomorrow. So tired.

Sunday August 22 1948

Today the 2nd Edinburgh Festival opera, and I have not seen a London paper for a week, nor any papers today. I wish I didn't have to have these gaps in my collection. Shall not relate conversation with Donald after all. It was just one of his outbursts, I see now, for it actually contained an appeal to be considerate to D. What impudence! He's a fine one to ask me for that and in any case I've forgotten most of it now.

Don't seem to have the energy for diarising, tho' partly due to too much talking. Ghastly women - old with beard is nearly bald, Fraulein Koffundschpit, talks vaguely and do does her friend, great long-nose, all legs, only really nice people are Irishman and English lady. She is tall, masses of dark curly hair, brown and pink complexion, long-questing nose, and a wide and frequent smile. Irishman plump jovial and tea-lover. Dinkie's owner gets worse. Dinkie apparently eats choc-chocs and get Rose-Hip syrup that so many mothers won't even give to their children, but after all that's life! Went to church. Precisely as usual. Pitch-pine and old dears in felt hats. Only the more you see of them the less dear they become.

Monday August 23 1948

A very windy day; the sand was being blown in clouds over the promenade. In the evening about six o'clock took the bus to Blackpool. B. is famous as a pleasure resort, for Lancashire people and Northerners especially. We got off the bus and found ourselves by a row of four large theatres all announcing in more or less gaudy posters their attractions, all of the variety sort. To the left of us, was about half-a-mile of amusement arcades, queer amorphous barns of buildings, filled to overflowing with penny-in-the-slot machines of mild gambling kind.

These automatic games of polo, cricket, football, golf, boxing, and even two babies who were made by turning two wheels to drink their bottles in contest. They were numberless and inhabited by crowds of intent people vapidly pursuing a chimera of enjoyment following little balls to win them another penny. Above the whole waited the treacly voices of recorded crooners coming from American-type 'juke-boxes' which enable the herd to play their favourite slop forever, at no more personal trouble than is required to slip a penny in a slot. Out in the street were stalls filthy with dirt and sand, presenting winkles, cockles, shrimps, candy floss and meat pies to the public through the hands of greasy men and rag-haired women, their whole persons matted with filth. Further along stood many side-shows of the 'Is Marriage a Failure? Come and see for yourself in our little French Theatre' variety. We went in to see the Spider Woman (an old trick with mirrors) and the fish-woman mermaid. The amusing thing about freaks is the wondering exactly how outrageously you will this time be cheated of your sixpence. Further along we came upon the most tragic exhibit of all - Epstein's great figure of Adam, standing in all its grandeur in a stinking little sideshow. I am not going to dilate on its artistic beauties because I am not qualified to do so, but it does not require more than common sense to realize that one of the major works of the world's greatest sculptors should not be standing in Blackpool in atrocious conditions to be sniggered at by a crowd of ignorant and loathsome trippers.

Set off along promenade in very strong head-wind to the notorious Pleasure Beach, a permanent fair-ground, superficially very pleasant because most fairgrounds are so dirty and makeshift while this one is solidly if hideously built - mostly in cubist white concrete. Very bright colours on all the side-shows, and even grass and flowers round some. Many of the shows quite hair-raising. The Big Dipper is a sort of car pulled up a track by cables in which you sit not expecting anything but a rise when after going along a flat bit you suddenly go almost straight down down under the ground into a tunnel from an enormous height at terrific speed, or switchback over a dozen violent bends. There was a thing call The Reel where you sat in a round tub and started along a series of hair-pin bends, getting faster and faster and faster, the tub going round on its own axis at the same time. There was a ghost train, a children's train, a lover's grotto with little boats going round a covered water-way, there were dodg'ems, little electric cars with thick rubber bumpers, (our favourites these), there were palmists and fortune-tellers, bump-readers and graphologists, there were all sorts of variations on the roundabout, hideous little cabins turning over and over and round and round at the ends of long chromium-plated poles, there was a great restaurant with huge muslin-draped windows, a dinner dance with band all for 4/-, as near an approximation to a cinema ballroom as possible, and most of all there were hundreds of games of choice, throwing balls down a peirrot's mouth into numbered holes, ringing ducks, wagging up and down, 'Bunty Pulls the Strings', the glass Roller-Monkey Business, 'Noah's Ark', and so on, all with cheap dolls and Woolworth glass, composition animals, and plastic condiment sets for prizes. We left the Pleasure Beach about 9.15, passing on our way the hundreds of people milling round the stalls. Blackpool was not full, being a Monday night, but full enough for us. What people! Tall, short, thin, fat, dark and fair, pretty and plain, but all dowdy, dirty, greasy-haired, black fingernails, pasty complexions, clothes frowsty, shoes dusty, their voices shrilling, their tempers on edge. Wondering aimlessly intent on enjoying themselves or dying in the attempt. People who will never learn any lesson from calamity, and who have no consciousness of themselves in the world. People whose one conviction is each for himself

and the devil take the hindmost, yet with no thought to meet their fate should they be the hindmost.

Blackpool, for Blackpool, was empty. Even so the sight was sickening. A vast machine for enjoyment, a contradiction of humanity, a vast stinking wretched funfair.

Tuesday August 24 1948

A calmer day, though still a strong wind. Am feeling tired today after our long walk of yesterday. Spent the morning on the pier, listening to those disgusting children showing themselves off for sixpence. I think M. must secretly <u>like</u> it. Laughed myself at two little girl twins only 3, singing Oh! What a beautiful mornin'! One buried her face in the microphone and made all kinds of moans and squawks, the other looked about her in a blandly bored way. In the afternoon sat in a shelter with M. reading. After about an hour and a half stupefied to see Donald turn up bare-footed, having been on the beach with L. and D. digging a sand-castle. Can't say I blame them, but would feel it silly myself, most unsuitable for people of riper years! I must say sometimes I think all some parents have children for, is so that they can build sand castles again under pretence of doing it for children. Evening ended in rain, and after a visit to the cinema some games of cards and a dull conversation about dreams. To bed very tired, considerably cheered by the thought that we go home on Friday.

Wednesday August 25 1948

A gale blowing. Usual coffee in morning, and M. and I to pics and music as before. Am under impression that tempers are getting frayed. D. seems funny and moody. How they do <u>love</u> getting boiled up about something secretly and then having to have it ferreted out by someone else and have a nasty underhand quarrel and reveal all sorts of things casually that should be kept quiet and lots of things with great import that don't matter a bit, and recriminations, and paddys and goings off in a temper and no one saying what they mean and being suddenly self-sacrificial. This afternoon went out to play golf. D. very awkward. Played golf tho' very windy. D. must have said something nasty to L. for when they were going to the cinema tonight he said, to her 'Are you coming?' She said 'No' and started to cry. Really he is disgusting. He never knows when he has been rude, and has some of Donald's selfishness in not being able to admit it and apologise. L. has done nothing and said nothing that could possibly have deserved rudeness, and it must have taken a horrible lot to make <u>her</u> cry. I think it is disgusting so kind and so loyal, and she could much more money less work and nicer people but she won't. And then we can't even be nice to her. Despicable! He must <u>know</u> he's wrong. A good thing we go home soon. Food getting worse.

Thursday August 25 1948

The last day here. A card came from Michael this morning giving his address in R.A.F. somewhere in Grantham, and a scribble saying he would be writing. He didn't seem

particularly miserable and I had a sneaking feeling that I wish he could be as unhappy as I was in the Army. Isn't it strange how we do that even to great friends? I wish in a way I'd been an Officer, for the difficulty is always there of telling people you were a private, but I'm glad I didn't try. I should probably have failed anyway, but apart from that I was as happy in the Pay corps as I would have been anywhere. I am a bit useless really. I can't really do anything. I shall have to be most careful to steer between saying bumptiously that I could have been an Officer but chose to stay with the men (so silly to say that when there isn't anything to do with the men in the Pay corps except office work) and saying too shamefacedly I was a private in RAPC. There are a great many things I must be careful about at C. and the first safeguard will be to talk as little as possible. I made a mess of the Willey's but then it was a bit awkward banging in as an unknown and compulsorily invited guest. Perhaps I didn't make such a mess as I thought, I don't know. But I must be careful.

Friday August 27 1948

Back home at last, and safe and sound. That I should be glad to be in Doncaster, when I first arrived I should never have believed, but the years in the Army taught me to be glad to see Doncaster, and after escapades such as this I am also glad. I am back here at my own desk in my own hideous room, hideous but my own. We set out this morning from the hotel at 9.0, leaving in a welter of goodbyes. We arrived early enough at the station to have some twenty minutes to wait for the train which left at 9.28. While we were waiting, Donald and I went over the bridge to the newsagents' on the arrival platform to see if we could get a Times or Manchester Guardian. (Donald likes to see the official appointments while he is searching for a job.) M. was very worried and nervous lest the train should come in and be gone before we could get back over the bridge. I told her we both had our tickets so what did it matter, but I am afraid she has never got over the childish fear of travel, and still thinks that to miss a train is opportunity for melodrama and a sure conviction that one will never see the tardy person again for he or she will somehow be swallowed inexorably and irrevocably in to the maw of the railway. D. I think is much the same, for when we arrived at Manchester, he made us four wait with the cases on the empty platform while he went to inquire about a connection for Sheffield. So silly, for we obviously had no alternative but to go down from the platform, along the subway and up to the main part of the station. Anyone could see that wherever our connection went from it certainly wouldn't go from the platform where the Blackpool train had just come in. There were recriminations in the taxi, and a slightly gloomy meal in a Lyon's, most interestingly decorated with lithographs of paintings specially commissioned by Lyon's for their restaurants, from famous contemporary artists, and I don't mean RAS. I noticed a very lively still life by Duncan Grant on the wall nearest us, but had no time nor opportunity to go close enough to examine any others. A dull journey as most journeys are in a train, with little country to see around Manchester and Sheffield. Pleasant to return home really. Went out to the cinema. Cannot stand first nights in. Very dully picture (see M.D.) To bed very very tired.

Saturday August 28 1948

Really when I sit down at night to write in my diary of these days at home I wonder how I can possibly think of anything definite enough to write down. I have done nothing today except write, read and go down to the library. I did not notice anything much on the way. I am not alive enough at home to notice things much. I more or less walk about in a daze. Perhaps something more will happen to me tomorrow other than finding it difficult to know what to put in my diary.

Sunday august 29 1948

Tonight was invited to Kelsey's. Also invited to Hainsworth. What a social whirl! At Kelseys' noticed that peter, 13, and at Malvern is coming to the silly stage. Poor mother and father! Will be a very decent fellow I think in the end. Talked to him and Mrs. K. a long time, quite nice enough, although rather too pretentious for my taste. It flatters my vanity to talk to them. I feel I know so much more even of little things than they do. They haven't the slightest idea what 'hors d'oeuvres meant, let alone how to pronounce it. I suppose I might as well help them up the social ladder as another. At 11.30 said 'I must go'. They said 'Stay'. At 11.45 said 'I must go' and they said 'Stay just a few minutes'. On getting outside was tortured by thought that I'd talked too much and stayed too long. Had I? Oh dear that's what I must be careful about at Camb. Was their dissuasion simply polite? How terrible if it was! They'll be saying 'Golly I thought he would never go!' Oh! I wish I know. It's no use my getting up and saying strictly 'I make a point of going to bed at 11.30. I must go', because I don't. Oh! dear.

Monday August 30 1948

Oh how to distinguish between one day and another here. I wish I had more resource or observation. I never even seem to see anything here. Spent most of day working for myself, but in afternoon took a cheque down to Mr. Kelsey's shop to settle account for my trousers. Passing the Mansion House I saw what all the windows were open and inside workmen were busy re-distempering all the walls. I do not know what it looks like inside, but I could see that even the little space between the noble main door and the top of the steps leading from the street has an exquisitely moulded ceiling. Of course it is quite the most beautiful and best preserved of all buildings round here. I cannot write more. Was awake a large part of the last night having suddenly started up about 3.30 ringing with sweat and I have felt vaguely disturbed ever since as if some unpleasant experience were in front of me. I have a splitting headache again, and am going to bed at once.

Tuesday August 31 1948

Only one more month and then Cambridge. The telephone rang tonight. It was Tom ringing from Newcastle asking me for weekend in Sept. 17-20. Will see 'Relapse' too - what luck! I imagine his mother has asked him to ask me as a sort of return of hospitality. She has at least seen me and knows I won't leave lice in her beds. I suppose his feeling about my coming will

be more or less what mine would be in the same position - complete lethargy in asking, but quite a deal of pleasure in the fact itself. I am glad of a chance to see him last minute before C. Will keep us intimate. Must remember to write to Bob Dingle now a don at John's. Yummy thought! Also booked seats tonight for next week 'Twelfth Night' at Leeds with Old Vic Company and Sir Cedric Hardwicke. Quite a round of gaiety.

Wednesday September 1

A mild cloudy day. To the town in the morning to the Saddlers' to see whether he can repair my trunk, which is a rather old fashioned all-leather one. There is a split in the lid near one of the corners and another journey, I thought might tear it off altogether. I was considerably taken aback to find that he will not even take it until October, let alone repair it. In the town noticed some decorations already up for the Royal St. Leger day. The Danum Hotel has its balcony completely hung with royal blue with the Royal Arms in the centre. I should have thought it hardly sensible to put them out so early - one shower of rain before a week on Saturday and they would be ruined. At teatime was involved in an argument with M. and Donald who irritably asked why I put my desk where it is (opposite the window, so that I sit with my back to the light) and have to keep my lamp on all the time. I said equally irritably that I didn't see where else it could go. M. said 'Well, I wouldn't mind if you ever did anything serious up there'. So I said, 'Well, later on I'll be doing something up there seriously'. And Donald said in that provocative way of his, with a maddeningly self-assured nod of the head as who should say 'I'll tell you something horrid you haven't thought of yet,' 'You won't be able to write up there in the winter'. That always drives me into a frenzy, for M. and Donald are so sensationally pleased and reiterate with growing fervour how unpleasant these things are going to be and of course M. is always off on the economy rage; all this drives me to state my position in exaggerated terms. So I said (also I imagine with aggravating assurance) 'I shall have to work up there'. So Donald said 'Why not in here? (the dining-room) so I said 'I couldn't - not possibly'. So of course they took great delight in saying with nasty pleasure 'Oh! you'll soon change your tune, my lad'. But I really meant it. I cannot work anywhere if I feel I am going to have to get up and move soon, or someone may come in and out, and most of all just sitting at a table with nothing round me. I'm not being finicky or posey or precious or just contrary, I cannot do it, nor will I.

D. and I went a walk round the race-course tonight from 7 o'clock to 8.30. Race-course gleaming in new white paint and decorations already begun. Road to woods crammed with gypsies mostly behind hedge. Some filthy children playing. Seem very healthy.

Thursday September 2 1948

Received papers from Cambridge this morning. First a set of rules about gates, meals, gowns and so on containing many gems of pedantic wit. In the section on music, there is a condition that gramophones and radios must not be played loudly enough to be a nuisance to others, and finishes off with 'Failure to observe this condition renders the instrument liable to confiscation! Among the others are a letter from the tutor telling me my rooms are in Chapel

Court C.2. That is the second newest court just behind the Chapel. They should be all right. What an excitement! Rooms at last of my own! Another letter about the college kitchen, a list of articles to bring including a tea service and 6 napkins (ridiculous) among other things, a notice about Rugger and the Freshman's trial, and a general Athletic Club subscription request. I am even now beginning to quiver inside with nerves at the prospect of actually beginning at Cambridge. To Derek and Nancy's at night. Very easy evening where I know I am accepted so just do nothing. Played cards and sang from a collection of popular songs beginning at 'A Fine Romance' from the Astaire Rogers film 'Swing Time'. To 'Doin' What Comes Naturally' from 'Annie Get Your Gun'. Fun.

Friday September 3 1948

The High Street is already a mass of decorations and more go up every hour. Spent most of the morning reading a poor translation of a true but dull book 'Name' by Emile Zola. So true it was a long procession from bed to bed with the heroine dying messily suppurating with smallpox. Too depressing. This evening first choir practice. Practising 'Evening Hymn' by someone or other. Finishes with long-drawn out, very low Amen. The tenors (just myself and Mr. Woodcock) had to sing our part alone. It sounded so growly and silly I laughed out aloud and Robert Young said tartly 'When I was your age, I could have held a longer note than that without stopping. You should take a pride in singing it correctly.' I was most discomfited, and flushed. Everyone stopped laughing. I do think it was most uncalled for. I don't care really for myself, but after all if I made more noise than anyone else I might understand it but he only tells me off because he knows I don't matter in the church and because he knows me better than anyone else. Very unpleasant, and felt badly about it the whole evening.

Have been reading Kilvert's Diary lately and though it is rather a foolish and unproductive thought it did strike me how much <u>less</u> is really memorable even on the evening of the same day, in <u>my</u> diary, whereas most of his diary can be read with pleasure nearly a hundred years later. Of course he lived in a country district where everyone had grown up according to his or her bent and with a real job to do, before elementary education had effectively crushed whatever individuality had escaped the steamroller of poverty. Here in a modern industrial city everyone grows up to do an unproductive meaningless job, live in a semi-detached villa like a million others, wear mass-produced clothing, use mass-produced hardware, eat food whose source they never imagine, and grow up to regard all the phenomenons of nature as excrescences on a comfortable life. What can they turn out but spiritless automata?

Saturday September 4 1948

Another nondescript day. When I say nondescript I mean mainly that I did not go out very much. Spent morning and afternoon writing though mowed the lawn in the afternoon. Very cool and pleasant and smell of cut grass delicious for which family would laugh at me, but I only say 'No' when they ask me to cut the lawn because I'm lazy. About 7 o'clock for a walk with D, whose throat is still playing up. He had three weddings today, one at 3 o'clock, one at 11 o'clock, and one at 9 o'clock. We went round to the Race Course, which we found very

gay. The old Georgian house on the other side of the road from the course very gay with fresh cream paint and flags. Going through the opening across the Court, D. asked two people of 40-ish appearance what they did with the opening on Race days? 'They' being the race-stewards. The couple said that grass or moss was put down after the public had come in. We walked on with the couple, finding from their strong accents that they were Scots from Ayr living in Doncaster because of his work, radio-engineering. Their name is apparently McDermint, and they have two children, a son 22 and a daughter 20, which I must say, she especially does not look old enough for. They, seeing D's clerical collar, and thinking him to be a visitor, began to expatiate on their Sabbatarian views. D. said were they good Presbyterians? They said 'Well, not good, but they did go to Priory Place Methodist Church sometimes, when Mr. Roughley was there. This set us both agog, since for the best of reasons we knew that Mr. Roughly had been from Doncaster 4 years, and they were taken aback when D. announced he was now Minister there. Mrs. McD. was telling us of her grandmother who thought cinemas were of the devil, and in any case wondered that people could see anything in the dark. Once apparently this old lady was asleep in her house when a tinker came to the door. Her dog attacked this man, tearing off his trouser leg. The old lady, much dismayed at this immodest disturbment, picked up a pair of her husband's trousers, and pursued the dog who was pursuing the tinker all the way down the high street in Ayr, with the tinker's wares, buckets, saucepans, blooms and so on dropping in all directions in a vain endeavour to clothe his nakedness. What funny old people are still left and how good that they are. To bed very tired.

Sunday September 5 1948

A fine warm day, with little sun, but a warm breeze. A close day really. In the evening to the racecourse which is lit up from end to end inside the long gaunt Georgian XX and buildings with the queues of people waiting to see the rooms the King and Queen will use when they come for the St. Leger. In the middle of the racecourse is a species of fair, but very small, dirty and sordid, full of freak sideshows like 'Hairy Mary the Carie Fairy', and 'Is it Male or Female? Monstrosity with 4 legs, 4 arms and two heads'. Which would probably be dead anyway. Afterwards to the Clarkson's house further down our own road. On the way had a long talk with Brian Battersby who is going to Manchester Univ. and who expressed great admiration of C. and envy of my luck in going there. I deprecated all this modestly as I was bound to do and was surprised to find Brian B. strongly supported by Maurice Wilkinson, a heavy fellow given to heartily funny remarks which never quite come off, and who went, I believe to Sheffield. It is extraordinary how these people are forever emphasising their apparent inferiority. I suppose C. does offer such a perfect background. I couldn't say, not having been to a university yet, but I don't think they should talk about it so much. Brian B. who is tall and rather good-looking, seems a nice enough bloke, though D. tells me he despises his father and mother and dislikes his home which is small and unsan. I can, I think imagine that, and I realize that the front he puts up may very likely be a false one. He is one of those people whose natures conceal their real feelings the whole time. Maurice W. quite uncomplicated, bluff and hearty. Spent a pleasant though very ordinary evening being funny most of the time. I was telling them all about the Army, and how I was called the 'Duke' and made a mess of the bayonet practice. Can't think why they laughed so much. I mean I do

intend to be funny and yet they still howl with laughter, much more and nicely than the others at school and so on who used to laugh at me and not with me. Surely I can't be so especially humorous? I don't see it really, but it is quite gratifying to be a success like that, even if you don't know why!

Monday September 6 1948

A still warm day again, but an almost intensely ordinary day for me, in which nothing happened except that I kept on deciding to do something and was interrupted by a trifling errand every time. Donald and Joan persuaded me to the fair. Oh! what a noise and blare! Oh how terribly sad it all is, such simply mechanical amusement with only a shadow of the old fun left.

Tuesday September 7 1948

Mr. Arnold who lives next door, was told the day before yesterday that his brother had just died. He had been ill at his home in Bournemouth for some time. Both are very rich men. The wreaths were arriving all this morning, and by lunchtime covered the whole of the front garden. A procession of twenty two cars formed up outside the door. What a performance. Cannot think anything in today to have been very interesting. Spent afternoon and evening writing and it's rather left me misty.

Wednesday September 8 1948

Today to Leeds to see Old Vic Theatre Company. Just as I was waiting to go for a bus while D. was upstairs getting ready the telephone rang. It was Michael, from Grantham saying could I see him over the weekend. Of course I said Yes, come here. He said 'Well book me a room in the town if you can - I'm not going to put you to any trouble. I said 'Yes' quite forgetting that Saturday was Leger Day and they are paying up to £60 or £170 for two rooms here. He can come here if he sleeps with me and Donald moves into L's room. I wish I could move to let him in, but I can't. However, it'll only be for a night or two. What a pity I can't move for him, because then he wouldn't feel the invasion so much but if I moved it would make it more difficult than ever. They are all pleased at the thought of seeing him I think, and of course I can hardly wait to know what he thinks of RAF. O.V. very good (see M.D.) Saw young Watson outside whom I knew at Kingswood, I think. He blushed and did not make any other sign that he knew me.

Thursday September 9 1948

The races have already begun and most of the morning the road was thick with cars and people. The day was still misty and the sky cloudy at noon, but about two o'clock the sun came through and it became quite hot. At three-thirty or so L., Donald and I walked down

the avenue to the racecourse to see if we could see any of the races without paying any money. We walked away to the left towards the start of the straight mile, and past any number of people glued to the rails. You are of course allowed to stand there without paying. All the people here were dull-looking, dressed in drab worn clothes, apathetically hanging over the white rail enjoying the thrill and colour of a race no more than simply wondering which horse would win and how much they would win by it. We walked along again, coming to the bit of road which has the hedge on its left, past the sleek stream-lined caravans of the travelling trader on to where the hedge hid the gaily painted dirty gay high-strung caravans of the gypsies. All over the twenty yard strip of grass between the rails of the course and the road on the other side of which is the hedge, were lying standing sitting and rolling many gypsies of all ages. All were dirty, but all well-favoured and healthy. As we passed among them the children thrust out bunches of 'lucky heather sir' and one small girl who could not have been over four with a blue dress matted with dirt and much too long for her and her flax-coloured hair cropped by a quite ruthless hand came up and said quite fearlessly 'Tell your fortune, sir'. Many of the dark gypsy girls were lying about displaying their charms quite liberally with low-necked dresses and short skirts in great evidence, with their men-friends lying among them silk shirts carefully undone to the waist. There was a jellied-eel stall further along with horrid little cups of the stuff stinking on trestle-tables. We watched two races, the horses most beautiful, sleek wonderful gleaming coats, very nervous, with rolling eyes and nostrils flaring. Some of them lathered and mouths bleeding before the race even began. The jockeys very pretty in such alive glowing colours, and black boots with orange tops. They sit very high on the horse, with their thighs almost level with the top of the horse's back. We tramped back home through hundreds of people and had to say 'hullo' to that girl we met at Mrs. H.'s concert. So amusing. In the evening Donald very irritable complaining about the finnan haddock we had for supper and snapping my head off for reading out aloud a piece of Francis Kilvert about a frog-woman.

Have been worrying about Mike's visit. For the bathroom is not very nice. It does not look clean, though it is. Perhaps the rest of the house will convince him that it is. How we will manage the shaving on Sunday morning I can't think. I wish this unreal feeling would go. I feel so dreamy

Friday September 10 1948

A still warm day, very close. To the town in the morning, where I found it very full. All kinds of people are attracted here for the races, small women (mostly profiteers' wives by the look of them) in London dresses the latest 'new look' long panniered skirts and flat straw boaters on the backs of their heads, and literally hundreds of shifty-eyed greasy men in very long very waisted jackets, their hair wavy, and so long as to be almost bobbed, usually suede shoes and a trilby with a very curly brim. I saw one dear old thing in a mob-cap, tottering along St. Sepulchre Gate with a basket of bread. Not many like her left now, I am afraid. The streets very hot and oppressive and walking very tiring when one is forced to dodge people all the time. We stopped on our way to the library and the bank at Longbottom's the ironmonger for some Plaster of Paris for the top of the bathroom hand-basin which plaster is shockingly broken and dirty. Whole bathroom the same, and I feel it ought to be refitted but

how can we ask for it when the other houses in the circuit are without necessaries, let alone repairs to things they already have. I hope Mike is not too disgusted with it. In Longbottom's I asked for some Plaster of Paris, and the boy said 'No sir, we don't keep it!' (as if they did everything else to it but keep it) 'try Boots'. So we tried Boots' who only had the dental Plaster of Paris! They directed us to the wall-paper shop where we soon got what we wanted. On then to the library, whose calm quiet interior and cool temperature made it a real refuge form the noisy crowded streets. I poked around and after tasting a good many books, which I am much too good at I am afraid, chose Macqueen Pope's 'Haymarket: Theatre of Perfection' a story of all the productions ever staged at the Haymarket. Sort of book I love reading, though I suppose not very useful or improving! Walking back home, we saw a crowd of people trying to push into the Mansion House and after not getting very far being pushed out again by the police. The wrought iron gates were then shut, and the crowd peered over them. We trotted over to look too and were rewarded by the sight of a fresh-grown jungle in the hall of the House. Evergreens have been massed so thickly with flowers among them that I wonder the King & Queen do not bring a scythe with them, and they have of course effectually hidden the lines of the most lovely staircase. Called for Joan B. (or rather Joan M!) and while we were walking up the road towards home, heard a police car loud-speaker calling 'Make way for the Royal Car', and at that moment it whizzed by, followed by a large and opulent Rolls-Royce in which was sitting the Princess Royal and her Lady-in-Waiting, the rear being brought up by another Police Car. All three were going very fast.

Have discovered today in my desk the cover of an old notebook with the words 'Diary. From Saturday August 4. 1945 Budbrooke Barracks Warwick'. There are entries in it only for two days, Aug. 2. the day I actually joined and Aug. 3. The diary never got any further than that for the same reason that I had to give up this one at Belfast. You cannot write a diary except at night, for the events lose their freshness if you leave them till the next morning. In any case you would never keep up with it if you left it till morning, and as I've said before, you spend so much time writing it up, you would hardly have time for anything to happen to you. The two pages of the earlier beginning I shall fold in these I think, since I have just found them. Town terribly full I think, for I spent half-an-hour waiting for a bus and twenty-two went past all full.

Mike phoned a telegram this evening. He is coming at 5 o'clock, so that I could have gone to the St. Leger in the paddock with M. after all. I don't care a scrap, but what a fuss she made about it, and accused me of making Mike an excuse to get out of coming with her. I'm glad he's coming.

Saturday September 11 1948

This has been a very full day and my whole self is aching with all kinds of muscles tired where I never knew I had any.

Up at 8.30 this morning and after a late breakfast down to the Mansion House at 11 o'clock. Decided to take up my stance in the middle of Scot Lane, a road just opposite the Mansion House. Already a great willing crowd, men women and children swaying and shuffling, XX

shifting from point to point as one looked over it. Policemen kept on attempting to push us back, but it was no good. The M.H. had been beautifully decorated with a crimson carpet down the steps, a royal blue canopy with golden tassels, and three balcony falls in royal blue with golden tassels, the left hand one with an initial G, the right hand with initial E, and the middle one with the Royal Arms. I was standing near an American girl and her English hostess-friend and we had some fairly amusing conversation. The time passed slowly, while bursts of excitement were occasioned as notables arrived, among them the Princess Royal, very dowdy in navy blue with her two sons in disreputably crumpled suits, most unhealthy-looking, she was cheered but never even looked round. Others included the Duke and duchess of Norfolk, Lord Roseberry the Earl and Countess of Halifax and the Earl of Scarborough. And what a pleasure it was to see some of our genuine old families in a rotten borough like Doncaster. There were a good many false alarms when people started cheering butcher-boys and luggage-vans but at last the great moment came and the wave of cheering broke over us as the cycle policemen swept to the door of the M.H. followed by a very large Daimler with the Royal Arms and the Royal Standard. The Royal Standard was also broken from the top of the M.H. The King and Queen got out, and the King received the mace from the Mayor, returned it (and thus the authority over the

2 PAGES MISSING

brick or anything like that. At least I'm not hurt but I protest frantically, because I feel my self-confidence being undermined. I must say I can't remember making a faux-pas except in the presence of D. or Mike (at Willey's for example.) This may be of course horrid thought that they are about the only two who know me well enough to tell me if I have. I wish I didn't bother so much. Then D. having the face to tell me to activate my personality a bit more. He never sees me except when I am aggressively arguing or getting annoyed with him. It is certainly true that I never get hectoring with anyone else, and I think nothing annoys me more than to be told in that quiet smug way that I am talking too loud! It brings out the very worst in me, so that my one desire is to search for the most wounding thing I can say. In the afternoon Mike and I played and sang all the old songs we used to sing in the music rooms at Kingswood, all silly ballads, which we like for their, I suppose, unconscious humour, 'Excelsior', 'Love Garden of Roses', 'Until Morning', 'Gendarme's Duet', 'I'll Walk Beside You', and 'Bless This House'. We sang a few Schubert things, 'The Trout' and 'The Miller' and so on, and some Handel, passed on to Bach, and finished up with the bits we did at school from the Schutsz passion. It was raining hard and it began to rain much harder when we set out for the station. I rang up for a taxi but there was nothing until 8 o'clock. We trudged thro' rain which was not so much violent as very thick, large solid drops. We were soon completely soaked, my rain-coat sodden from top to bottom, my trousers and shoes wet, and my collar and shirt damp to my waist. I simply took a bus after Mike got his train, had a good rub down and stayed in. It was hopeless to think of getting to church. I have been pleased and freshened by Mike's visit. Oh! how he makes me detest the stodgy round in Doncaster! It is not the daily round, the common task, because I have no daily round and certainly no task, simply day following vague day, waiting to go to Cambridge. Less than a month, thank heaven. To bed, very tired.

Monday September 13 1948

Very chilly this morning on waking up and not just because my eiderdown had slipped off either. Breath made white cloud when I stepped to shut the window. I think I should write to Mrs. Sawyer today and tell her when I am coming, or tomorrow at the latest. D. rang up Mr. Hughes to see if he would come round our way and take my trunk down to Baker's. Baker, the saddler has agreed to put the corner on, or rather sew up the already-existing but split corner for me in a fortnight. Good. To the cinema tonight to see 'The Red Shoes' (see M.D.) Most enjoyable but too many intervals in the programme and that dreadful man Con Docherty with his vulgar flourishes and patent leather hair, playing the cinema-organ, with a record of his new baby crying and a crude parody of a popular song about it and its nappy - so cheap. Also saw the news-reel pictures of the inauguration of Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, which I also heard on the wireless. Saw Princess Margaret among the Royal guests - quite ravishingly lovely in a pink full-skirted brocade dress, with a little Dutch bonnet side-turned with ostrich feather. To Sawyer's I think on Friday. Bed still very tired. The effects of Saturday not worn off yet, I think.

Tuesday September 14 1948

To Mr. Kelsey's shop this morning for some socks and pyjamas. Mr. K. himself large, fat, and completely bald, served us. Bought four pairs of all wool socks @ 4/11 a pair, two pairs maroon and two pairs fawn, and a pair of flannel pyjamas @ 15/11 ordering two more pairs as soon as they can be got. Took my trunk to Baker the saddler's in Mr. Hughes' car and hope to get it back on October 1st. This evening took a longish walk round some faded back-streets with L. on a mission of mercy, and much amused by the spectacle of a lot of old men turned out of the Library Reading Room at half-past seven going to sit on a seat outside the cemetery on the other side of the road. I suppose they were getting ready.

When we were all sitting in the dining-room after the eleven o'clock news summary, I happened to mention my trunk. M. said 'When will it be ready?' D. told her, and she said 'I think it will be much too heavy in itself empty to use in these days, when allowed weight has gone down! I said, 'Don't be silly darling, it isn't as bad as that'. Donald said, 'Why send it per luggage in advance (PLA)? Why not take it with you?' (Incidentally he <u>always</u> sent his PLA.) I, not wanting the bother of it or the embarrassment, said 'No,' so Donald said with that triumphantly patronising air with which he always announces some special hardship for me, 'Well you'll have to wait a long time for it if you don't. I said 'I don't think so.' Donald said to D. 'You know you can't tell Angus anything - not a thing!' At that D. joined in too, and said 'It would be much easier. That is what you must do, and of course arrange about a taxi the other end too! (e.g. at Cambridge). I immediately said, 'No, I don't think it's necessary.' At which they both proceeded to tell me how full C. would be, how few taxis there were, how far it was from the station to the college and so on and so on. I could not bear it a moment longer, and burst out 'Oh! be quiet. I will <u>not</u> sit and have patronising advice and 'proper courses' arranged for me, and my actions tied down to a particularised rule so that anything else I do will be wrong. You gave me advice about K.S. and it was <u>all</u> wrong, and when it came to the Army and I wanted someone to tell me what it would be like,

you couldn't and you were all wrong again. I never want to take any advice from either of you.'

Apart from anything else I wish I didn't lose my temper like that because it is so undignified and gives them an advantage against me. What's more, I could see D. looked hurt, and I imagine (for he said, 'Your memory is short') that he was thinking of the first few weeks in the Army, when I was pretty well desperate. I wrote to him then appealing letters, though honestly I cannot remember a thing that was in those letters, but they were no more pathetic and appealing than the letters I wrote to all my other friends except that I knew D. better and could be as sloppy as I liked. Anyway it is no more than the truth to say that I can remember no single occasion when D's advice has been of the smallest use to me. I appreciate a great many things he has done in a lot of ways, especially material ways, and I am not sure that I have been grateful enough, but I cannot truthfully say that he has helped me in any other way than by giving me actual money or goods, or procuring things for me through people he knows. Everything I have learnt about behaviour and manners from him has had to be modified out of all recognition before I could be happy with my friends. My artistic taste bears now not the slightest resemblance nor owes the smallest debt to him. I have not yet had an opportunity of measuring his real organisational capabilities, and money-raising capacity, but I think they may possibly turn out well enough. His attempts to mould me have been by the very means best calculated to infuriate me to the point of sticking up for something I know to be ridiculous just to be at loggerheads with him. I have asked his advice about far too many things, matters I should think out for myself and because I have been timid enough and lazy enough to do so, he now imagines himself indispensable. But the thing for which I can never forgive him, nor even forget, is that he had not the courage to tell me himself the facts of sex, but leave me to hear them whispered out in the sniggering smuttiness of a dormitory. All he has succeeded in indirectly communicating to me is an, I hope not ineradicable sense of guilt about the whole thing and a pretty good deal of maladjustment. The most damning thing I have against him is really this, that if he read this he would call it self-pitying nonsense and simply tell me that I had built up a picture of him that was simply not true! What does it matter whether he thinks it true or not, if I think so? That is to say, if he appears to me like that there is something wrong with him or me, and of course I don't think it's me.

Wednesday September 15 1948

Have felt very depressed and lethargic today. Long periods when even a book could not tempt me, but simply sat blank. D. gave me a lecture this morning on not having worked all the last six months. He is of course quite right, but I wish he would realize how desperately clear it is to me already without him telling me and sort of confirming my own suspicions. Nothing is worse than to have your own poor opinion of yourself endorsed by others. To bed, very very tired. Eyes swimming and aching.

Thursday September 16 1948

Sent a telegram by phone this morning to David S saying 'Arriving tomorrow 3.45.' Cannot remember offhand by the way whether he asked me to stay till Monday or Tuesday. Must remember to ask him privately. Conditions in home apparently merry and bright. D. off this afternoon at half-past one to the Synod at Beckett Rd. Synod apparently meeting where they decide who shall decide things. A mystery to me. Wrote to Mike this afternoon, a scribbled note, just to encourage him since training for a commission in the R.A.F. can scarcely be fun. Not that a letter from me can be really very encouraging, at least until I get up to C. and even then they will only be tantalising rather than encouraging.

D.M. and L. went to see 'The Red Shoes' tonight and were so long in coming back that I quite thought something must have happened to them! Donald and I were just arranging how we would manage for money when we were left destitute when we suddenly realized that the cinema had not yet fallen down, much less buried them underneath, and stopped. I shall never forget, once when I was in Belfast and D. had been, as I thought, perhaps on a train that had crashed, having a long argument with myself as to whether it was selfish of me not to want to spend the money to have him buried at Thurso. Must remember to write down all the things I want to ask David about. Have to go to the bank for money tomorrow too. To bed at once.

Friday September 17 1948

To David Sawyer's for the weekend so that I am writing in Newcastle. Newcastle very like other big cities from what I have seen of it so far, which isn't much - only one cinema. From my small inside view of David's home, which is a perfectly normal house, though with good bedroom furniture, I should say that David keeps a pretty firm hand on his parents and they seem, altho' protesting, to find his sense of their inadequacy most disturbing. Of course their company faces are on, but still I sense disharmony. Disharmony there will always be right or wrong between parents brought up as his and mine were in the narrow lower middle-class circle of respectable non-conformists. They all run almost ridiculously true to type. For example Mrs. B. has exactly the same songs as M. has and not one with a single particle of musical merit. I would admit that 'The Holy City' is preferable to 'Shoo-Shoo Baby' but that is scarcely the point. To the cinema, to see 'The Naked City' and a 'This Modern Age Can Britain Go Hungry.' (M.D.G.V.) Must not judge Sawyer's till I have been there a little longer. Mr. S. is a fool.

Saturday September 18 1948

To the shops after a shocking-early breakfast at 8.0. Walked around and found them very like any other large city's shops, though pretended greater interest than I felt. I know David better than I thought, and find his fine notions as like my own as life, tho' I fear he does not recognise them as such. I inspected his wardrobe tonight and find he has five shirts, various underwear, one ordinary blue suit, one grey and hideous tho' expensive one his uncle gave him after apparently two years wear, three sports-coats, and an out-of-date overcoat. I am pleased to discover that he can do little better than I even with a rich uncle, and to find my

fears of a superior wardrobe much allayed. He surrounds himself with useless objects and is taking a wireless which is asking for temptation, a type-writer which I wouldn't thank you for, since cannot write but with my own hand, and a French horn, which he probably won't play. We hove to at a hotel for a perfectly foul lunch. The hotel is a perfect period piece, an embossed wall-paper of dark brown in the richly-ornamented hall, and any number of Stags at Bay and chignoned beauties in enormous gold frames in the dining-room on a figured gold paper. The soup was tomato and good, but the fish I had was thick gluey cod, slightly over-ripe, and a vile date slice. After lunch we ran down to Tynemouth, a pleasant open place with green lawns going down to a long promenade adjoining Whitley Bay. We had hoped the tide was out so that we could walk to St. Mary's Island and see the lighthouse, but the walk of concrete was awash, and we had to come back. We stopped for some time at the finals of Mr. S's church tennis club. I was surprised to find that David refused to speak to anyone, Mr. S. only to one, and even Mrs. S. only to two or three. No one even seemed to know them and I cannot be surprised that Mr. S's church is empty. Heaven knows, I understand David's feelings, for the Methodist Church is an objectionable institution as it stands today, and the awful social round of saying 'good day' to people without bowels or manners is almost more than I can bear. However I must go to D's church for his sake and if I go I must speak so I do. David's conduct is really inexcusable if he is honest with himself, even tho' I did it myself some months ago, his conduct is only excusable if he does it because he is not to be here long. I notice that he is fairly rude to his mother. It is astonishing how polite one can be to someone else's mother.

Sunday September 19 1948

To the Cathedral at eleven o'clock, which I must say I much prefer to a Methodist service. At the least you are assured of a lovely liturgy, usually indirectly with moderate accomplishment. The choir....

(See Volume V)

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 9

A.L. Mackay

Doncaster 1948

Being the fifth volume of this record and diary from

Doncaster Sept 19 1948
to Cambridge Jan 12 1949

Sunday September 19 1948

(Cont.)

Was not striking, being remarkable neither for sweetness of voice, nor accuracy of pitch. They performed an anthem of exquisite style by Vittoria and a slightly pedestrian Te Deum by Walford Davies. It was not of course fully choral matins.

I am interested in discovering why I so easily feel inferior. I think Donald's persecution (?) or rather, perennial assumption when we were small that I was incapable of doing anything well. David is inferior to me in intellect, I think I may say with honesty, at any rate if exam. results are anything to go by. Anyway I <u>know</u> I'm cleverer than he is. But I wish I did not feel so inferior about clothes and so on. I don't need to because they matter little today. For instance in the theatre, I felt easily his equal and superior. I think I need to assert myself more with him and less with other people. The better I know a person the more aggressively humble do I become.

I wish the Sawyers did not get up so early. I am nearly dead with tiredness. And we get up at 6.0. Six o'clock to motor to Edinburgh tomorrow. Six o'clock! They ought to be shot. I am going to collapse on the pillow.

Monday September 20 1948

Up at six o'clock to a grey cold world. Mr. S. indescribably and indecently hearty at breakfast until I could have pushed his silly teeth in. We drove off about twenty minutes past seven, and proceeded by way of Belsay and Ponteland to Jedburgh. Jedburgh is a plain Scots village, with grey stone houses of austere but beautiful proportions. It stands today much as it has done, I suppose since the eighteenth century, and shows no signs of either the ribbon builder nor the preservation of ancient monuments, both equally evil. We went to Edinburgh through some very bleak treeless hills quiet and deserted except for the white dots of sheep on the far hillside. We arrived in Edinburgh at about eleven o'clock to find that it was a holiday and all the shops were closed. It was refreshing to find that Scotland still keeps complete days of holiday, even against the disapproval of England who thinks them

ridiculous. After all, what can one do with a half-day? Apparently the shops being shut was a major disaster for the S's, for as far as I could gather that was all they had come for. They perked up after a little, and we trotted off to have lunch at the Balmoral, an indifferent good restaurant in Prince's St. David had a whole meal, but found the sauce too vinegary and left it. I had some delicious halibut and an ice-cream which was not so delicious. There were many Americans in the dining-room, asking ridiculous questions about 'Scaatland' and dressed in either bogus or at any rate illegitimately worn tartans, or impossibly garish floral ties and checks. After lunch we walked to Holyrood Palace, which the S's had not seen before, as I had. This time we were taken round the State Apartments as well as the Historical Apartments. 'Taken round' is the word for we were conducted by a little Highland guide, who chanted in a soft voice a great deal of useless and ill-digested information. Hollyrood is undoubtedly a very beautiful palace, its silver quadrangle and oak-panelled rooms in the closest harmony with its setting of tall and grim hills, but I cannot like conducted tours, nor silken ropes to keep you away from everything, nor the brass plates and printed notices for the more important historical spots. I get nothing out of it but a useless string of objects, too many at a time, which I find as impossible to take in as the Oxford colleges proved to be all at once. I do remember though the Adam dining-room with pale green and white plaster walls and ceiling, and pilasters, a mirror polished dining-table, and a fireplace than which I can imagine nothing more perfect. Oh! I admit I don't know what else they can do to preserve them at <u>all</u>, but it does seem a pity to preserve them <u>dead</u> like that. Oh and I saw the absurd collection of pictures of the Scots Kings, nearly all of them imaginary, done by de Wint in 2 years at the rate of one a week!

Absolutely worn-out, and completely disgruntled with the whole thing. Cold water on return. I <u>hate</u> hearty people. Bed - thank heaven.

Tuesday September 25 1948

Back home again, and pleased to be so. Spent this morning reading desultorily until lunch when David brought the car round and we drove down to the station. It is now more or less arranged that David coming down to C. the day after me shall be met at the train by me with a taxi, and from thence to his lodgings, after which to a tailors for gown, cap and so on. He has now given up the idea of coming down by car, an idea which I was at some pains to scotch, emphasising that there would be much of the breaking-in process he would have to accomplish alone should he arrive late in the evening of the Wednesday, since I should be forced to buy my gown on Wed. afternoon to be able to take dinner in college that evening. All satisfactory. The conclusion to a somewhat cheerless weekend with little fun and no hot water or baths for most of the time. I am wondering how I shall fare at C. I confidently expect that I shall have to share my rooms, and cannot decide whether the prospect appals or interests me.

After a weekend with the Sawyers I have come to the conclusion that the best way of managing parents is simply to pay no attention to them on important matters. David, always allowing for the effect of visitors, does it with success. I am afraid my success will be in

proportion to the thickness of my skin as compared to his, a comparison from which I emerge unfavourably. Am impossibly tired in a dull leaden way. Unusual for me. To bed. To bed.

Wednesday September 22 1948

A dull cold drizzly day so stayed in the house. Must remember to write to Mrs. Sawyer thanking her for a perfectly horrible weekend. Just before tea I reminded D. that he must ring up Sheffield to order a dinner-jacket. He did so and to my great delight they are coming in this week and the man will keep one for me. I cannot really believe that this will come to pass at last, nor can I believe that I will ever have a real opportunity of wearing one. I wonder what shirts I should get with it, and what sort of collars - turndown ones or what? Oh! dear. I must write to Mike and ask him I think. How exciting it all is! I pulled out my old patent leather shoes and they seem quite good, not worn at all and will do beautifully. I am all jiggery with excitement inside, and can write no more.

Thursday September 23 1948

Another damp grey day, with a greasy mist rising from the moor playing fields. During breakfast the telephone bell rang four times, all the calls for D. of course, but such a nuisance and aggravation. To the shops with M. unwillingly on such a depressing day. All afternoon the room was dark with the heavy clouds and the mist. I was reading Trollopp's 'Barchester Towers' with a great deal of pleasure, a writer whom I find so subtle, so smooth, so satisfying that I find it hard to say goodbye to any of his characters, though he is, I suspect, rather too affirmative for a great novelist, but very cheering all the same.

About six o'clock, and while a very late tea was just on the table, Margaret Crow, a schoolgirl of about 18 who attends the church, came for a 'little talk' with D. for she wants to go to Oxford or Cambridge and was not sure how to go about it. Donald and I went in after a time, and we all three bombarded her with speculations and advice and insistent voices to do this that and the other. Whether she cottoned on to all we said, I don't know. I think she gained the main point that if she wanted to read History, Oxford was the place to do so, and if she wanted to read English, then she must go to Cambridge. Further she must have French and Latin credits in School Certificate, or in Little Go, and she must get a Higher Certificate or she might have to sit the College Entrance Exam which might very well be harder. The proportion of women to men at O. 5-1, and at C. 9-1, makes it very difficult to get a place at all without a scholarship. Still tired. To bed.

Friday September 24 1948

Much warmer today. Bright and sunny and true autumn gold. In the evening to choir practice. A stormy session on the whole. On Mr. Young's (the organist) suggesting that we sing a different tune to that abominable hymn 'Yes, God is good' substituting for the sugary Victorian harmonies (which is about all the hymn is worth) of the familiar one a much

pleasanter old Irish air in unison. Mr. Kelsey said meaningly after the uproar of disagreement had subsided, 'Let's have the old one after all. Harmony is so much better than unison don't you think?'

The church is already half-buried under the abominable decorations for the harvest festival. The choir lectern-shelf has been smothered and entwined with bracken and sheaves of corn and being prepared for down below. Roll on the marrows and cabbages tomorrow.

Saturday September 25 1948

Too tired to write anything. Bed.

Sunday September 26 1948

Harvest Festival, and a warm near-sunny Indian summer day. One long hearty howl of popular hymns from beginning to end. In the evening to Brown's for supper. While I was waiting for the others to get away from a Pyps Committee meeting, David Hainsworth came up and said 'Let's go in to it' so we did, unofficially. Peter Unwin and Sheila Gledhill were also with us, making four outsiders altogether. Nora Laughton, the secretary, was in the chair a tall big jawed poor-skinned girl cross-eyed and very ugly who is silly enough to wear a 'New Look' straw-hat gaily trimmed with flowers on the back of her head thus emphasising the length and pasty colour of her face. She was talking about subjects for outside lecturers, and we, who were already engaged in subversive and extra-committee talk of our own, in the person of David H. suggested a lecture on 'Juvenile Delinquency'. I then said 'Well, let's not bother with a lecturer - you give them a short resume of your life. That ought to cover the subject fairly exhaustively', at which we all went off into giggles. All the rest of the committee were with us of course, as it was only composed of other members of the 'gang' and was in no way a very formal meeting. But Nora Laughton said sharply 'If you have anything to say, say it out loud, and if you don't stop laughing, you'll have to go out of the room, Angus! Sheila G. leant over and whispered to me, 'She's a school-teacher, you know', as who should say 'You mustn't blame her; she can't help it! I quite expected to get thirty lines. At Brown's there were the Hainsworths, Sister Bettina Bridges, our new Deaconess, who arrived the Monday before I went to Newcastle, and Isabel Porter, the daughter of the people next door but one. Sister Bettina was with us at Archway during the war, and in fact it was her first job. She is a fair big-nosed woman slim with good teeth, sunburned and out-of-door. Not at all the ordinary sort of Deaconess - much more natural and less stuffy. A few distressing habits, but nothing much. Isabel Porter has not long left, the Mount and is going to be a nurse. A tallish plump girl, with unmarked features, no brains, created by her education a snob above her station. I was asked to escort her home since it was 11.30 by the time we broke up. Few of the usual jokes cracked, of course and family laughed when I got home. Must watch that I am not thrown in her way again. I know how easily such things develop, if the moment of checking it goes by. It gets harder and harder to say no as time goes on. I mean, if they asked me round to tea say, I should be almost forced to take her out, and then where we would be? Knowing her, I should say nearly at the altar. Wonder

whether I talked too much, by the way. Must remember to be careful at C. D. said when I came home 'Had I' and I felt faintly annoyed although I had already asked myself the same question. I wonder whether I did, specially as with people like that one bases jokes on humorous disparagement of them. I must take care not to rush into knowing people too well too soon. Pray heaven I don't make too many bloomers at C. Bed.

Monday September 29 1948

Another close still cloudy day. Am hag-ridden by the thought that I should be busy, but I can't think of anything to do. D. recommended me to chase the man doing my trunk and hurry him up. But I won't. I'd rather go without my trunk than do that. Hope that call from Sheffield comes through.

News from the UNO session gets more and more serious. Bevin today asked the USSR for pledges of faith that if they believed we were preparing for war let them throw open their country to prove to the world that they were not. It looks as if we were going into another war - three years after the last. With atom bombs what chance would any of us have then? It is of no use even to contemplate it. On the other hand it's no use either dancing on the edge of a volcano. All I can do is hope. Cannot wait for a week tomorrow. No life till then.

Tuesday September 28 1948

A week today I shall be in Cambridge. I simply cannot believe it. This morning Austin Reeds of Sheffield rang to say that my suit was in and I could go any time for a fitting. I cannot believe that either. Began sorting out my books today, and soon had pile big enough for three trunks, which I must take. I still have whole book-case full left. Must whittle them down somehow. I do want a good show of books when I get to C. They do fill up a room so and hearten one. If one only took them on that principle of course it would be easy for you would take those that looked best. Am on tenterhooks for next Tuesday.

Tonight went out with L. delivering some leaflets for D. designed to make an appeal to return to Christianity. We were doing our bit in a church effort to distribute three or four thousand of them. I hate doing it and find myself thinking much more of whether there's a nasty dog or whether someone's peeping thro' the curtains or whether someone will suddenly come in or out of the house I'm at. Oh dear I don't think I'd have for an early or even late Christian martyr.

Wednesday September 29 1948

To the saddler's this morning to find trunk and case repaired for 14/6. Very cheap and beautifully done. How wise we were to have them repaired rather than get new ones, for the present day stuff besides being fiendishly expensive, is no use whatever. Both case and trunk are rich chestnut coloured solid leather. To Mrs. Huckett's tea concert for the second time,

this afternoon. A much better concert this time; and Miss Elsie Froude who has been a professional is now, tho' very well preserved, in the William Nuttall home for aged spinsters! sang. She has undoubtedly a voice in a thousand, rich, strong, pure, unforced, but unfortunately her taste is poor and her musical intelligence almost nil. No wonder she failed. The second half of the programme provided by the Damensian Madrigal Group. They are under the direction of Mr. Appleby, the musical director for Doncaster Education Committee. He has certainly trained them as far as precision and ensemble go extremely well, but I doubt his somewhat sentimental expression, especially in the Elizabethan madrigals, the genuine ones that is. At last met Alan Whitney, the tenor of the group, of whom I had heard at one time and another. He has a Choral Schol. At John's and after a talk (mostly me as usual for which I must make up when we meet again, my tongue wags too much under the excitement of meeting someone) we decided to hold each other's hands on our entry into Hall, and to travel on the same train. He is a nice bloke, but more than that. He is no eighteen-year-old to be pushed around, he has character and spirit, and leaves no negative impression when he shakes hands. Self-possessed, and knows his own mind I should say. Is tall, somewhat chubby though pleasant features and a prepossessing smile. Much better than I expected, if I have to see something of him, as I suppose I will.

Thursday September 30 1948

Tomorrow to Sheffield for clothes. List now a little longer, and includes a Dinner Suit, 2 dress shirts, a pair of grey flannels, two vests, one pair of pants and a bow tie or two. This will all come to about £30, I should think. Oh dear, what a lot. However it must be spent. An absolutely quiet day, did not go out all day, packed my tuck-box with books and part packed my trunk. After supper when D. returned from Selby where he had been preaching sharp argument about my hair going thin, which of course it is very badly, but I am not going to start massaging it, and hair restorers and so on as if I were an old man. I wish they'd leave me alone, too excited to write more.

Friday October 1 1948

In this month I go to Cambridge. To Austin Reed's at Sheffield this afternoon to fitting for dinner suit. I wish Austin Reed's were a XX tailor's instead of a ready-made place. Still they are the best of the ready-made shops. This morning to the bank to cash my first cheque to self - £5. Then to barbers for my last Doncaster haircut. To the station to get my ticket for Cambridge - and to arrange for my trunk and book-box to be called for. Caught the 2.5 with M. and we were in Sheffield by 3.0. Caught a taxi to the shop, as it was raining. It seems a little shop from the outside, but has a good many floors. Went inside and asked the department for dinner suits. To the second floor, a long low room with heavy wardrobes with glass doors on either side, and well-worn low tables down the middle. I said to a floor-walker 'My name's Mackay and ' but I got no further, for he shouted 'Forward, Mr Pearson', and a tall thin fortyish assistant came out. He brought out the suit straightaway, and I must say it looked very good. The broad cloth is rich and thick and the silk collar solid and well corded. It is double-breasted, with no waistcoat of course, and trousers with braid down the

seams. It fitted me the moment I put it on, and will need no adjustment whatever. How good! I did feel strange putting it on, and in the mirror I looked as strange as I felt, so neat and svelte and expensive-looking. He brought up two shirts with soft turned down attached collars, and soft what he called (or what it sounded like) marsala fronts. It couldn't be, because that's a cheap sort of sherry. Anyway it's a sort of cross hatch raised pattern, as if a piece of coarse gauze had been stuck on the top. I bought both, and altogether the shirts being £2.11.6 each, and the suit £22, the bill was £27.3.0, which I paid by cheque. I wrote it quite quickly too, and I don't think anyone would have known it was only my fourth! Fortunately the place was empty! He said he would send off the suit and shirts on Tuesday, which will be just right, I XX!

We could not buy a black tie in A.R's so he recommended us to a little shop down a side-street, where they sold everything for men! Here the man showed me cheap made up ties that looked as though they were made of liquorice. I said 'Haven't you any unmade ones?' He had the impertinence to say 'No, there is no demand for them. Everyone asks for made-up ones!' I said 'I'm afraid you're wrong. I have a demand for one, and I'm asking for one', and went out. I got one all right across the road, though how I shall ever tie it, I do not know. There is a diagram, but I will will will not have a made-up tie. There's something horribly fake about them. The principle is wrong. They'll be having specially folded hankies next all stitched up for your breast pocket. Beastly!

Saturday October 2 1948

Another nondescript day. In morning set out for my watch, but have it put off a fortnight. Bah! Tried for notebooks like this one, but none. Attempted one for M.D. but none! Met M. half-way thro' and we fought our way back to the market through crowds of dirty people and rows of stalls covered in dirty clothing, cheap jewellery and odd ends of towelling and bought some glass-cloths and dusters. Still wretchedly warm and close. I do not seem to have the mental energy to put anything down for the last week; partly the weather I think and partly that I am doing such a lot of practical material work, sorting book packing and so on, that I have no time to think. I am living for Tuesday, now anyway.

Sunday October 3 1948

Busy all day packing when not at church. Almost everything in, but forgot tablecloths. Many things to be settled for one, whether breakfast is served in Hall or not. If it isn't, I can see me eating out of my hands the first few days. Oh! dear, what a lot of difficulties. Still they will probably resolve themselves quite easily. I hope my government cheque comes soon, for I have only about £30 in my account and don't want to ask D. for any more. For I must get at once some cutlery, forks and spoons mostly. Just one or two forks and a few teaspoons will do, to begin with anyway, so that won't be too bad. But I must have a pair of trousers, and an overcoat, and that will certainly spoil £20 altogether, which won't leave me much in case of other expenses. I have already had £100, but of course £30 of that was only a deposit, another £7 will be paid back, and £27 was paid for my dinner suit, which was a

gift, so I have had only £36 altogether, most of which isn't spent yet, so I haven't done too badly. My real fear is of asking D. for too much. He is easily annoyed these days, but I do not see how I can be more economical, for I cannot only have one pair of trousers, and I must have an overcoat for I've never had one so haven't even an old one. It's very difficult. Still time will unravel these difficulties. Must have a talk with D. tomorrow.

Monday Octbober 4 1948

D. still groggy and ill in bed this morning, so I went to the preview of the Olympic Games film (M.D. q.v.) with M. instead of him. We had our photographs taken for the papers with the Mayor, all too silly. In a frantic rush all the rest of the day packing and arranging and dusting. After supper in the kitchen a series of rows at least not really rows but, on my part, at any rate passionate arguments. First about me when I was small and D. flying off the handle because I remembered some happenings which I thought injustices, and which he remembers as legitimate teasing. He said that if I had not been teased, I should have been an overwhelming cissy, worse even than I am. Personally I cannot see this, for I think I was and am a cissy becuase I refrain from doing things. I refrain from doing things because I'm frightened of them or because people will laugh at me for doing them. However I will not betray myself into discussing myself and my injustices just now or I shall be here all night. Then we moved on to my letter-writing. I write to more or as many people as anyone in the family, far more than D. does (at least personal friends) and almost as many as M. and far more than Donald and L. who scarcely write to anyone. Of course I always am the first to lose my head in these arguments, and shriek and shout and go into long defences of myself. I wish I didn't. It gives them such an advantage. D. said that at school I scarcely ever wrote, and that I was shockingly selfish, idle and shiftless. I must, he said, write every week, to let them know I am all right. I owe it to them.

I shall write every week. I shall write a three side dull letter. I'll show them. I don't see why they should set up standards on trivial things like letters and then judge others by them.

Tuesday Oct. 5 1948

10.30. At last I am going to Cambridge.

11.30 p.m.

In Cambridge. It is useless for me to attempt to analyse the extraordinary multiplicity of sensations and experiences I have had today. I arrived with Alan Whitney at the college and found my rooms to be in the magnificent new block with private kitchen and hot and cold water in the bedroom. I have already had coffee in two people's rooms, in Alan W's and Bob Dingle's. Bob I went to kindergarten with. He is now a fellow and exactly the same. I must not write more. My eyes are heavy and my head is so full. I am so happy I can scarcely think.

Wednesday October 6 1948

I woke this morning with a bad sore throat, and by tonight have developed a cold. What a beginning! Found this morning that we were supposed to take breakfast in our rooms, and so tomorrow we will. I shall probably have mine with Simpson, a tall and embittered Modern Languages student, who has the rooms above me, and who was at school with me. We got rations of bacon and two eggs and butter at the kitchen shop, so we will have something to eat. I saw my tutor, Mr. Thistlethwaite, this morning, a small nice-looking person quite young - but I feel rotten. I'm going to bed. Oh! What a mess I'm making of this diary that I hoped would be so helpful to me.

Thursday October 7 1948

Feel better tonight, and will hurriedly bring myself up to date. Saw Mr. Y. quite normal and nice. Three-years business apparently quite in the air, so that can go out of my mind. Bought a second-hand Johns' gown at £2.10. Good, a scarf at 2Ss and a tie at 9/11. All this still on Wed. of course. At about 6.0 went to see Supervisor of Studies, Hugh Sykes Davies. Not a little bit like portrait. Short, not really plump, sharp nose, round face, black hair, and merely (so far) the matter and manner of a normal educated man. Gave me my syllabus and implored me not to work too hard. XX, on Tuesdays and all Eng. freshmen every second Thursday. Syllabus quite reasonable. Shakes. Hamlet, A & C, Tempest. All lovely. Know all them well. In the evening after Hall to the Arts Cinema to 'Mr. Deeds Goes to Town' (q.v. M.D.) Today Thursday did absolutely nothing except shopping of various things in morning and books in the afternoon. Quite a pleasant day to myself. I have scarcely had time nor energy to sit down and collect my real self and say to it 'Here you are in Cambridge', I simply live from hour to hour. When I arrived on Tuesday, as I walked beneath that lovely rose-pink twin towered gate, I thought ridiculously that in that moment I really became an undergraduate. I signed my name in the Porter's book, and the Porter, a ponderous man in a top-hat told me to go to my rooms, which I did. They are in the newest part of the college and are most luxurious. Ever since I came up, I have been meeting people, and usually through someone I scarcely know. All most confusing.

Tonight all freshmen were invited by the Master, the President and the Dean into the Senior Combination Room for coffee and to hear the Master talk about the college. 'The SCR is the most beautiful room in John's and therefore', said the Master, 'in Cambridge' which raised a big laugh. The room is a long low gallery-like room, with a magnificent Tudor plastered ceiling, and perfect oak panelling of the same time. The room has not been fitted with electricity, but is still lit by old candelabra springing in pairs from central plaques framed by the crest of the college. Round the walls hang pictures of prominent benefactors, on the wall opposite me at the end, was a portrait of the Countess of Shrewsbury, hung there at her command after the completion of this second court at her expense. It is a thought to make one feel very small that so many generations of famous and infamous men have passed through this same college, John's. The Master, whose name is Benians, is an old man now, tall and stooping with a nervous smile and a mild hesitant voice. He said that he was

speaking to the largest body of freshmen the college had ever welcomed. In the general dusk of the room faces appeared with that almost luminous paleness that one notices in all portraits until the nineteenth century. I see why now. Bed, bed, bed, another bad night last night. Indigestion, felt I might choke or be sick or something.

Friday October 8 1948

Another day of restlessness, when I feel I must be with someone the whole time. Silly. Did nothing all day, but long for my trunk to come. Wish it would hurry. No, I am too tired. I cannot write.

Saturday October 9 1948

I cannot understand why I have found it so hard to write anything in this record since I came here. I think it is because I have not yet settled down. My trunk has not come yet, and that always makes me wonder whether I'm really here or not. I always have connected my flying visits to Cambridge with tired feet and slowly stiffening shoes. That is of course just what is happening. Oh! I wish it would come. I am restless and quite incapable of apprehending or judging anything.

Sunday October 10 1948

My trunk has still not come. Pray heaven it is not lost, or I shall be so uncomfortable I shall not know what to do. But surely both my trunk and tuck-box cannot be lost. Oh! dear. I cannot write. I cannot - I am so restless and tired.

Monday October 11 1948

At last my trunk has come. I am surrounded by my own tonight, and I think my tongue is loosened. I went to my first lectures this morning. The lecture-rooms, in Mill Lane, by the side of the hideous Albert Memorial Cambridge Press building, are all light, airy and roomy. Nevertheless we were sitting on the floor by the time everyone was in. The lecturer was a tall gaunt youngish and rather affected man, a Mr. Rossiter, who lectured on pre-Shakespearean drama with an elaborate barrage of quotations and an extraordinary deficiency of matter. Quite fun but not very valuable. The second man, a Mr. Hodgarts, on 18th C. Prose, was like his appearance, stodgy, heavy and dull. Everyone or almost everyone was taking copious notes. I myself while I could see that if you tried to note everything he was saying you would be busy without really hearing, found to my satisfaction that the extra time for meditation afforded by taking no notes, gave me plenty of time to realize that all his wordiness could be summarized, with suitable precision and enough penetration, into little more than two or three sentences. Between lectures there is the most unholy scrum. It is quite possible to be held quite immobile for 10 whole minutes. I walked away about twelve down the gracious King's Parade, most gratified to observe my gown, a John's gown with the approved flowing sleeves and velvet bands, billowing most satisfyingly in the wind. On my way back to college, stopped in at Sidney Smith's, and bought a fine pair of grey waisted trousers for £4.18.11, for which he accepted a cheque. Went to the kitchen office after lunch, and got my points and soap coupons, not very much of either, and later in the afternoon my Government grant - £90. Most satisfactory. I then prepared a little piece from 'Man & Superman' to read for the

Mummers' audition, and on going round to Great Court Trinity, found myself, having walked through the audition room, waiting in the bloke who keeps the rooms' bedroom, adorned with a large collection of hats. Went in to find the Committee (composed principally of those who had had parts in the play-reading of 'Arms and the Man' held last night in the picture-covered Junior Parlour of Trinity) waiting, I was asked various questions, than read my bit, read a bit from 'Androcles and the Lion' as unseen with another girl. I was asked would I be prepared to accept a part in Nuseries (one-acters in three weeks) if I were successful. I said 'No', thinking of the A.D.C. I went back to get my things, and they called me back saying 'Was I open to persuasion and so on, quite forgetting to put in 'If you are accepted.' So it looks as though I have been selected. Bother. Went to a meeting for membership of the Union, and decided to become one. That's £7.17.6, but it's for life and has lots of privileges. I'm not sorry I've done it. Must be a trifle careful, I think, though. I went round the Union buildings and found them heavily and impressively XX.

Wednesday October 13 1948

The day of the A.D.C. audition. It took place in the ADC theatre, a smooth roofed and quite characterless small theatre up a little side-street off Jesus Lane. We had been given a piece of Shakespeare to read, the bitter speech of Troilus after he had seen Cressida canoodling with Diomed, and a short exchange of dialogue from 'An Ideal Husband' when Lord Goring is preparing for dinner. The second bit was own choice, and I was forced to choose it for lack of any other book around the place. Sangster read the dialogue with me, and altogether it was all a bit silly, and I occasioned one or two laughs most of them at my expense instead of my offering to pay for them. This put me off, and also the fact that someone just before me, had done the Porter speech from 'Macbeth' and a scene from 'Mr. Puff', really extremely well. (That reminds me, I must find out his name.) This puts me off even more when I am sure I am not the best. I know that is really quite wrong but I must admit I act much better when I feel I am on top. That must be put down however and if I am chosen, I am resolved to start at my best at the bottom and try to get to the top. At school from lack of competition my success was too easy. Oh! I do hope I get in a production. What an excitement and happiness it would be.

Thursday October 14 1948

A very rainy day. Had my second supervision period this morning, the fortnightly one with five others, Bear, Beans, Tagore (an Indian but no relation of Rabindranath), Wilders, a heavy-faced and, as it proved, slightly overbearing youth, and a shock-headed annoying little creature called Thornbery, I think. We had been told to look at Keats Sonnet to Sleep beginning 'O soft embalmer of the still midnight'. R.S-D asked me first to tell them all about it, and what I thought of it. I said I felt it to be very closely connected with the resemblance between sleep and death, and cited 'Embalmer' and 'shutting.... our eyes' and 'hushed casket' and so on, as support for the idea. All five of them routed me completely and after about ten minutes of crushing, Mr. S-D said, 'I think you need an ally, Mackay.' and told them that I was quite right etc. etc. etc. I was and am jubilant, and pleased with myself so there! They

said I was making the sonnet harsh and ugly. It was they who were simply turning it into wishy-washy poetaster's drivel. Whopeee!

Friday October 15 1948

I have been elected to the ADC and went along to the first rehearsal today at 5. I find I have part of a drunk Russian sailor with only about two lines. Oh God! What a part. How am I to do anything with it? What a beginning. I am so miserable and wretched. I had hoped for good luck even after that awful audition. I must go on and treat it as a joke and really throw myself into it, otherwise I shall get chucked out into the cold metaphorically if not actually. Oh, here am I who thought Cambridge meant all happiness, as lonely and restless and unsettled as ever I was in the Army. Oh please let me alone. I must must must remember that I am here to do my work, which I really love, don't I don't I oh.

Saturday October 16 1948

Thank Heaven; I was dreading rehearsal, but I have been chucked from Ivan and made one of the two roughs. I say nothing but just drag somebody drunk off the stage. I am glad, because if I'd spoken in this play, I would probably have done so badly that I'd never have been allowed to act again at all. I found that I had a note from the Mummers saying I had been accepted and so I have a part there too! And a much better one - Richard Burbage in a little play by Maurice Baring, about a rehearsal of 'Macbeth' with Shakespeare present. Quite a good part. I am feeling much much better. Oh perhaps I shall be all right here after all.

Sunday October 17 1948

Rehearsal of 'The Rehearsal' took place in someone's rooms in the extreme end of Pembroke. The rooms were numbered 10 and everyone thinking 1 should be at the foot of the staircase and 10 at the top, came in announcing their fury at having had to walk all the way up to 1 only to find that 10 was exactly opposite the staircase door. Rehearsal did not go well, they don't take up their cues well nor put anything into their parts. And whenever I do they stare in the most extraordinary way. It cannot just be me, for the Producer seems to be quite satisfied. I like my part and it has some good moments. I do hope it goes off all right. It is a farce and they have quite a way of going wrong.

To the ADC party for new members this evening. We stood in groups, our group consisting of those who are in 'The Long Voyage Home'. Guy Hitchin, who is also Shakespeare in the Mummers' 'Rehearsal' was there. We had lunch together today; he is the son of a doctor, tall well-build, with a dark bony face, very strong-looking but actually quite mild. Seems interesting and I shall be glad to try and keep up the acquaintanceship. Definitely something more there than usual. Peter Wood who is playing Driscoll with such a nauseating Irish accent, is a medium height, with a hard-bitten kind of face, as of one who knows all the answers. I don't think for a moment he does, but he told guy and I that he did no work and

that we didn't know what we had come up here for it we did any. And there was I who haven't done a stroke, defending conscientiousness. Just contrary really. He strikes me as a debunker who has not yet realised that one cannot debunk everything, or one is left with nothing at all that one may do safely. I may indulge myself, but he certainly beats me, if he's telling the truth, which I doubt. He vainly attempts to retreat to a position where unassailable himself, he can look down amused upon the rest of us, diligently suffering for success. He will realize some day I suppose that effort of some kind is required for anything worthwhile. Gracious how dull we would be if we never did anything we didn't like doing.

Monday October 18 1948

A full day. Lectures all this morning. Mr Rossiter on Greek ritual drama, rejoicing in an entirely phallic hour. Peter Wood actually turned up much to my surprise, and I could not see Guy, which annoyed me, as I had just remembered I could not go to Mummers' because of David's birthday. (When I write of David, I always mean David Sawyer). We had dinner at the Union and a good dinner it was too, with delicious sole with some subtle sauce, and peaches, and with our coffee we dared a liqueur. We wanted Cointreau but it turned out they hadn't any, so David asked for Curacao but no, so in the end I had a Kummel and he had a Van Der XX. Very nice too. We laughed a good deal over our courage. I said, meaning the cinema 'I hope we get out of here on time! He said 'I hope we get out of here!' After the film, Jean Cocteau's 'La Belle et La Bete (M.D.q.v.) I met Brian Appleby the Uppingham bloke who spoke to me at the fresher's squash about the ADC. He of course has been made Bottom in the scenes from 'The Dream'. I certainly have had damnable luck, or else I am very much poorer than I think I am. No one knows fortunately but me how bitter a disappointment it is to have such a poor part. Oh I do hope Burbage is fairly successful. They used my room tonight and liked it, I think. Miss Rudermann, the Producer, was at the cinema too!

Tuesday October 19 1948

Another rehearsal in my room tonight. Me present this time. We went thro' the thing about three times, and it went, I thought, better. Funny to think of it being in here, when I am sitting here now with the place so quiet and empty. I haven't really done very much work yet, but a little more than before. Anyway I've only been here a fortnight, although as David said yesterday, 'You forget that there's anyone waiting for letters, or in fact that anyone is doing something other than this! This being 'Cambridge life'. I have not yet been fully pulled into the whirlpool, for I have not yet felt that tug into nervous energy which sets me going in all directions but I will. My worst trouble is that whenever I am not actually doing something with somebody else, I tend, instead of sitting down and getting on with reading and so on that can only be done alone, to look for somebody to do things with. I have no doubt soon I shall be longing for some peace and quiet. Guy Hitching is nice, I think. I am going to like him. I hope I don't alienate him ever. I was not talking very easily this morning. Bother!

Wednesday October 20 1948

Met Guy Hitching at lecture this morning and found him so pleasant as ever. To Tulliver's again at 10 for coffee with him and a friend of his from Clare, David Humpries who dressed exclusively in check sports coats and yellow polo-neck sweaters with socks to match. We had about three coffees each and attempted completely unsuccessfully to do the 'Times' crossword. This afternoon Julian Slade, who is in 'The Long Voyage Home' and is incidentally the bloke who did so brilliantly at the audition as Mr. Puff, came up to me and quietly asked me to tea in his rooms which he shares with the chap who took over my Ivan thing. I accepted gratefully and went off with them after the rehearsal. They have rooms in the furthest court of Trinity, pleasant, airy though somewhat undistinguished rooms at the top of a long flight of wooden stairs. After we had talked for a little I discovered that they had been at Eton. This surprised me a little, for Julian Slade especially seems so much less hide-bound than I should have imagined some years at Eton would have made you. He is a thin fragile person of about 19, with a prominent nose and chin, high colour, hollow cheeks, and an uncombed head of black hair.

PAGE MISSING

At any rate, our blokes can't cheer very well. What a scarifying sight to see almost hundreds of scarlet-gowned doctors, male and female, all at once. More rehearsals and more rehearsals, but I am so tired. I must get to bed earlier, and I have only been here a fortnight. What'll it be after a month - or two years?

Friday October 22 1948

David told me today that he has heard the result of the University Health Service X-Ray Examination. He has a patch on one lung, and must go home and rest for six months. We were sitting in Matthews, having our morning coffee, when he told me. He seemed to be quite cheery about it, but he must be feeling it terribly. To leave here after having waited three years to get here, and for such a reason I wish I could have said something to him, but our conventions don't allow it, so I had to leave him without any way of showing that I felt for him. Oh what a tragedy, that he will not be here and I will. He must go home I suppose, by next week. But more of him when I see him again tomorrow.

Guy Hitching asked me to his digs for coffee after dinner tonight. I met him at about nine thirty in the Club Room in the ADC where we had a drink. The Club Room is a medium-sized room, lined on two sides with rather tumbled plays, and on the other two by writing-desks and tables with books or news-cuttings and photographs of former productions. I found many familiar names, among them Frances Rowe, such a resounding success on Broadway recently in 'Man and Superman'. We started to walk to Guy's rooms, just off Chesterton Road, realized it was nearly 10, and started to run. I ran much faster, and got there first, at which I was much pleased for G is a rugger player, but I am afraid he probably <u>let</u> me get there first. His room is pleasant, large with 3 windows. We settled down to try out

his new coffee percolator, the sort with two large glass globes. We laughed a good deal by and large.

Saturday October 23 1948

A hectic day. Mummers' rehearsal from half-past eleven to half-past twelve after two lectures from nine till eleven. Then a rush to get laundry tied up, and to the dress rehearsal of 'The Long Voyage Home' at the ADC. The stage is most completely equipped, with a lighting gallery and a mechanical cyclorama. The dressing-rooms are big and bare with tables at one end with mirrors and lights all round them. My make-up arrived just as I was going out. I began to make up quickly and decided, as the others were making themselves so weather-beaten, I might as well be pasty and city-pale, so I gave myself bags under my eyes and sunken cheeks leaving the No. 5 more or less untouched on nose, cheekbones and forehead, except for a few dabs of No. 9 to relieve it from its absolute XX. I thought I might as well spend a little time making up as I had nothing else to do. The play went on its usual dull way, very badly on the whole. My costume was pleasantly sordid, a dirty old reefer coat, a khaki scarf, and a pair of denim trousers too small for me. I do hope the other plays aren't too good. I have read 'Each in his Own Way' by Pirandello, the big product. of the ADC this year, and find it very puzzling but very exciting. Pray heaven I get some sort of part in this. I shall definitely apply, and I think particularly for Diego Cinci (a nice big part anyway).

Sunday October 24 1948

Tonight the Nurseries at the ADC theatre. Not an occasion for me, nor in fact, I think, for anyone. The plays were on the whole, poor, and although the scenes from the Dream made the audience (and me) laugh quite a lot, they were very much over-clowned in a variety of tiresome ways, but see M.D. However, I still feel that my debut in the ADC as the most insignificant character in the most unimportant play has scarcely been auspicious. But it was a thrill to be on stage in a real theatre for the very first time, and look up at the bare brick behind the velvet curtains and the dirty floor beneath the feet of neatly dressed actors. Tomorrow the Mummers' dress rehearsal and at least I have more chance in that. I wonder if I could make my performance funnier and a little more Gielgudish. Oh! I am again so tired.

Monday October 25 1948

The dress rehearsal of 'The Rehearsal' tonight. I went to Coulson's to get the costumes this morning and came away in a taxi with a large hamper. My costume is fairly good, green satin and yellow velvet, with green tights and brown top-boots. The others are rather poor on the whole. Poor Guy has a dreadful black sateen affair with a good velvet cloak admittedly, but not good. An old school-friend of his, whom he met suddenly in the theatre tonight, said to me later 'I suppose you know Guy awfully well, don't you, I mean you're always together, and you sit together at lectures, and so on.' I was foolish enough to repeat this to Guy. He laughed, but I hope it won't start him thinking that perhaps we have got too intimate too quickly. How difficult it is to seem properly eager to be with someone and yet not seem demanding! It is so difficult to know when to refuse and when not to invite. In passing I must say I have never got to know anyone so well so quickly, and as far as I can tell, he

seems a straightforward and charming person. Tomorrow auditions for ADC 'Each in His Own Way'.
Tuesday October 26 1948

1.0 and terribly late. A good night, the play went very well, and I got a lot of laughs. This afternoon to the ADC auditions for the Pirandello, and I saw at 6.0 that I have a part. I am the First Young Man with quite a lot to say, including the opening line of the whole play! Oh I am so happy and tired!

Wednesday October 27 1948

Very late again, and I just cannot sit up writing as long as I should like to. My diary has been, to say the least of it, incomplete since I came to Cambridge, let alone inadequate in writing what it has. It arises simply from going to bed too late. Enough has been happening, heaven knows.

Tonight David Sawyer (already he seems so remote) came to say goodbye. His father came in, but only for a minute. David and talked for about a quarter of an hour and he seemed quite cheerful. He said that he must go, and shook hands with me at the door. He stopped at the doorway of the staircase, and I said 'I'll write, and - you know how sorry I am.' He simply waved, and walked out of the light. He is going home tomorrow morning. I felt almost guilty at being so happy and with years of such richness ahead. I realize that I have no one here now whom I know well enough to be really open with, or who knows enough of me for us to be relaxed in each other's company. Poor Tom, he didn't deserve this beastly setback, and how wonderfully he's taking it, and how he would hate me to write that.

Thursday October 28 1948

To be measured for my Pirandello costume this afternoon. A pretty girl, with thick black curly hair and pink cheeks did the measuring. Ross Lewis, the President of the ADC, a rather broad and dark young man, with a wide face and a large mouth, complimented me nicely on my Burbage. Very pleasant of him, I thought, quite needless for him to bother and not a bit patronising. In the afternoon to tea again with Guy, who wanted me to finish up some bread and cake. What a wonderful reason for coming to tea, I thought! In the evening Guy called for me about eight and we went off round to Victor Menzies, the producer of 'The Long Voyage Home' for a party. Gin flowed strongly, thank heaven, and though my first was all orange and no gin, later I did better. We all talked theatre all night descending to the really juicy scandals after the girls left. Quite a merry time on the whole, though I wonder what Bob Stanley was winking at Vic for when I was talking about Tree. Perhaps it was because we were all staying too long. Well that wasn't just me. Oh! so late again, 12.30 and so tired. Must have early night.

Friday October 29 1948

So late again. What is the matter with me? Stayed in this morning and worked away at this Donne essay 'Intellect and Emotion in the Poetry of Donne'. Cannot make up my mind whether to buy an overcoat or not. So expensive. Oh well, leave these things to solve themselves. To the first rehearsal of the Pirandello, on the empty cold stage of the ADC, just a walk through, and quite successful on the whole. Ross jumping about all over the place showing us moves and so on. Morris Perry who is playing Diego, a medium-height rather bloated looking person with handsome blond hair left far too long in a species of bob. In the afternoon to the Mummers' tea-dance; Guy there already and well away with a mousey blonde. He can't dance, neither can she, so they got on well. I just talked, ate my 3/6 worth of tea and got away quick. Guy told me later that he had gone off with her to look for a double room for some friends of hers, and didn't realize for quite a long time what all the dirty looks meant. He also told me that David Humphries (whom I have mentioned before in connection with Tulliver's and yellow polo sweaters) had got into the ADC. He is apparently thrilled about it. He is not at all like his appearance, for with his rather sporty clothes and sleek curly black hair he looks rather man of the world. He is actually disarmingly humble, and has a most disconcerting habit of smiling meekly up at you just when you expect him to snap some smart reply back at you.

He is nice, I think. I have been wondering what G. really thinks of me, but perhaps I'd better not. It spoils things. It has come to me that really although far more of far more interest is happening to me than has happened to me for years and yet I am writing less. I am in the ADC and at Cambridge and I must realize that.

Saturday October 30 1948

To bed early at last, for in any case the clocks go back an hour tonight, so we get longer. I have washed my hair, had a bath, it is now 20 past ten (really nine) and I am off to have a cup of tea, then bed. Spent a happy norming with David Humphreys who is in the ADC and will be at rehearsal tomorrow with Guy and I.

Sunday October 31 1948

Somehow inexplicably I wrote nothing for Sunday, but cannot remember how I came to forget.

Monday November 1 1948

Pouring in torrents today, so my wish was fulfilled, and I flourished my umbrella with delight. My delight was not so much in showing it off and in being pleased that I looked well with it but rather in feeling pleasantly defended from the rain. Such convenience! Finished my essay this afternoon, and popped it into S.D this evening. I think that's what must have

made me forget my diary last night. To Guy's for tea again. We talked as usual, and he, talking about the girl he met at the Mummers' Miriam Prission, asked me what I thought of her, and when I said I found her mousey colourless and dull, he said he would have nothing more to do with her. A little later on talking about women, he took some papers out of a drawer, and proceeded to read me a series of mildly pornographic poems, which for some reason he had had typed. What an astonishing person he is! I should never have thought him so trivial. At least they might have been really dirty, but this - well! At 5.30 we both went to the rehearsal of the Pirandello. David H. was there very affable and as humble and friendly as ever, even after my standing him up for tea quite beyond my control yesterday. The rehearsal was more or less chaos. These crowd scenes with acres of conversation by hundreds of people always are at first go. Should look masterly from the front. To the Arts Cinema with David Simpson in evening. Mike is coming. What a wonderful surprise.

Tuesday November 2 1948

Too tired to write.

Thursday November 4 1948

Yesterday a most mournful day. Splitting headache and ceaseless diarrhoea. Simply sat and watched the clock limp round all day. Went to the nurse at 5.0, when I felt for the moment at little better and got some medicine, magnesia and Bisodol. Both simply antacids so not likely to be spectacularly helpful; however she was cool and efficient, and kind, and I felt glad I had been. Then I got worse somehow, and the headache became worse, and I lay and dozed and had the funniest dreams. By then I must have been running a bit of a temperature. And I lay there all the time knowing I had to work up enough energy to go and see the Dean and to meet Mike. At 9.45 Mike still hadn't come, so I pulled myself up and tottered round to see the Dean, who proves to be, apart from the pleasant white-haired and active figure I had seen around the courts, a talkative and nonsensical clergyman who never seems to be able to finish his sentences. Most aggravating, not that of course I was exactly at my best. When I got back to my room I found Mike here extremely smart in a very new P/O's uniform. I cannot think how I talked to him, nor can I remember what I said, but I suppose I must have done all right. When I at last sank into bed I felt a wonderful sense of contentment all over. Today I have drifted around getting better and doing nothing. Of Mike I have seen more or less nothing, for he has so many people to see. He, unless he is putting it on, has become a little self-consciously service. Must be off - so tired.

Friday November 5 1948

What a day! Now a quarter to one, and we have just stopped drinking tea after a wonderful Guy Fawkes evening. David Simpson and I sallied out about 8.0 and found the market-place full and a good many fireworks going off, though nothing much else happening. We wandered around after various mobs, and finally joined forces with two blokes whom David knew, one a Varsity Reporter, the other a long-nosed glasses type. After another walk

around, when we could see nothing but lumps of people, with a lot of terrific explosions from fireworks, we decided to go and have a drink at the Bath, which we did. I had already been to the Union, and started in on gin and limes and felt after Wednesday it would be unwise to have more, but had a half to be sociable. Came out after about half an hour and on walking out again into Peas Hill, had got to the edge of Market Hill to see someone (in a gown) climbing up the lamp-post in (it turned out) vain attempt to put it out. the Junior Proctor, standing in the middle of the crush, surrounded by Bullers and Police-men, and looking incredibly dignified and remote until a little boy let off a little squib just behind him, simply said grimly 'Get him', and they got him. Later I heard that his name was Vassilevskey and that movement had been started to get him out. I just didn't believe the first and doubted the efficiency of the second. Immediately after that some other one climbed up the lamppost and simply smashed it, and that was that, and immediately after that, I met Jessie Faber, of the ADC and Teddy Frazer also ADC (she's doing costumes for the Pirandello) and Robin Williams who lives just round corner from here, and various other unidentified girls, and I stayed with them all night, and lost everyone else, and a very good time I had. I wonder now whether I talked too much or laughed too loud and think I probably did - but what the hell - it's what I'm really like I suppose. The festivities became really festive. Every lamppost was smashed in the end and a street island blown besides some overturning of cars. Lovely. Bed.

Saturday November 6 '48

A slightly dim awakening with not the smallest hope of getting to the first lecture. I am not doing nearly enough work. I never seem to have a chance simply to sit and think, and no chance at <u>all</u> to do any writing as I thought I might like to and be able to. It is the first term, perhaps things will settle down later on. Money is getting short, but I <u>must</u> not start panicking after all, why should I? Went down to the Mill Lane Lecture Rooms to meet David Humphries and Guy, and found them in Tulliver's, engaged as usual in the Daily Telegraph crossword puzzle. We walked up the KP pretty quickly and made out way to John's, where in the forecourt was gathering the procession. (Poppy day today, and all the colleges are organising some sort of 'do' to raise money - now who says we're decadent.) This procession, made up of a bloke dressed as the Duke of Wellington on a large horse, a cart with the bull (a pantomime bull) by name El Proctorio Furioso), a number of extremely unconventionally dressed picadors, the matador (Senor Steatu Pupillari) and a wonderfully hybrid band, processed round the town, finally ending up at Parker's Piece. Here there was an enormous crowd, with a commentator with a lovely line in guff, spouting away with a hand microphone. The fight proceeded amid terrific cheers, the bull at one point standing up in two halves to revive itself with beer, and at another being attacked unrehearsed by a dog, who soon lost heart against such a queer opponent. At the gates of Trinity at 12.0 a tumbril arrived, with its haughty of ci-devant aristos, who, with the hats of a terrific crowd, hanging from every tree and roof round about were executed with sepulchral delight by a most wryly sinister executioner. All these and more made up the show, and all had their inevitable accompaniments of single turns, a nurse with a baby in a pram and a chamber-pot for collecting. It was a morning of fun for me, and when we ended up at Nina's for an omelette and a cup of coffee, I felt quite jealous of not having done something myself and quite mean that I had not offered if for no other reason than that I did nothing for Poppy Day. In the

afternoon David H. and I went to tea with Guy. His room is always so cold. He only laughs at me when I tell him. In the evening to a party at Ivor Hussey's. Rather boring. Too much drink no food, and everyone not mixing. Simply could not manage to say a word for the last hour. Often wonder whether I am half as witty as I think I am. Certainly from this book no one would think that I was capable of anything but flat statement and graceless recording. I am assured by the smiles and continued acquaintancy of many friends that I am at any rate moderately amusing if not a raging wit, and can be tolerated XX for a conversation and asked back for more. I can only think that I write here when I am worn out!

Sunday November 7 1948

A graceless day. Raining and the Film society which by getting up too late I nearly missed. An indifferent lunch, with Guy slightly irritating. A headache which persisted, and a heavy rehearsal in the afternoon. After dinner John Wilders, a pleasantly similar person to myself, came in and after a short telephoning session stayed until about eleven-fifteen. He is of slightly satirical cast, but subtly aware of the numerous layers of contradiction and agreement which make up conversation. An understanding person, who faces life and finds problems in almost the same way as I do myself.

I was thinking this evening, when writing unwilling and characterless letters to two people whom I know in the Army, that the Army suddenly has become really finished in my mind. All the time I was at home time went past so smoothly and unnoticeably that I still felt I could almost remember the exact number of times I'd changed my shirt since I first went back into civilian clothes. Now I can't!

PAGE MISSING

...come in. To the Arts Cinema this evening to see 'Dr. Caligari'. Most entertaining.

Thursday November 11 1948

To the ADC in the afternoon to a make-up lecture; most entertaining, for the Leichner bloke, who came down to lecture was an Oxford man, and took a delight in telling us how stupid were those systems which he of course knew we used. Rather pathetic really how he so clearly was so pleased to be just one jump ahead in theatre gossip. Morris was there of course and seemed quite affable, tho' of course walked away afterwards when he saw I was with G. and D. I do hope he doesn't think I'm cadging for a part in the Marlowe, I am not even sure that I really want to be in at all.

Friday November 12 1948

Stayed in this morning to begin my Chaucer's Langland essay. Found Langland really rather tiresome at the beginning, great lists of sins and evils, all with capital letters. But afterwards

his plainness and spareness and simple morals began to have their effect, and become quite pleasing, though I don't think that I could ever read him with active pleasure. Something too parochial about him quite to straddle the years. John Wilders came in and we went for coffee. Really quite delightful. We agree about so much! More work in afternoon and a rehearsal at 5 after tea with Guy. M. not there, but will be at rehearsal tomorrow, I do not doubt. Sat most of the evening thinking he might come in at any moment, but of course he didn't. John W. came back in after he had been to the pictures, and we talked. He asked me to tell him if he bored me, I said I would. We discussed work, about how we both did so little, and wrote an essay more or less by patching together passages from other critics and how in any case I didn't feel I had much more than average talent even if I did do the work. I have wondered how well I would do if I read all I was supposed to do, when I consider how well I do so often by drawing conclusions from someone else's conclusions about a book. To bed. To bed.

Saturday November 13 1948

A grim day in many ways. A rehearsal in the afternoon long and slightly boring, really though Act II is really not going at all badly. Morris there, and in good form. Cycled away immediately afterwards, and I met him as I was going down Sidney St. when he waved. I presume he was going to the Marlowe auditions. At Hall tonight Philip Lee ordered 6 half pints of cider, but the waiter read it wrong and brought 6 and a half pints of cider. I have never felt so bloated in my life. Poor John Wilders was terribly full, and as if that wasn't bad enough, Guy came to my rooms soon after dinner and we went off to the 'Eagle' for a drink before going on to the ADV to see 'The Three Sisters' after all, because Guy had a ticket he could not get rid of.

Sunday November 14 1948

Got up late at about 10.15. Missed breakfast. Went out to get my papers. Guy came round about 12.0 and we went and had lunch. When we went back to his rooms for coffee, I started a fearful argument about the XX on news magazine 'Time', a dreadful vulgar thing. I said it was a menace, and an expression of all that was worst in journalism. He pointed to its large sales, I said that I should have thought that the larger sales a paper had these days the more completely did that condemn it, and so on and so on, getting quite annoyed. However it came out all right in the end. We went on to the interlude rehearsals, very difficult and tedious, but going to be on the night quite masterly I think. It is a bit easy to go on regarding them as a casual joke until far too late to get them rehearsed properly. After the two interludes at about 4.30 we started Act II. M.P. arrived, his hair in dreadful rats' tails. When the rehearsal was over, I walked off to the corner, M.P. having gone off straight away. I was forced to wait for Guy, David and Michael Miller. They soon came, and we actually caught M. up and trooped in after him to AM Jaffe's rooms. Jaffe is President of the Marlowe Soc. He must be devilish rich, his rooms are hung with original drawings, and he obviously has plenty in other ways. The auditions had begun and we squatted down to wait. M. tucked himself into a corner with a big list, and asked everyone, even the people from the ADC whom he must have known,

their name and college and what part if any they would like in the big production all this in the most impersonal voice, without even the famous Perry leer, but when it came to me, he never bothered to ask my name and college, but had it all written down. Strange when you consider I've only told him once, and he must have taken special pains to remember it, I hope!

This evening I popped out in between essay writing to the ADC General Meeting. It was quite ordinary (the meeting part that is) but we had quite a good gossip afterwards. I must say I was astounded, when Guy and I were walking home, to find that he thought my style of wit most individual and effective, that he thought most self-confident and that many other people had said I had a striking personality! It is really incredible but he seemed quite sincere. How can he, how can he think so. I mean my style is only a sort of...

2 PAGES MISSING

... facing things the same. He is rather old-looking, a little like one who has 'knocked around a good deal and knows all the answers', but behind that front he is just as insecure and wondering what others are thinking. He told me he thought me the most poised and self-assured person when he first saw me, and would still think so had I not told him different. I cannot understand that, but can only suppose it to be true, for so many people have told me so, especially lately. I shall have to be careful, very very careful that I don't become bumptious and too sure of myself. I always get a specially big knock if I do.

To the Marlowe Society auditions again tonight. From about 7.30 John and I had been practising in my rooms our speeches. He was doing the Third Gentleman's speech about the coronation from the first scene of Part IV of Henry VIII, and I 'Posthumous' soliloquy from Act V, Scene V of 'Cymbeline'. Although I am well in at the ADC and so on, I was quivering with nerves. When we got there, I was appalled to find that, as well at Ross Lewis and M.P. and the Pres. of the Marlowe, Michael Jaffe, there were also George Rylands and Donald Bees. They all sat in a row in the stalls and one by one the others went up to read. Most of them were drips, unknown to me, and probably fancying themselves in the Marlowe, though not having bothered to join the ADC. Peter Fardiner, who's doing 'Prestino' in the Pirandello, was very good, and the only one with any life in him. I must say with all honesty that out of about a dozen more John and I were the only ones besides Peter who showed any life at all. John did not do as well as he had done in my rooms, and he has been downcast about it all evening. I did fairly well and was quite satisfied that I did more or less my best. But again he amazed me by commenting quite gratuitously and calmly how well I walked up onto the stage, and how perfectly I had placed myself when I got there. I am really <u>amazed</u>. However it's most gratifying.

Tuesday November 23 1948

I must be careful. I felt somehow one or two cracks in my self-confidence (my outer self-confidence that it) today. I shall go and be <u>really</u> tactless, and feel really obviously uncomfortable. I cannot seem to stop myself thinking of the play. At night I lie in bed, and

shiver with excitement at the thought of going on, and yet I have not really a big part, or anything like it. I am stupid, I can't even write straight in here. I can't think at all properly about anything.

Wednesday November 24 '48

A depressing day. To Girton in the afternoon for tea with Jessie and Teddy. Girton a hideous red building from what I could see of it. Jessie's a charming sitting-room, feminine touch I suppose.

Rehearsal dragged on over dinner: fairly all right Act I anyway. At 8.0 into Act II. Actually dropped a cue, which put me off the rest of the evening. Act II rather dead, even M.P. missing a cue at one point. My bit in the interlude all wrong, and am now quivering with expectation that it will never come right again. Oh, such a wretched thing! I shall never get to sleep tonight.

Thursday November 25 '48

To ADC at 4.30 for a fitting for my costume. It and the women's costumes are coming from a different place, and had not arrived. I didn't get away because 'Varsity's' photographer was there, and wanted a picture. So I, being the only person there, besides Ian Oswald and Brian Appleby, who was in the play, scrambled into a tail suit with my ordinary shirt on and a piece of rag for a tie, and posed doing the most absurd things, striking Ian with my gloves and so on, none of which comes in the play. So silly and will, I am sure, give a very bad impression of the play. Got my audition card from the Marlowe today, signed by Morris too. How wonderful! I'm in! Auditions for H 8 itself on Wednesday, Saturday, and Monday. Bed.

Saturday November 27 .48

Too tired last night to write. Costume rehearsal somehow very tiring. My costume really very good, a smart...

SEVERAL PAGES MISSING

... 'The War Within' to think much of the dreadful flatness of everything. John W. to ADC to Marlowe and M.P. rode up as I said goodbye to John. He said goodbye to me in most cursory fashion, no go, quite definitely.

Tuesday December 14 1948

A collapse on return to D'caster. What a town!! Shall probably write little. Literally do nothing but read all day.

Thursday December 30 1948

Christmas over rather flatly. Michael has been posted to Germany. He wrote me and told me he had volunteered, and had been accepted. Oh why did he have to volunteer? Now the only person whom I really know and like my only friend, will be away in Germany. And Germany is by no means a safe place these days. I wish he hadn't volunteered.

Tuesday January 11 1948

Cambridge again, and again I come alive. In the train landed up against a family of mother and four very lively children, whose husband and father has some connection (I should guess a don) with Clare. The children were excitedly noting down train numbers and saying excitedly 'Wasn't that Milton' meaning not the poet but a particular engine. What a world!

Am too tired to write more, but have picked up where I left off.

Wednesday January 12 1949

In the morning back to the delicious rhythm of coffee in the morning, lunch, wandering in the afternoon. Really a day in which nothing happened, but I feel agreeably as if much had. In the evening to the large cold bare room for the first of what will prove a series of the most trying rehearsals. I am still exhausted. Did not sleep very well last night.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 10

A.L. Mackay

Cambridge 1949

Being the sixth volume of this diary.

From January 27 1949
To September 14 1950

Thursday January 27 1949

Have just come back after a performance of 'The War Within' and suddenly felt an urge to return to this diary. One reason why I have not written anything since I came back is because I have been so terribly busy with the play. I got the main part in it by chance really. It is by an undergraduate of King's, and not, I thought, particularly good. However we started to rehearse it and every afternoon and evening since term began, we have been slogging away at it. It came up well, and I was more or less pleased by my own results. Dress rehearsals and so on went off well, and on the first night tumultuous applause, five curtains, and masses of congratulations afterwards. Mr. and Mrs. Chichton the author's father and mother came backstage to congratulate me, and altogether it was a really thrilling evening. Next morning (Wednesday) I got two notes, one from Monica Beament, (!) saying how much I deserved all the praise I was going to get, and another from Alan Sutton, in the tone of 'It was a pleasure to be present on such a memorable occasion.' How kind people are! Lots of people came behind to say how much they had enjoyed it. I was, and am still, amazed. I feel my performance to be very monstrously and artificially nerve-wracked. However, I can't do anything to it now. Tonight John Wilders and David Simpson came, and when I came in were waiting for me. We had tea and toast together as usual, and they both enjoyed it like anything. I <u>was</u> pleased, for Morris P.A. had been there too, and trying my utmost to do well, I had done worse than ever, except that I managed to lift the third act, better than I have managed it before. M.P. was <u>most</u> complimentary in his own way, and when I said 'Well, has this done anything to change your mind about my only playing Roderigo and Osric?' he said with one of his slow smiles, and holding my hand still, 'No, but I see that Roderigo has a good deal more in him than I ever thought he had!' He took me out to coffee afterwards with Rita and Guy, and we...

PAGE MISSING

...moment seems so small, even if it comes in the middle of one of your pauses, it upsets your timing. I must just forget about the audience and forget all the compliments tomorrow night. After all I shan't have to spare anything tomorrow. Oh what a sag when you come off and someone says 'It's been awful'.

Saturday January 29 1949

The last night and cheers and applause like anything. I was better than I have ever been, I think, and was so pleased. I hate a last night to be a flop. Lots of people came round behind to thank me again, and I understand that George Rylands and Joyce Caney were in the audience. Oh how marvellous if they had come round. Oh I am so happy.

Sunday January 30 1948

Felt very tired all morning and afternoon. In afternoon went along to the reading of 'The Dover Road' for next Wednesday. Why I got concerned with the Mummers I don't know. However I'm Mr. Latimer which is something - the chief part and that is to say, the first and last time I went to a Mummers' play reading was in my first week here. What an age ago that seems, and how far I have gone since then. Yesterday afternoon I went round to Geoffrey Beaumont's rooms (the Chaplain of Trinity) to see about the songs in the ADC smoker. I am singing a thing in a quartet called 'We are the Clan from Cannes', quite funny, but not much of it, and being the hero in a film sketch. I don't think I like Adrian Vale (who is in charge of the thing from the ADC point of view). Geoffrey Beaumont is charming and extremely clever at the piano but Adrian Vale is rather a waspish person, who apparently (so Julian told me tonight) was very horrid about our play at tea with him the other day. I should think he has spent so much time on satirising things that he has lost the capacity to appreciate anything serious. I wish I were as clever as Julian and how wonderfully self-sufficient he is.

Monday January 31 1949

A comparatively quiet day the first this term. I must however get down to some work soon or heaven knows what my Prelim. will be like.

Friday February 4 1949

A day almost entirely occupied with my essay, on 'A Comparison of Gulliver's Travels and Robinson Crusoe'. Rather more difficult than it sounds. Finished it late, but had a good supervision on it, and was vastly pleased thereby. Spent the rest of the evening in the clubroom attempting to write letters with the bar as an invaluable deterrent.

Saturday February 5 1949

Nothing much of interest. Got a volume of Gilbert & Sullivan, 'Patience', and played and sang bits of it with John. Rather fun, wish I knew more G&S. Went for a drink tonight, and finished up in the Mitre with John and David and had a good sing there.

Sunday February 6 '49

Up at 11.0 and off to a rather cold but inspiring rehearsal. Peter Gardiner most moving as Buckingham. Should be very good. Lunch at the Blue Boar with John and David. Have forgotten to record that on Friday evening, John and I were in here having a long and intimate talk, telling each other everything about each other.

Thursday February 10 '49

At 10.0 was interrupted in a particularly charming dream by John sticking his head into the dark bedroom and saying 'Are you coming to supervision?' Which I wasn't and didn't. I must go a fortnight today though, and do some more work too. Got up slowly to Mrs. Lyre's disgust, and with my essay material on my arm, tramped off to Matthew's for some coffee and doughnuts to serve as breakfast. Then to Union Library, where I did absolutely no work, then downstairs to lunch where John was having lunch with John Coleridge, as he had told me he was going to. I decided not to avoid a place I would otherwise definitely have had lunch in, just in case he thought I was trying to crash in, and am glad I did.

In the afternoon to the Anchor Hotel down by the river for a full run through of 'Henry VIII'. Not specially impressed by anyone in particular except John, tho' the play turns out to be better than I thought. M. is rather ordinary, very Morris'ish, and almost exactly as he was in the Pirandello. John is quite transformed. The voice, so mordant, so varied, so huskily witty, is smooth unctuous and deeply full. Throughout the scene of the fall, he was deeply impressive. And especially in the letter half of the scene after the entrance of Cromwell, most moving. When he reached the end of the speech, and turns to say, 'Oh Cromwell, Cromwell!

Had I but served my God with the zeal
I serv'd my King, he would not in mine age,
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

He seems to start with such rising inflection on 'Had I' that he will turn the speech into an hysterical petulance, but with a sudden rush, he descends and fills the lines with so much power and emotion that they could contain no more without becoming ludicrous.

Friday February 11 '49

Spent most of the day on my essay. Afraid I don't work very fast. However got away to an ADC revue rehearsal in the middle and finished it just in time for my supervision at 5.45. Very good supervision with Hugh at his best. Felt most at ease with him. In evening to cinema, and round to catch Guy at the ADC to arrange about the party he and John and I are throwing on Feb. 24. Went along with him to the Athens with Jerry and Peter Wood, Michael Plaister and John Barton. Felt very happy and in good form. Made them all laugh,

but wonder now how much of me is simply echoes of John. Must get to bed to be up for Dadie. See Basil tomorrow perhaps.

Saturday February 12 1949

To Rylands' lecture in the morning and most stimulating and amusing too. Then with John to the Eagle after a coffee at the 'Copper Kettle' when half of the cast of 'The Amazons' turned up on a coal-cart soaked to the skin, in their costumes, too - what people will do for publicity. Peter Wood in the 'Eagle'. We had a drink with him, then to the Corner House for lunch - rather dried up and nasty. John very nice - we were talking all about 'it' and saying who we liked best. We tootled off then to 'Les Jeux Sont Faits' at the Arts, then tea here, then another talk, during which J. actually told me...

2 PAGES MISSING

...him and some others for coffee. Very gay conversation most refreshing.

Monday February 14 1949

John says he did not want to see me this morning - partly because of what he'd told me. He wanted to forget about it all, and I reminded him! All straightened out now, though. He tried out his make-up in my rooms tonight and this afternoon, and is having Julian in to tea here to try again tomorrow. This evening to the cinema; on the way back met Jerry Jarratt, Sec. of the ADC, and went back to his rooms for coffee. Bob Turner there of course, and a very merry talk again. Such pleasant people. Must get my essay down soon this week, or I shall be in the soup, and if 'I don't get to bed' earlier - I shall never get up at all.

Thursday February 15 1949

A singularly dull day in which all most everything went wrong. I shall never be a great diarist. I can't be bothered

Wednesday February 16 1949

Very late at night. John W.

Thursday February 17 '49

Essay most of the day. To Oedipus in the evening with John. (See M.D.) Rather depressing. Went to the Koh-noor afterwards where saw many of the Mummers' cast and George Kingsworth. All quite cheery. Afterwards walked back into John's and started an argument

with John about the Marlowe and the O.U.D.S. I got very passionate and intense about it as I do about most things I'm really interested in. He stayed very calm, and after we had walked about twice round the college he admitted that he had just been leading me on to annoy me. This always annoys me furiously, of course, tho' I tried very hard not to get annoyed, without much success. He explained, in answer to my frenzied queries as to how anyone could be so unfeeling as to do that when I was obviously sincere, quite simply that to hear me ranting on gave him or anyone else who was listening an impression that I couldn't be sure of my case, if I already had my back to the wall so badly. He was really awfully nice about it when almost anyone else would have stamped off in a rage too. Oh! I wish I weren't so hysterical and then so horribly resigned and pathetic afterwards.

Friday February 18 1949

A hectic morning finishing my essay; until well into the afternoon I was copying it out, and it must have been about a quarter to three I pushed it through Hugh's letter-box. It was another lovely afternoon, the sun shining brilliantly and warmly from a faultless blue sky, and I suddenly thought how good it would be to go a walk by the river. So I walked off down Chesterton Lane past lots of little cottage houses to where the railings begin. The banks are clear for about twenty yards, sloping up to the river on that, the far side of the river, from here, and of course this side of the river up that way is clear for many hundreds of yards with tennis courts and parks and things. The river between me and a lock with a green-painted iron bridge over it - the Victoria Bridge - was empty, why I did not know at the time. It is, of course not used for rowing. Under the bridge I caught a glimpse of a single oarsman rowing with double sculls. I went over the bridge, and got on to the tow-path on this side of the river. There were some crowds of people farther up as I could see beyond another bridge. I walked on up to it, and under it, and found myself in the middle of rowing Cambridge. On the opposite bank at fairly frequent intervals were large and rather elaborate garage looking houses, very well painted and with shelving banks of gravel running down to the water's edge. Each boathouse, for such they were, had as it were a hollow base, large double-door compartments underneath their first-floors for the storing of the boats. Outside every one stood a great pile of varnished oars, gleaming in the sun, each painted with college colours very new and bright. And among the crowds standing about around the boathouses (only rowing-men allowed of course) I could see all sorts of people all sorts of figures and all sorts of costumes. Some wore correct white with college colours, some khaki sweaters, some khaki vests, some blue sweaters, some grey shorts, all standing around and looking keenly at opposing boats which were now flashing by. Flash is the word; one would have to run fast to keep up with them, and indeed the trainers actually use bicycles; a menace on the tow-path where they ride at breakneck speed, within inches of the water, relying on the rule that you must let them pass. Now the boats were all over the place. I soon noticed at least four boats shouting out with their brilliant scarlet blades that they were from the Lady Margaret Club. All the colleges were there, the maroon of Cats, the lavender of Magdalene, the black and yellow of Clare, the brown and white XX of Christ's, the blue and white of Peterhouse, the black of Trinity Hall, and finally the Cambridge blue of the Varsity boat. This last was just swinging to their boat house as I got there. I wonder if we win this year?

Saturday February 19 1949

In some ways a dull day, though in reality quite pleasantly full. I seem all the time to be bewailing to myself my own lack of self-sufficiency. John came in and had some coffee after the 'Amazons' and talked very big about all sorts of charming encounters he's had with all sorts of friends. I must not be silly. My life is quite as rich as his, I think. I never have people to tea; that's one trouble, so I never get invited anywhere - to tea, that is. Not that John does really. He met so many people in the navy. I suppose I'm just jealous, tho' without any reason save the silly one of wanting to be in on everything all the time.

Sunday February 20 1949

A pleasant day in which I decided some unpleasant things about myself. First I talk too much, secondly I talk to too many people too easily and third I don't think or work enough. Pleasant to decide them without any particular cause to make me feel depressed about them. In one way the talking to too many people is a virtue, but it is bad for my reputation as I am so easily imposed on! I here and now take a resolution to be more sober in future, for the spectacle of an ageing vivaciousness is horrible. One reason why M.P. is so impressive is because he never talks to anyone. My transformation must be a bit like that of Toad. Possibly this elaborate social concern is a little unnecessary and in one sense treacherous. It implies a single standard to which we all attain alike. Heaven defend we ever reach it!

Tuesday February 22 '49

All this week is so full of Marlowe rehearsals that I hardly know where I am. Do nothing all day but stand about at them. Really I am too exhausted in a sort of set-on way to say more.

Friday February 25 1949

Quite worn-out with rehearsals and everything. Last night the Theatre Ball at the Dorothy. Enchanting evening - danced quite well for the first time in my life. I feel I could go to hundreds of dances forever now.

But this evening after rehearsals, some more dances quite sapped my self-confidence. Practising the dances for 'Henry VIII. Whenever I can't do some...

PAGE MISSING

... quite wonderful, and fully deserved the encore he got. He still needs a lot of polish but that will come, and his talent is certainly rare. He is the most talented person, almost too much so for his own good.

I have been offered a place in the John's revue, and am hoping for some personal numbers. It is better to rule in hell etc. To a playreading of 'Noah' in Johns by the LM Players. Awful! Am depressed. Dread tomorrow's supervision with this awful thing on Eliot.

Saturday March 5 1949

So frightfully busy and tired. Party tonight, Jessie and Teddy at which not very much happened. Rather dull, except that I got talking to Audrey Sparks, discovered she is very nice and will probably ask her to a May Ball. I feel wonderfully cosy today. This next week will be deliciously full. No time to think.

Sunday March 13 1949

'Henry VIII' is over, and as far as I am concerned it is a good thing too. A most tiring and almost completely unrewarding play, and in some ways quite dreadful. Have just returned from the party which finished it, and really am appalled when I view with dispassionate eye the false gaiety that mostly made up the evening. Possibly I am suffering from the depressive effects of the evening's drinks, but really when someone is sick at a Cambridge party, it is a little too much. I think that lately I have been living the social life without the means or the position to justify it. Raef Payne stayed away. I wish I had copied him.

Wednesday May 25 1949

I return to this faithful book in a calm before a storm. On Monday Preliminary Examinations begin, continue until Wednesday midday when we begin rehearsals solid. What a lot I have to tell of the world of drama! The auditions for the May Week ADC show were held at the beginning of term. It is Vanbrugh's 'The Provok'd Wife', and I was successful in getting the leading young man. John w. has the leading part of Sir John Brute, while Ross Lewis has the secondary young man, so we should be a happy cast. I am very pleased at this, and at my casting in the John's play 'A Journey to Parnassus' written by Johnians between 1597 and 1601 and never acted since. I play 'Amoretto' a romantic young man who also hunts. Since my name in the Vanbrugh is Heartfree, I am obviously versatile! I think I am supposed to be doing something in the Johns' revue too. Oh dear, I am not too sure I can manage it all. What pleases me almost most of all is the offer I had over the weekend to play in Strindberg's 'Creditors' from John Rosselli who hopes to produce it next Lent term with Morris! and Anita in the other two parts. I am extremely flattered they should have thought me capable of it, and very pleased to think I shall see something of my M.P. as well as get to know 'Nita even better. It is an interesting and well-written part with large and varied opportunities.

At the moment, and for the majority of this term I have been working at set books mostly. I shall have little more to write till after the exams.

Friday May 27 1949

I have very little to write, except that I am quite sure to do extremely badly in the exam. I have not done even a quarter the amount of work I should have done. I cannot conceive how I can be such a fool. Will next year be any better? It must be, that's all, for it will be my last chance before adulthood gets its claws right in.

Sunday May 29 1949

I have been working so hard my eyes are nearly popping out of my head. I expect to do badly, so shall not be disappointed whoever beats me. At least I shall know exactly how much work I've done, since it has all been done in the last week.

Friday February 10 1950

Oh what a lot has happened since I last wrote in this diary! I have spent some of the happiest months of my life in Cambridge, so happy that it is overflowing in return to diary-keeping. I am going to make no attempt to recapture these months, except for two all-important differences; I have found in Julian Slade the most delightful and most deeply-attached friend I have ever had and John has become an ever better friend than before.

Thursday July 13th 1950

I write at the end of the happiest twelve months of my life, and the beginning of what is probably the unhappiest. War has broken out in Korea, and has now reached such a stage that a third world war is talked of as a commonplace. There cannot be another war. There must not. I can't say I mind for others as much as I do for myself. I want peace for myself myself myself.

Wednesday August 9 1950

Donald's children have now been here a month, and he and Joan, who arrived last Friday, intend to stay until September 6th. This will mean that they have been free of the children for three weeks (almost a holiday in itself) and on holiday free for a month. This is manifestly absurd. They cannot expect Daddy to support them for a holiday twice as long as his own. When I suggested this, and also intimated that I should like to ask Michael Bishop for a weekend at least, adding that he could come between August 1st and the 24th, both Donald and Joan, after rudely and irrelevantly suggesting other times when he might come (a whole fortnight in September) merely said, 'It's just too bad, that's all'. Do they not realize that Mummy and Lalla have had their work almost doubled by the children before, and by them all now? (quite apart from the trifling, but nevertheless genuine feeling on my part that I would like to have my home to myself? (even though I'm not all that fond of it). Joan is of

course a coarse-fibred, vulgar, selfish and almost neurotic woman, who will as the years go on, become less and less amenable to reason even than she is now. Her capacity for disregarding her own rudenesses is extraordinary. Her lack of taste, or dignity even more striking. Only this evening, as she and Donald were about to set out for a walk at about 10.30, she bounced into the sitting-room to say goodbye and said, with a laugh, 'Time was when we made any excuse to get out together. Now of course it's quite legal, so don't worry about us!' when I remember the conditions under which she was married, I blush for her even though she cannot for herself. The surprising thing is to me that Donald seems either not to notice or to have become inured to her ill manners. The continual impropriety of her speech and her habits jars unmistakably upon all the rest of us. On her very fist evening here, on Friday, she had already talked a good deal about her operation in most unpleasantly detailed terms for the supper-table, when I, being in the middle of what I hoped would prove a funny story, was pulled up short by the sound of loud giggling, whereupon Joan, emerging from tearful mirth, announced that she had remembered something very funny which had happened in hospital, and proceeded to tell it with no sign of apology. It is obvious of course that exhibitionism has complete control. I mean I love an audience as much or more than the next man, but my love doesn't bring me to spoil other people's fun, I hope. They must be made to see their unreasonableness.

Thursday August 10 1950

This afternoon I heard voices raised in the sitting-room and the baby screaming, and on going down found Mummy nursing a shivering Bodkin, Joan passed me on the stairs as I came down, murmuring 'Damn and blast' under her breath. Apparently Daddy had taken her temperature and found it to be 100 degrees. This discovery was greeted by Joan with 'She wouldn't have cried if she hadn't been taken out of her pram, and then she wouldn't have cried herself into a temperature.' This remark was obviously inspired by Joan's own desire to go out, for which she had dressed Bodkin in a sun-suit persistently ignoring the signs of illness. Thus does Joan repay three weeks of baby-sitting. She becomes less and less susceptible to reason.

This morning took coffee with Marion Hardy, the producer of a play I was in last year. She is staying in Babbacombe, and had very much to tell of her activities as Lady Mayoress of Norwich, her mother being their first lady Lord Mayor. She is a firmly build woman of about 26 medium height, with short-cropped light brown hair. Her face shows no beauty, being spoilt by a too hooked nose and a too receding chin, but it has at least a lively intelligence behind it. Her speech is highly artificial, being a compound of absolute casualness, throwing away such an obvious sort as to be quite ineffective, and the most exaggerated drawl I think I have ever heard. She gives to most syllables of long words such tremendous importance that sometimes one is in great danger of missing the whole word altogether. She is a blue stocking who, beginning to see her shelf becoming lonely, has balanced herself on the edge so precariously that no one who valued his life will come near her in case she crushes him to death.

Later.

Everything seems smooth now. Mummy and I went to the pictures this evening to see what turned out to be a realistic and very well-made American crime picture called 'Panic in the Streets'. When we came back, we found to our amazement that Daddy had taken Joan out for a walk.

I must write and ask Mike as soon as possible to come for a long weekend after they go. Somehow the Joan-Donald business does not touch me at all except in the social sense. They have made what is proving an uncomfortable bed, and they must be on it together!

I feel happier tonight than for some time, which probably means something horrid is going to happen. I have lots to read, both that I want to and that I must. Any many letters to write.

Saturday August 12 1950

Isn't it extraordinary how little can happen when home is the only horizon? They say Jane Austin's horizon was narrow. Compared with her, I am shut in a barrel. I know no one in this town, and have no opportunity of meeting anyone but the people at the church. They are all without exception office-workers or tradespeople. Some of them are of course very kind and good and pleasant, I have no doubt, but that doesn't happen to be what I want. When I say I know nobody, I am amazed at the difficulty I have to convince my friends that that is literally and actually true.

Saturday August 13 1950

At church this morning was suddenly surprised to see Mr. and Mrs. Malecca sitting over the other side from us. Said 'Good morning' to them afterwards, and was struck, as I always was at Doncaster, by the extraordinary contrast between them. She is tall, thin with reddish hair, and a weak slightly petulant voice, matching her skinny appearance exactly. He is tall, brisk, intense black hair (he is a Pole or a Czech or something naturalised) tactless, and overbearing, with a fixed smile, and large, thick-fingered cruel hands, hairy like a degenerate, the ugliest hands I have ever seen. If he were my doctor - well, he never would be, so I need not bother with 'ifs'. Oh isn't it awful? I am a vegetable. Why has my home got to be so like an unweeded allotment? Isn't it <u>sickening</u>?

Monday August 14th 1950

Nearly open warfare today. Just before teatime Mummy called me from the kitchen, and when I went to see what she wanted, I found to my fury that she wanted me to carry the baby's high chair into the dining-room. Her father was sitting reading in the drawing-room, and her mother in the dining-room, and I was blessed if I was going to fetch and carry for their baby when they were at leisure. I came back and gave Donald a small piece of my mind before Daddy made me take it back again. Joan becomes worse, I believe, with every day

that passes, and I do not think that Daddy's temperance will extend to cover any actual personal clash. I wonder if he realizes my position. I do not of course suffer mentally, let alone materially, as much as the others. There is only in my case the irritation resulting from an absolute lack of prejudice. I am the only person in the house who is not in any way obliged to suffer the presence of Donald and Joan, and the only person on whom they have no possible sort of claim. Daddy and Mummy are bound by their love of Donald, Lalla by her love of Daddy and her employment by him, and the children. I have no interest in Donald, very little in the children (which is not so callous as it sounds, for with such parents they will be beyond the reach of reasonable people in a few years), and in short I have no call upon me but that of good manners, of living in the same house with them. All of which nonsense boils down to the fact that I am the person to tell them where they get off, and how very glad I would be to do so!

Have been reading in the nineties recently. What a charming book 'Time Was' proves to be. I have heard of it these five years, but only now read it. It's only fault is that its perfect charm of manner and elegance of theme is apt to cloy, with its slight suggestion of Olympian superiority. He says urbanely that he is now (1932) no longer at home in a world he does not understand. The world he did understand was a much easier one to live in, and a much cheaper one when he died two years ago. He left a fortune of £500,000. Does he realize I wonder that the sort of life he adored depended entirely or almost entirely on the confidence of money? To be as delightfully rude or eccentric as the nineties were, needs a steady income (unearned) to be able to manage life with the right dash. He would have become a whiner and a bore, as Max Beerbohm so tragically has.

Holbrook Jackson's 'The Eighteen Nineties' on the other hand is discursive, realistic and rather vulgar, fascinating but only journalistic. His chapter headings are much more exact than the arrangement of his materials would justify. Still he quotes some lovely things. What about this

'But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face,
And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled,
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.'

Which is Yeats.

Tuesday August 15th 1950

More rumpus. Up here even (at 11.0 a.m.) I can hear a four-cornered argument going on between Joan, Donald, Mummy and Daddy. Voices raised nerves jangling, veiled insults, everything half-spoken, people retiring in tears. Oh what messes they make, like puppies that haven't been house-trained. It is extraordinary what pleasure it gives me to listen, horrid really, I suppose, when I am in no way really involved, except from a certain curiosity. Lalla

has just been in, and we have hugged ourselves with glee; isn't it odd that quarrels that have nothing to do with oneself are great fun? Now of course Daddy has been reduced to assuring Donald and Joan of their welcome here, and of how he wishes them to feel at home. What else can he say when he must choose between his wife and his daughter-in-law, and both are a different sort of quite unreasonable neurotic? Mummy is weakness, and Joan persecution mania. So what do we do now?

Later.

What I do now is apparently to become gloomier and gloomier. If I have to see anything of them at all, or indeed anyone else, I get irritable. Of course I try not to be actually horrid, but that simply results in my being so quiet everyone knows there's something wrong. Reading all the old Punches. What a lot of atmosphere they've got. How very firmly based on Victorianism the twenties were. What amazes me is the cultivated public that they were able to rely on. Complicated jokes about the Eton and Harrow match which no one could understand who didn't know something about it, endless jokes about servants, jokes about night clubs and big receptions and so on. I suppose the middle classes could afford all those too.

Wednesday August 16th 1950

A most peaceful day. Everyone out except me from 2 till 5, and me out alone from 7 to 9.30. Walked round onto the sea front, and was struck as always at the way in which every natural advantage has been ignored and every beauty either hidden or spoilt. They would change the sea if they could. After supper for no reason at all everyone became very merry. Donald and Joan find me very funny. Too funny really, it's so easy to make them laugh.

Thursday August 17 1950

Spent this evening in the house hired by Gerald and Myra, Lalla's sister. House owned by some awful people called Winship, who have a nice son at the Old Vic Theatre School. Myra is like Lalla, only shorter and fatter (expecting a baby in February), with crisp wavy black hair, and a very soft sweet Welsh voice. Gerald is tall and plumpish, with a pear-shaped face. His mouth looks always as if someone has just taken away a large helping of his favourite dish. Mr. and Mrs. Gratton, his father and mother are just ordinary working-class people. Gerald is a school master - of a sort - in a Technical College! Myra is very pleasant and warm, like my dear Lalla. They have two little boys, the younger of whom is extremely forward. Only three, he can call everyone by their proper address, and performed some charades entirely by himself. We played knock-out whist after supper.

Friday August 18 1950

I wonder if anyone here realizes how dull and colourless they have become. How cruel they would think me if I told them. They never meet anyone less dull than themselves, nor read anything calculated to do more than amuse them. Daddy has the saving grace of intelligence, Lalla that of humanity, Mummy has nothing with which to replace the waning of youth and energy. And the intelligence is being crushed by stupid companions, and the humanity withering under the cold blasts of a hard world and selfish people. What can I do but run the moment I may? I am no better, indeed in many ways I am worse, in accepting all their kindness and their board and lodging. But I have something inside me which will be killed if I once admit that I am to have such lives as they have chosen, and as Donald has had forced upon him by his own thoughtlessness and self-indulgence.

Saturday August 19th 1950

Tonight one of my best opportunities for an ecstasy of self-pity sprinkled with I'm not understood' and, 'Why must I suffer this?' and so on. In short, a slight misunderstanding as Daddy would call it, and a radical difference in temperament, as I would call it.

Mr. and Mrs. Gratton had been over this afternoon for tea, and during the course of the afternoon and a political argument, Mr. a big fat vulgar railwayman with only two teeth, had been saying that 'his belief was that America was due for a big crack-up'. He apparently expects America to collapse, upon which the Communists would take control. Daddy mentioned this, and Donald said 'How silly.' I agreed, saying that I did not countenance such an idea for a moment, considering the immense material resource in the country and the immense debts owing to her overseas. These remarks Donald and Daddy appropriated, swinging them backwards and forwards at each other in different words skilfully adapted each time to give the effect of a progressive argument. Both used a heavily authoritative air, accompanying such pearls of wisdom as 'It is impossible economically, socially, historically and geographically' with many didactic 'you see's and 'of course's'. They ultimately arrived at the conclusion that it was 'all a good deal more complicated than that', a conclusion any intelligent person might have perceived from the beginning, and by which would have been prevented by proper diffidence from continuing a discussion based upon nothing but hearsay of the first hand writings of reporters whose columns they attempt to analyse. If one knows nothing about America but what the papers and a few ill-chosen books have told one, the only courses that one can with propriety pursue are to leave it alone altogether or offer explicitly conjectural suggestions.

I have gone into this at length to establish for myself the exact form of the argument. I then said, on their reaching this valuable conclusion, that in that case I would leave it to the two dears to complicated it as much as they liked, while I went up to my room and read. They imagined that I was complaining of their conversation being boring, a thing I will admit I do too often, though not as often as I feel bored, and told me, as they would say, 'in no plain terms' that they did not care to talk about the theatre as often as I bored them with it. I was of course restrained from my real answer because it would be too hurtful, namely, that I never particularly wanted to talk to them, and only did so because there was on one else around; that I only talked of the theatre when their conversation became so acutely boring that I was

nearly screaming, when it reached in fact its deepest depths of fact-exchanging, which is what they understand by conversation; that I talked of the theatre only because it was the most familiar to me, and the one from which I could produce the thickest cloud of words to drown their facts with the least trouble; that I was in fact pleased to hear them discussing something. Even if that something were only politics, and their ideas of discussion only competitive teaching. No, I could only deny everything, and lose as usual. One day I shall lose my temper and tell the truth and hurt Daddy terribly, because he'll think it's a pretentious lie. And of course Mummy smoothed it over in an inadequate foolish way. How can one respect a stupid woman? If it wasn't for Lalla, I should go mad, I really believe!

Later.

On reading this through, I came to the conclusion that it was a mountain of self-pity made out of a molehill of irritation. That was a false conclusion. I really believe, in cold blood, nothing is harder to bear than to live where one's fundamental ideas are unrecognised, where one's approach to life is misunderstood. As Jane Austen found to her cost, people will not see what they do not wish to see, and I cannot believe that my depression is founded only upon self-pity. There is in it the fear and the depression of loneliness.

Sunday August 20th 1950

I am becoming drugged by a task so trivial and a round so common that Sisyphus' life would be a rich variety in comparison, that I will not waste pages on describing it.

Monday August 21st 1950

By the time evening comes and I am sitting up with this book propped on my knees, the thoughts of the day, so much more important than the trivial events of the day, never strong enough here to stop me thinking for a moment, have receded into an impenetrable identity with all the indistinguishable days of 'life at home'. Today was warm and very sunny. I sat in my room and worked intermittently. Am attempting to bring my play notices up to date, and am finding it necessary to re-read 'Lady's Not for Burning' by Christopher Fry, before writing about the performance of it I saw in January. Seeing things more clearly these days, and only wish that this diary contained records of my happy days instead of my sad ones. The moment I began to become me, I stopped writing. Now that the vortex of genteel poverty is sucking me down again, I wonder if my real self is only a mirage.

Fry is a difficult person to write about. His surface is so beguiling, his words so exciting that anything else is forgotten so easily. I have for regular work been doing a little on Ruskin. Quennell's new biography surely says almost the last word on the life, summing up as it does all the new material revealed in James' 'The Order of Release', which I am now reading. Quennell book very well-written, very clear, quite incontestable about Ruskin as man, does not deal except indirectly with artist. What a mess James' reveals. You see, what comes of repressions and inhibitions. What a perfect psychologist's case-book the whole thing is! Oh,

how the Ruskin parents loved never being frank. What emotional messes they all made like puppies that haven't been house-trained. Ruskin is branded forever as mad, and unpleasantly mad at that. His photograph in Q's book, in middle age, shows a noble forehead, sensitive eyes almost seeming to plead in extenuation for the scornful nose and brutal mouth below.

Tuesday August 22 1950

Effie arrived today on a bus tour from Croyde. Her sister and her maid have gone to Darmoor, and since she has no car, she came on a bus which is of course immeasurably cheaper than the train.

It was strange to see Effie in our house again after this long time. She is unchanged except for a silvering of the thick hair which she wears, parted in the middle of her head, and drawn tightly into two 'earphones' on her ears. The same broad uncompromising face, the same stocky figure, the same immensely decided speech tinged with the slight Birmingham accent, the same beautiful hands. Her opinions are the same, too; immense interest in everything Scottish, immense contempt for Bernard Shaw, the Labour Party and modern jazz (which to her more or less is anything written after 1910.) Of Bernard Shaw she said 'The air will be the purer when he's dead'. She also believes that Bacon wrote Shakespeare, and told us with evident satisfaction, that a presumed Shakespearean signature in the British Theatre exhibition at Birmingham, its case being broken into, was covered by a note saying 'Shakespeare was a butcher's son, and could neither read nor write'. I of course never argue with Effie on any of her pet subjects. One does not want to disturb people of her age. But if Baconians require proof, quite apart from the, to every sensitive person, proof of the impossibility of the mean politician's mind conceiving 'Lear', how do they explain away the poem on Shakespeare's death by Ben Jonson, or the many references to him in contemporary writings, Nashe, 'Parnassus Plays', Herminge and Condell's edition and so on. No, Shakespeare is Shakespeare thank heaven. It's funny to think though that those who are annoyed S. never went to a Univ. generally never went themselves. Everyone at Camb. believe in Shakes.

Wednesday August 23 1950

About 11.0 I was working away quite oblivious of the sounds of a visitor's arrival, when Lalla rushed up and said Aunty Jenny was downstairs. I went down as soon as I could, and found her in the drawing-room, as tall and commanding as ever. She showed little interest in me, but remarked when Daddy and Mummy came in how fat they were getting. She spent the rest of her half-hour visit in making uncomfortable remarks of two varieties, first, little hints for fresh gossip if possible dismal or derogatory of which she is inordinately fond, second, throwing out little barbed shafts intended to start a quarrel. A vulgar stupid but dangerous woman.

Somehow for a few days I can be nice to Donald and Joan without noticing their loudness and selfishness. And then suddenly a wave of depressive rage will come over me at some

small action not intended to be annoying, yet all the more annoying in its revelation of how both are reverting to type. This evening both were late for supper. I went to the door to let them in, and Joan flourished a greasy smelly newspaper parcel of chips under my nose which they had fetched from the fried fish shop or whatever they call it. Now anyone could do that once, as a sort of 'see-how-the-other-side-live' idea. They say they often do it at home, and it just struck me suddenly of how they will slip down and down and down. I sat silent through supper, and of course afterwards they moaned to Mummy, who soon forgets how horrid they are to others when they are nice to her. She came up to me, and of course says I'm unkind and weeps and says she's worn out keeping the peace. Her way of doing that is to acquiesce to any demand, however unreasonable, and submit to any indignity, however low.

Thursday August 24th 1950

Mike Hall sent another bill from the ADC to be paid directly. Hope account will stand the cheque I sent him, otherwise a noise from Daddy. I suppose I am extravagant.

Had a little discussion on the theatre at supper. Too simple to be worth setting down here. Suffice to say, all built on none of them seeing that the theatre is one of the coarse arts, is indeed the coarse art. That is to say, the audience has a direct part in the actual creation of it. And for that reason, no work of theatrical art is too low to be of interest, for that act of creation is always taking place in the midst of it.

Friday August 25 '50

Argument continued tonight. Resulted in Daddy saying again with no refutation of my arguments or even an attempt at one, that I must think more deeply.

Saturday August 26 '50

Inertia overcomes everyone in this awful house. No one has enough energy or money to break the beastly circle that binds them. I will break it sometime - I will, I will.

Sunday August 27 '50

I became quite the Minister's son this morning; was forcibly introduced to two people from Jamaica, and so decided to make a go of it and talked like mad. Saw Derek and Margaret Scott again. Young prosperous couple, (he is an undertaker, I think) with four children, three boys at Gorse Cliff, and a girl just two months. Margaret is 32 or so, plumpish now, big nose, well-controlled everything, pretty brown hair, well-cut. Wearing smart strongly-patterned silk, white straw bonnet and white shoes. Derek much commoner, but just as pleasant, black suit, very 'double-breasted', wavy, greasy black hair, clipped very short round back and sides, stiff collar, black speckled tie. Best description that they will make a perfect

Mayor and Mayoress. He is a Councillor at Bournemouth. Not in society, of course. They are in trade, pleasant vulgarity is their line. They have asked me to dinner and dance at their hotel. Probably dance very Hammersmith, steps all in the right places. Don't like that, can't do it very well, but even if I could, I wouldn't. Modern dances are not pleasurable in themselves. I like to talk and it's not worth doing the steps which only distract from conversation. A dance, to be a good one, should be impossible to talk through, like a real waltz or Sir Roger, or an eightsome.

House still awful. Do they realize how unhappy they all are, I wonder? It's becoming absurd, now. Oh, I wish I could get away away away. Even Daddy is getting worse, more niggley every day.

Monday August 28 1950

Dance not so H'smith, much more decorous than I expected. Mostly office workers and so on holiday. High-up office-workers, for the hotel is not cheap, at least in the financial sense. There was however no one there from society at all, nor anyone with any pretensions to gentility. Danced a bit and enjoyed it quite. Ballroom small, only about 30 yards by 10 yards. Everyone in various stages of evening dress. Some not at all. There was not a pretty dress in the room.

Had a long talk with Derek about undertaking. He has sunk all his capital, indeed has mortgaged a good deal, in an attempt to make his business the most modern in Bournemouth. Out of 2000 dead a year, he buries 300, against the competition of 60 other firms. His hearses are the most modern in the country, and he has his own embalmer. How I kept my face straight through all this I do not know. Also told me as a Councillor that B'mouth Orchestra loses £20,000 every year. No bar by the way.

Tuesday August 29 1950

A very lazy day. Spent the afternoon clearing out a lot of old letters from my desk, and reading Henry Green's 'Nothing' which I am very much enjoying. A most distinctive writer, writing unmistakably about the most ordinary things. Capable of transforming the biggest cliches.

Listened to a delightful recital from Edinburgh, on the wireless. Jennie Tourel, a controlled rich mezzo, admirable attack and great humour...

2 PAGES MISSING

...that would have saved it, would have been an enormous display of emotional effects, so large a part of its success before. Of course its situation means almost nothing today. No one is interested in a woman's past when no public penalty is exacted for having a bad one.

Had an argument with Daddy tonight about Henry Green's 'Nothing'. He picked it up, and his eye fell on the sentence 'Liz clapped a hand over her mouth above blue eyes that watered with silent laughter'. I simply skimmed over it in my reading, taking it to mean, without noticing it, what in fact it does mean, that her eyes were watching etc. above her hand on her mouth. I saw it, coming to read it over specially at his request, as a sort of impressionistic telescoped sentence, to be quickly understood without pausing for its immediacy. He refused to accept as English at all, saying 'Have you ever seen eyes below a mouth?' taking the sentence absolutely literally, and expatiated on my being led away by what fashionable critics say about H.G. Did not lose my temper with him for once, so enjoyed it much more. What impertinence though always to assume some lack of self-knowledge in me to account for any disagreement with him.

He's being left behind and he doesn't like it, that's all.

Friday September 1 50

Another argument with Daddy, more serious this time. Stemmed as often before from letter-writing. I write on the whole far too few letters, home that is. They would like a letter regularly every week telling them 'all the news', that is to say, a clear statement of what I have been doing during the week. That sort of letter Donald writes admirably. I prefer to deceive and I prefer to try and write, the sort of letter which allows you to see into a person's life far more clearly than a factual letter (and oh! how factual some letters can be). Now that sounds very grandiloquent, how Daddy would laugh, but I know what I mean, and even in a factual letter a lively mind finds an interest in everything which gives to its pages a vitality I never find in his for example. After saying that I ought to write more often, Daddy said oughtn't I to be interested in the everyday doings of my father and mother.' I said I simply wasn't, nor did I expect them to be in mine. Daddy did not take the last point up, and I am glad he did not. One day he will, and he will say that I would soon be hurt if they weren't interested, and one day I shall reply that I shouldn't at all, and if ever I do and he believes it, he will be very hurt. He then reminded me that my background was the everyday doings. I replied that I had been so much away that I had never been much affected by that background, since he had never insisted on our taking any part in the church work, nor even sent me to Sunday School. He then said that it was our backgrounds which had provided me with money and so on, to which of course there is no reply. I then said that I would not write letters simply as he wished. He said he would not insist on anything, but did I not owe something to them. I said Yes, but writing up the trivial round. He said pityingly that I was still young enough to imagine that I would be able to avoid a trivial round. I said that I had no such idea, but that I was never going to allow myself to become drab and dusty and disillusioned if I could possibly avoid it, not thinking particularly of him, though of course it seemed as if directly aimed at him, and to a certain extent is true. At that he simply smiled and 'If I didn't know you lost your temper so easily and said wild things you did not mean, I would be very hurt sometimes.' I said (which was perfectly true) that I was not in the least angry, and that I never intended to hurt anyone ever, but simply to say what I felt, and that I hoped that the intention to hurt was not concealed from me, if it was there, by my own vanity. He said still smiling, that I mustn't imagine I was the only one searching after a little truth and

beauty, and if only I wasn't so hopelessly self-centred, I might be able to recognise that other people had centres of their own, through which I was endeavouring to push my own centre. He had reiterated several times during the argument that I did not worry him by my strictures upon him in the least, he too had thoughts, 'perhaps', turning to Joan!, not so bright or so scintillating as Angus's but still sufficiently satisfying. By this time he was clearing up the dishes from the table, to help with the washing-up, which he sometimes does in the evening. I got up, not angry, but, as is so often the case, quivering with suppressed truth, forced to ruin my case by trying to conceal the cruel truth, and said 'I don't think you have any idea of the gulf there already is between us. He smiled again, and said 'Oh yes, I know we don't understand you' (deeply sarcastic), but I should look into yourself a little more deeply before you speak like that again'.

Does he not realise that I am, if still very young, not a child? I do know when I'm speaking the truth, or what I consider to be the truth, at least as well as he does. It is more than anything else the air of the whole conversation not mattering very much to him, that upsets me so much. I have no natural feeling beyond that of friendship for him or Mummy, nor, I am sure would I be desolated emotionally, were they both to die tomorrow. Were their deaths not accompanied by any material worries, I should notice them even less. I remember saying once when I was 18, and in a temper, that Daddy's advice had never been any use to me, and being silenced by Daddy saying 'Oh Angus, how you forget! What about the first months you were in the Army?' I was silenced only because at the beginning of my Army time I was so unhappy that a letter from anyone in the outside world was a help. My letters to and from Mr. Milne, my former headmaster, were no less intimate or helpful. For good or ill, I associate Daddy and his advice with dreariness and lack of knowledge of the customs of the polite world, inability to prepare me in any way that mattered for the things that lay ahead. Oh, a lot of vague talk about ideals and keeping my head and looking deeply into things. What is the use of that when I want to be told the practical things without which one cannot begin to have time to think? Why, Daddy has never had the guts to tell me the facts of life, I was allowed to pick them up casually in the dormitory and changing-room.

Saturday September 2 1950

A quiet day, during which I started a cold. Never a dull moment at home, is there? Read 'Lewis Carroll: Photographer.' Found it interesting mainly for the photographs reproduced in it, among them pictures of Daddy's idol, George Macdonald, and the Millais family. Extracts from his as yet unpublished diary were very dull. Only lists of photographs and such excitements as 'Met Mrs. Franklin, and secured her promise that Rosa would sit for me. Took two pictures, both good.' This sort of entry is endlessly repeated. Perhaps of course the rest of the diary is more interesting. He apparently would have preferred his sitters to wear nothing at all, the little girls, that is. He hated boys, and would only photograph celebrities and little girls. His passion for the latter certainly seems excessive, and reminds me of Francis Kilvert.

Sunday September 3 '50

Developed a very wet cold. Went to church in the morning, but really very sniffly so stayed in thankfully for the rest of the day.

Donald and Joan are going on Tuesday. How heavenly! The children will then have been here seven weeks, and the other two a month. Mike comes on Friday. Hope it won't be a bore for Mummy and Lalla to have another guest so soon. How I wish that I had kept this diary up during the last year, certainly the year during which I have observed most change in myself, the most obvious setting of me.

Monday September 4 '50

Listened to a most wonderful and moving performance of Verdi's Requiem from the Edinburgh Festival. It was sung and played by the soloists orchestra of La Scala, Milan, and formed the programme for their very first performance in England. I have never heard a chorus with such power and such delicacy at once. The most responsive singers I have listened to for a long time. Dies Irae reduced me to a tearfulness. It was a gigantic performance. I am glad that the audience agreed with me. Behind the announcer's closing remarks, I could hear solid cheering for five minutes before we were dispatched back to the studio. Donald and Joan go back tomorrow!!!

Wednesday September 6 '50

Yesterday a day of rejoicing, too much so for me to do anything but sit and rejoice. House delightfully empty, and have taken great mouthfuls of work in consequence. Reading the second volume of Shaw's Music in London. Unflagging stuff. Never put pen to paper without six times the knowledge of men who had written volumes. We could easily do with another Shaw now. His achievement was nothing more nor less than to adopt the highest standards, to look at every performer and composition with an absolutely XX eye, and to record the result in matchlessly livid prose.

Perhaps he was not absolutely unbiased but much more than most.

Thursday September 7 '50

This evening Lalla and I walked to Chapel Hill, and climbed its winding paths under the thick eucalyptus trees to the top where, with the solid node coming through its floor, is a rough chapel, more like a Norman barn than anything else. There is by the side of it a curious little hut with a look-out over a deep gully full of trees the whole place must have been mysterious and Gothick once. Now its paths are well-worn, and its seats well-polished, and even its views a little dog-eared. If places keep ghosts, the ghosts of that place will be, not medieval monks but holiday-makers posing for a snap, or honeymooners snatching a quiet stop in a corner.

Read 'The Second Mrs. Tanqueray' again tonight. Of course the biggest thing wrong with it is simply that Paula is not a consistent character. As she appears in the first two acts, her only regret for her former life should be the social advantages she has forfeited, instead of all the purity business. Aubrey himself is an impossible and most unsympathetic character, with all his claptrap about 'a man's life,', and Ellean is not pure to our eyes, but simply silly. The muddleheadedness of the whole play is in the Andale business. Hugh Andale has already been forgiven (in a passage of pitiful mawkishness) for his 'wild life' by a girl with no knowledge of wild life. Paula has also been forgiven for hers. Aubrey is prepared to let Andale marry Ellean, although he knows of the 'wild life' himself, because he knows very well every young man comes experienced to his marriage night. The moment however that all this 'wild life' is brought home to them by the re-meeting of two actual partners in it everyone recoils in horror and everything ends unhappily. Sheer hypocrisy.

Friday September 8 1950

Michael Bishop has arrived. He seems more certain of himself since I last saw him more able to manage his hitherto gawky arms and legs. It unfortunately rained all day. In the afternoon we went for a walk round the town, and ended up at the York Abbey Art Gallery. It is most depressing, being full of the dullest Edwardian and Victorian pictures, the only things of interest being four Turners, a Holman Hunt and a flaking Constable. We did not feel depressed by the rain, and once we were wet rather enjoyed it. A thing I certainly don't do ordinarily.

In the evening after taking refuge in a cinema, we at length arrived at conversation making in the sitting room. Now Mike has never been good at small-talk. He is perfectly at home in any sort of fairly serious but not heavy discussion but when faced with an ordinary conversation makes heavy going of it. Daddy is much the same, only more boring. I think I am fairly good at small talk and of course not so good as they at a really serious discussion. But in a way small talk being more of an <u>accomplishment</u>, needing more technique than mere sincerity, is more important. After all, you cannot talk seriously always. Tonight was frightfully dull. I can't make small talk with nobody to talk back to, after all.

Saturday September 9 1950

Conversation continues gloomy except when Mike and I are by ourselves. Went along Bishop's Walk this afternoon, with Daddy as well. Very beautiful walk along the top of very high cliffs, with Daddy as usual telling us how beautiful every view was. Long walks of this dreadful sort always affect me in a trance sort of way and I cannot say a word because of the enormous battle of screaming irritation going on inside at the boredom of it all. You cannot have a fluent conversation with Daddy because he will <u>not</u> <u>not</u> <u>not</u> talk on any terms but his own, and not an ordinary cultivated person at all.

Went for a long walk this evening with Mike. Conversation deeply philosophical, but quite useless. Agreeable enough, without being depressing. Quite agrees with me about Daddy, and 'nothing'. Too tired to write more.

Sunday September 10 1950

This morning we stayed in and played and sang instead of going to church, at which Mummy was, I think, a little upset. In the afternoon Michael, who has an Aunt and Uncle living in Torquay, took me over to see them, and to go out for a picnic walk with the Uncle. They live in a largish house called Cypress Heights at Chelston. It is large, square, and early Victorian, with pinkish walls and white windows. There is a terraced garden with most beautiful bushes and a pergola covered with roses. An enormous marrow plant on the manure heap, and some lovely alpine strawberries. His uncle is German, originally called Boehm, married a French girl, Mlle de Sanvanna and took her name (after she had died) during the Great War. He is a short high-cheekboned man, with a thin precise mouth, and a strong German accent. He is most Tentonic in every way, and all the time we were out was remarking on everything he saw; for instance 'Ah! there are some English children enjoying their customary holiday pleasures. I am most fond of seeing a bevy of children running round amusing themselves.' He and his wife, who is a small immensely shrivelled active woman of 75, have travelled all over the world, and have actually been to Korea. Very rich, but dressed quite indescribably ordinarily.

Monday September 11 '50

Mike had a telephone call this morning at breakfast time, and has had to go home to be with his stepmother, who does not wish to look after his dying father without a man in the house. It has made me feel humble and rather ashamed of myself when I think of the beastly life he leads. Not ashamed to be annoyed or impatient with my life, because my life is afflicted by that most deathly germ, lethargy, but ashamed because I have perhaps yielded to the lethargy too much in complaining about it so much. To be involved in complaints and grumbling is really to try to escape facing what really matters. I have been curiously moved in an impersonal sort of way to see Mike, and cannot regret his coming as I once might have done.

I have decided that I must go on the stage. I cannot go on without the thrill of the footlights, the dirt of the dressing-rooms, the sense of power in making people laugh or cry, and the sense of humiliation in failing to make them listen to you. When I leave Cambridge I shall get a job in a touring company.

Tuesday September 12 '50

Every night when I open this diary, I actually start wondering what to put in it. Tonight I even caught myself wishing that Donald and Joan were back to make 'interesting' situations. That is not really so fantastic as it sounds, for really life at home is so featureless, it is

possible to go right through a day without experiencing any other sensations than those which waking, eating and sleeping provide. The real trouble is that there are just enough real things happening (it may be a book, a song, a visitor, though these last are few and far between) to keep one alert enough to realize how cabbagesque one is growing. But what can I do without money that I don't do already? Any work that I can do at the moment to get money would only be worse, and defeat its own purpose.

Arthur Cranmer and his wife come in for the evening tomorrow. It will certainly provide a slightly new interest, though there again Mrs. Cranmer's pleasant sense of fun is such an unusual thing among the people D and M know, that they regard her slightest remark as a daringly novel epigram. The result is to put me thoroughly on edge, and respond to Mrs. C. in a far more youthful gushing way than I otherwise would. I think tomorrow I must make a real effort, and get her by herself in a corner. If I don't soon, she'll never find out that I am grown-up at least superficially, and she won't have met the real me at all.

Wednesday September 15 '50

Tonight the Cranmers came in. He is a heavily-built man of medium height, with white hair, still abundant, a backwards-sloping forehead, a long fleshly nose, and a thick-lipped generous mouth. He has a deep velvety speaking voice, not unlike his singing voice. His wife is plump with tightly curled white hair, a sharp nose, bright eyes and a tiny pinched mouth. She has a slow slightly cracked voice, and a most ready wit. He is genuinely jolly, a much overworked word, but true of him since his vitality is such that quite dull stories are made funny by the delight with which he tells them. He talked a great deal of his career, which has led him various ways. What performances on the operatic stage much have been like in the twenties, I tremble to think. He once had to learn the whole of Gurnemanz's part in 'Parsifal' in 10 days, and then go straight into a performance without knowing anything about the set, the rest of the opera, or the other performers, let alone the production. It is exactly like the conditions of which Santley writes in his memoirs. He remembers (Cranmer I mean) the earliest days of broadcasting, when a singer had to give a recital on the run as it were, since high notes had to be sung at some distance from, and low notes much nearer to, a microphone which resembled a rain-gauze.

I do not think I made too much of a fool of myself, but I did not feel at all comfortable, and several times felt most adolescent because of the dreadful atmosphere Daddy and Mummy manage to create. It must be that, for I never feel it anywhere else. It's rather nice in one way though to feel young enough to feel awkward again.

Thursday September 14 1950

Wrote to Susan yesterday and on re-reading it decided to change a number of passages which would infuriate her more than really necessary. Perhaps this is the place to tell the saga of Susan.

Susan Sturchbury was in 'The War Within' as my sister. Through that play I also got to know Julian Slade a bit better. But it was not until last Michaelmas term that I got to know either of them really well. I am most annoyed with myself that the most important part of my life to date I was too lazy to record in this diary. I noticed on looking back that there is virtually nothing in it between May 1949 and August 1950, more than a year. This is nothing less than a tragedy to me. It was then in the middle of this blank period that I realized that Julian liked me as much as I did him. He started to ask me round more, played over a lot of...

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 11

A L Mackay

Being the seventh volume.

From September 14 1950.
To December 25 1950

September 14 1950 (cont.)

...his songs on the small piano in his untidy bedsitter. With my absurd diffidence, I had not realized then enough of my own importance to be at all sure enough of myself to make myself acceptably pleasant to people. I had not realized that the reason I did not get on with people always as I should, was because of lack of self-confidence rather than too much, though lack of it expresses itself in assertiveness. I did not see that the qualities which attracted me to him he found in me also, namely, an unusual enthusiasm, a gusto, which most others could not share. This sounds like boasting, but it isn't as I will show. It finally culminated in his taking me completely by surprise by asking me to go down to his home for New Year weekend. I was amazed, but delightedly accepted. I thought can it be me to whom this is happening? Am I to be honoured with the friendship, the intimacy of this wonderful creature? Naturally I soon got over that. Enjoyed myself at Painswick enormously, in the small, exquisitely crowded cottage, presided over by Mrs. Slade, tall, remote, with great pools of sad eyes, a cloud of dusky hair, and the most wonderful complexion. The place is full of the most lovely china and glass, and furniture, but all =used=. Julian and I slept in a room over the boiler, and lay awake sweltering and talking until four o'clock every morning. Needless to say, we were both wrecks by the time the weekend was over, but we also felt we knew each other much better. The next term he had finished his comic opera 'Bang Goes the Meringue', in which the chief part had been written for me. I sang it through with Susan and Angela Murphy the girl who eventually sang the part of Julia, to a selection of Julian's friends on two occasions. By this term, Julian, having during the vac. finally cast me for the part written for me, over-coming the very natural temptation to play it himself after his success with it in Trinity, was quite unable to allow Susan to continue as Christina in the ADC Theatre where it was now to be presented. Her appearance and her voice would not do. She gallantly but as it turned out selfishly consented to retire to the chorus, and cried determinedly in the wings, during every one of the heroine's duets or solos. Christina was now played excessively competently by Anne Percival-Smith, a charming singer, and an accomplished actress. I have never been so happy as when acting in 'Bang' and that drew me to Julian closer than ever. Not just because he had given me a wonderful oppportunity, but because I knew that no one but he and, I like to think, I, ever...

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...to take her in a corner at the end of it, when it degenerated into see-the-dawn-in-sleepiness, and give her and receive a few encouraging kisses, consolatory on his side, fatal on hers. She

and I left soon after seven, and on her request walked in the dew on King's lawns in the bright clean air. She was happy, but I foresaw misery ahead. Of course there was. That term finished with an armed truce, and when I went down to stay with her at her mother's house, Periton House, near Minehead, at the beginning of July, while still unhappy enough to talk about her problems for hours, she was still under the impression that he had enjoyed the kisses. I knowing the facts, advised her to forget about such an unfortunate attachment. She seemed to be becoming quite sensible about it. But when I went to stay with Ju. at the end of July, I was horrified to hear that she had some all the way over from Cambridge where she was up for the long vac. term, to see him, and with her bad luck had arrived when his mother was away. What was worse, Diana was with him when she arrived, (Diana being a girl with whom he was practically brought up at P. and whom everyone, though not Ju. himself, expects him to marry.) My letter to Susan has expressed my surprise and almost disgust, at an action so well calculated to increase the unhappiness of all concerned, and so lacking personal pride. A man would no more think of running half across England to see a girl who had already refused him, without even telling her, than he would of jumping over the moon. That is where the situation rests.

Friday September 15 1950

Days have subsided into a featureless succession, and I cannot tell one from another. I shall be glad to get away. We got a letter today to say that Michael's father died on Wednesday morning. What a good thing! It would have been awful for everyone if he had lived on and on; he was a shocking bad patient. Most selfish and demanding. Mike will be glad to start his term at Kingswood free. Sometime, tomorrow perhaps, I will try and retell my visit to Susan and my visit to Julian (both visits to Julian if possible) all important bits of the year's diary I missed.

Saturday September 16 1950

Another day of dreary weather. Spent most of the day reading some of J.B. Priestley's plays, 'Time and the Conways' irritates and depresses me. Does he imagine that no one who is young ever imagines himself as old and unsuccessful? Well I can tell him there is someone. I am sure his plays are superficial, though nearly all of them are so clever it is not hard exactly but laborious to find out the fallacy. Too tired to write more. Pen running out.

Tuesday September 19 1950

Have not felt well today. A swollen tonsil and so on. Stayed in the whole day, for which I was not sorry, as a continual drizzle makes indoors much more inviting. This evening was much struck by the vigour of the news bulletin. Great excitement over the steel division in the Commons. Maybe an election, which would perhaps reveal the tedium very slightly. Have spent most of the weekend reading a very badly written book about the Gaiety Theatre by W. Macqueen Pope. Extremely poorly arranged, but fascinating because of the material it

uses. It quite brings all the old names to life - Nellie Farmer, Fred Leslie, George Grossmith, Gertie Millar and the Danes. To think that the Gaiety (the second one) still stands there on the corner of the Strand and Aldwych, a big grey triangular building, which has been, ever since I can remember, gaunt, shuttered, silent, like the Lyceum across the way. Lupins Lane was going to re-open it, but found it to be too expensive, so now it is to be knocked down, and Government (Labour Government!!) offices built on the site. What an infuriating victory for the lifeless equality over the invaluable luxury. Of those stars I mentioned, of course the last three are still alive, Gertie Millar as 'Gertrude, Countess of Dudley and the Danes, Phyllis and Zena, in Ivor Nobello's latest show, 'King's Rhapsody'. Also reading Quennell's excellent 'Byron: The Years of Fame'. Far better than a biography more obviously weighted with scholarship. Such books are generally so dull, because their authors cannot write, that they are forced to be overburdened with footnotes and notes and textual criticism just so that something about it may be original even if it's only an absolutely mechanical discovery of a new comma.

Wednesday September 20 '50

What an extraordinarily attractive person Byron was. I am continually impressed however by the undoubted fact that we could many of us be as attractive and as cruel, and as picturesque if we had a large private income, a title, and a society where privilege was not a crime. Anyone who is able to give way to every whim is styled an eccentric. Throat very painful.

September 23 '50

Very painful throat last three days, and only bit better now. Doctor came today. Very tired.

Monday September 25 '50

Very much better today. Up and out. Rather worried about rooms - have still not got anything for next year. Hope to get something in the news few days. Perhaps Lee will help.

Mummy in her element today. Someone fell down and fractured his spine. His wife rang 'in tears, poor thing' as Mummy said, and M. had a lovely consoling 'Yes my dear of course anything we can do you know we will' sort of talk. This pen-nib is getting weaker. Must get it changed at Cambridge.

Received answer from Susan today. Most amusing letter, very sensible, but what is the use of that when at any moment she may become unsensible again? Also letter from J. V. amusing about Peter Frith and the Lakes, and telling me all about 'Lear'. saying Gielgud was wonderful in the pathetic parts but deficient in virility in the stormy passages. Also says he has finished two acts of the opera, in which I am required to dance a lustful tango and a twenties tap dance. What fun and cavortings.

Tuesday September 26 '50

Pen getting worse. Went to the cinema tonight, and was most amused by the second feature, an absurd film called 'Bomba, the Jungle Boy', where a sort of second Tarzan finds a girl lost in the bush, and love dawns. My biggest laugh came when she, attempting to explain what father meant, was driven by delicacy to explain 'Well, my father is - well, I'm his cub'. The whole film was stupid, but no one else laughed at all.

Friday September 29 '50

Daddy and Mummy came back from Doncaster where they have been staying with Philip Jackson, the owner of Radiance Toffee, whom they knew when we lived there. To D's amazement, Jackson offered him the managing directorship, and when Daddy refused it, said that at any rate when he died, D. must be a trustee director, because his son was such a fool, which young Philip certainly is. It will naturally mean a big income, £1500 or £2000 a great change from our present £400 or whatever it is. Pen much worse, no pleasure in writing at all, so will stop. Cannot believe good news though how awful to take money from a creature like that.

Saturday September 30 1950

I'm quite useless. Have decided to go up to Cambridge on Wednesday and stay in town the night and do some shows. Cannot waste any more time, without a play.

Sunday October 1 '50

Have decided to try for 'Carousel' on Wednesday evening, 'Second Mrs. T' on Wed afternoon, and 'Captain Carvallo' on Thursday aft. Such a lot to do tomorrow, haircut, hairwash, telegrams, XX Oh how nice. Life begins.

Tuesday October 3 '50

More or less packed up for tomorrow's early start. Have arranged with Susan for matinee of Carousel. Have not yet decided on evening theatre. Staying with Mr. Petree, great comfort.

Today has been the only one disturbed by packing. I don't believe in beginning till the last moment. By the time I had packed a trunk and two cases, I already felt half-gone. I sat at supper, feeling as if I were already separated from them all by the distance, mental and actual between Cambridge and here. Oh! How marvellous to be going. I did a little dance in the bathroom, and now I am all pins and needles with happiness_____!

Wednesday October 4 '50

A wonderful wonderful day. Up at 6.30 and out of that house before I could think how glad I was to be leaving it. I am sorry to feel that in a way, because they are as kind as they can be. But they are all so disappointed and forced to live such circumscribed lives out of which they make so little. Perhaps I shall fail as they have failed to keep my courage and enthusiasm. If I do I shall be able to return and live there with a clear conscience.

Came up in the train with middle aged couple, husband Colonial Officer, emaciated, liverish I should think, quite amusing, ordinary enough. Told the joke about Cole stopping the traffic in Piccadilly by looking up at nothing, 'But that, of course, was before the days of these flying-machines' Wife fat, commanding, knowledgeable, vast grey felt hat with a plume in the side, broad complacent face, sort of person used to commanding the country. Passed the journey. They collect antiques, have a house with 7 bedrooms and 4 1/2 acres of garden, and are going into a smaller one.

Arrived at Paddington half an hour late (nationalized railways!!) and drove immediately to Liverpool Street to leave my trunk. Drove back to Sussex Gardens. My Pottle's Service Chambers bed and bunk 12/6. Taxi cost me 14/-. Fares have gone up. Rushed to Lyons for lunch, only place quick enough. Then to the theatre, with Susan and her aunt. Aunt exactly like Mrs. S. to look at much nicer to talk to. Theatre most beautiful. Three tiers of boxes, the Royal Box gleaming gold in the middle of the left hand side, and its light on, as it always is, empty or full. Stage enormous. Drifted out afterwards, S and aunt having gone early, and got a ticket for 'Captain Carvallo' at Saint James. Still in dream from that. Why can't I be young forever?

I must go on the stage. I must I must.

Friday October 13 1950

Unlucky day! Almost a week and a half later. Am writing this in digs at 28b Green St. after much travail. When I came up, John hadn't got my card, so I had to sleep on his chair, with my feet wrapped in a rug on his sofa, and the gas-fire on. And remarkably comfortable I was too. All the same the desolation of having nowhere to go, brought on my special miasma of grasshopper mind with a vengeance. Couldn't feel real no matter what I did. The desolation of those days I cannot describe because I don't feel as if I was there during them. Though desolation is too strong a word, of course.

Went to my first 'Patience' rehearsal a week tonight, and two since, Monday and tonight. Very well conducted by the Musical Director, Eric Wedd. The principals quite characterless, all office workers, with two good voices, the rest lousy.

Cannot feel anything but rage at not being able to write up this diary. The three nights before I came here, I spent with Geofrey Beaumont, in his extra bedroom but even then I forgot all about my diary, so odd did I feel. And a lot of interesting things have happened, such as a

day on which I spent 13 hours with Peter Wood, a long talk with Michael Hale and Colin Temblett-Wood, a search for digs covered with insults and bad luck, a lot of singing sessions, of one sort and another, a first hearing of Ju's new opera, 'Cynthia in the Country', and all of these delicious excitements will now never be described. The pleasure of coming back is so acute it is almost painful to allow any moment to go past.

Saturday October 14 '50

A full day. In the morning at 10.15 went to see Peter Morris, the criticism editor of Varsity, about doing some notices for them. Frustrating. Small dark person, with smugly protruding teeth, and a cleft palate. He intended to continue the iniquitous system of giving each show to a different critic, a custom which allows of no regular standards, and is intensely frustrating to anyone anxious to try themselves out as critics. Left with little or nothing settled.

Afterwards to the Copper Kettle where I found Jenny Jamart and Bob Turner, two members of the ADC who left last June year. Both unsuccessfully pursuing uncongenial jobs, and both too weak to do anything about it. So depressing to think what one's fate may be. Then to digs to change. Digs quite nice, Australian landlady, good breakfast, otherwise quite characterless.

Changed and to a long, gloomy rehearsal in which I had about two words to speak, the ghastly fey atmosphere of John Banton's conscientiously whimsical Elizabethanism pushed me further and further down, into the depths of depression. After an interesting but depressing glimpse of the new members who looked miserably brilliant, out to tea to wait for members of the new Rattigan play, 'Who is Sylvia' cast, supposed to be coming to a club party. They never turned up, and our carefully arranged reception faces, and our carefully casual conversational groups all went for nothing. Went out to dinner with John and Ju. Ill-assorted pair. Went to Who is Sylvia? and were not favourably impressed. During one of the intervals saw Mike Hall, who said he was enjoying it, with the sort of look which means 'now criticize my simple enjoyment if you dare', which of course you do not dare, because the only criticism possible is to say that you are simply more sensitive and more selective than he is.

Afterwards walked back to coll! John <u>would</u> not go away, although I wanted much more to have a moment alone with Ju, who always frightens me when he goes quiet. I have always been terrified that friends will get impatient with me for continuing an argument after it's stopped interesting them. John W. is always doing it and though Ju never has yet, I am always afraid he will.

I have come to the conclusion that I must be coarser than most of my friends because I never ask anyone to stop taking about something.

Sunday October 15 '50

In the theatre all day from two o'clock onwards. Play went slowly but progress made at afternoon rehearsal. Dress rehearsal beginning only 3/4 of an hour after ordinary finished. J. and I had to go across the road to a little cafe called The Old Dutch to snatch a quick meal. Back to the theatre, and costume and make-up again. Costume good; fifteenth century tunic with broad red silk, tasselled sword-belt, lavender tights, and a pageboy bob wig. Tunic green brocade, by the way. With all this, a bow and arrow for some reason. Many fascinating people in the cast. Mike Hall, bold, warm, brash, boisterous, and a little coarse, with a drinker's rasp in his voice. Colin Temblett-Wood, playing Will the minstrel, well-built, black-haired crooked-nosed quiet person, with a curious and most individually unaccented voice, a lovely smooth tranquil, but very underplayed performance. Eric Cross, spindly, timid, stoat of a person, and a mouth that looks as if were always full of winkles.

John Barton himself of course is a ceaseless source of energy. A clever and resourceful producer, he gets the last ounce from his actors by repeating a scene once more after they have decided that to say another word would kill them.

Monday October 16 '50

A rehearsal day again. Nothing really happened except the dress rehearsal to me, or would not have done but for a long talk John and Julian and I had this afternoon, in which Julian imitated Peggy Ashcroft's percussive pipe, and told us of the impression that terrible American film about lunacy 'The Snake Pit' had on him. He almost went mad himself in the telling his eye rolled, his hand shook, he screamed and cried, and shuddered and we shuddered with him.

The dress rehearsal went well, though still the pace is awful. I wish I had a bigger part, I would like the play so much better, I'm sure. Though it isn't so simple as that, I'm afraid. John Cambridge, plump and rather puffy and pasty was better, but the beginning, with its insane use of three soliloquies is damned from the start. Parts of it are going to be delicious fun, parts of it intolerable boredom. John B. has allowed himself to pop in all sorts of things because he likes them rather than because they were necessary. Indeed in many places so far fom being necessary many elements in it are entirely irrlevant. Julian is exquisite as old King Findelbert of Candlemont. His withered voice and singleminded vacuity are going to make it the best thing he's done. John W. is absolutely right as Dizzle, the clown, but such arch mumblings and jumpings are just embarrassing to me. Far more embarrassing than any moral obliquities John may have found in 'Bang Goes the Meringue'.

Tuesday October 17 '50

First night of 'That's all One' Audience very slow to warm up, left cold by Diggle except for a round of applause for the actor and his courage in rolling around in a barrel. First real response, laugh on David King's entrance as a comic friar, the first character talking more or less without Elizabethanisms except of the mildest variety of pedantry. A character they could recognise, like Canon Chasuble or Dandy Dick, and of course they roared. Such is the

nature of audiences and it is this dislike of unfamiliarity which simply cannot be ignored. Drama is the art of compromise, as no other is, and John Barton has to learn this above all. What about the beginning of the play, with its three successive soliloquies from three different characters? These seem to me simply a confession of an inability to begin the play naturally. Surely one of the first things a young playwright tries for now is to jump straight into the middle of his plot, Ibsen-like.

Briefly, if I had the managing of this play, I should cut the opening to the entry of Stagwick, cut Diggle altogether, cut almost all the commentary, the glee and some of the other drinking songs, cut Lightly with suitable alterations, cut the final section to leave Candlemont a three minutes bit instead of 20 minutes in the darkness and you might leave the audience excited instead of exhausted.

Wednesday October 18 '50

Another full day. In the afternoon ADC auditions. Quite fascinating if for no other reason than that some of them are certain to become great friends of ours before this year is up. One or two really good people - among them Peter Om, from the Doncaster Grammar School, who did Caesar in a performance I remember seeing advertised there. Pleasant-looking person. We all had enormous fun, writing things about them all, especially with two wonderful women with splendid suburban accents and absolutely no doubt at all that they would wow us completely. Performance tonight absolutely bloody. Colin forgot a lot, and the edge was taken off the whole thing. And tonight was recorded too.

I am rather worried by the awful suspicion that I am growing into the most terrible bore. I keep on making remarks which sound boastful even beyond wit, even to myself, and then I strain to be wittier. I think a little quiet would be good for me. Too much congenial society after so much silence is so intoxicating.

Yet I feel my good opinion of myself growing inside almost out of my control. I am finding it difficult to stop myself saying openly and seriously, ‘What a good comedian am I’!

Thursday October 19 '50

Feel a bit better about myself today, but must still be careful. Pride has certainly always led to a fall with me, and things are so splendid at the moment it just isn't true. Am asked to the Arts Theatre party tomorrow, and what with ADC auditions, and Patience and That's All One to boost my morale, I am getting too much for myself.

Julian got his piano back today. We walked into his room and just found it there. So I shall hear the opera sooner or later.

When I think of my feelings two years ago, I am appalled by the depth and intensity of my present happiness. Here now as I lie in the bed writing, I can scarcely help from dancing all

over the room for all the lovely things I have to do and all the charming people I know, and most of all for my two friends.

Friday October 20 '50

Went to the party the Arts gave for the Irish players and enjoyed myself enormously though I never said a word to the Irish. Had a long talk with Peter Scroggs, who has taken over the stage-managership from Ronnie Banker. Tallish, fair and good-looking in a vulgar way, he is not very much more charming than his position makes him.

Had some wonderful hours with Ju. and XX Performance exhausting opera so tired.

Sunday October 22 '50

Too tired after the party to write and really too tired now. Spent most of today with John B and his sister Jennifer. Anne McCleshan and Pat Doggarte, Hubert's sister. So tired now.

Monday October 23 '50

Did nothing all day and enjoyed it. Have been talking to so many people lately that I have slightly tired my brain! (There are such funny noises going on outside, cats moaning and wailing like a mixture of a baby and an air-raid siren (sic), and what sounds like a mass of corrugated iron being dragged over a garden wall.) Went to the Union for lunch, afterwards trotted into the smoking-room, to look at the glossy weeklies, and seeing a warm fire and a cosy carpet-chair I dropped down into one, and in front of the other, and began to read. I had just bought Ken Tynan's new book, 'He That Plays the King', and was in the middle of a petulantly controversial, castigation of the critics as piddling dilettantes when I fell asleep. Like Tom Murdoch, I awoke 'famously snug', and wishing that autumn afternoons would last forever. Had tea there, and then took 'The Country Girl' round to Julian where we played it and sang it together. And how sweet it is! And how cloying it would be to have XX requirements beyond it. At the Univ. Actors Committee meeting a day or two ago, by the way, we decided to produce 'Huis CloS' and 'A Phoenix Too Frequent', as a double bill. Should be good. Second will be the trouble - plays of charm always are.

Tuesday October 24 '50

University Actors' Comm. this morning. Only Peter Wood, John, Tim O'Brien, Jimmy Beaumont, Julian and myself there. In discussing 'Huis CloS' I said it was a picture of three people shut in a room with hideous irritating furniture and tormenting each other for all eternity to the extent of persuading each other not to go out of the door when it opened. John said Huh, just like an ADC party. Decided on 'The Browning Version' if a licence for Huis Clos was impossible, as may well be though it has been performed in two club theatres and on the wireless of all things. These rules are stupid.

At the Union for lunch, and saw Jimmy Cellan-Jones, full of marvellous adolescent pride at having persuaded La Moorsom to have lunch with him. One of the girls who are basically hideous but taken all of a piece look attractive. to the ADC Committee in the afternoon where John Barton was rather dog-in-the-manger about producing the main production. After a dullish discussion, only enlivened by an interruption from some members of the Young Vic cast, we decided on 'The Alchemist'. John B producing, with a new man, presumably Toby Robertson, who looks like being taken up as the new discovery of the year, sitting in on rehearsals. To my eye the new people look as they would supply a very good cast for Richard of Bordeaux or King John or the King Maker. Dull worthy costumes and Sixth Form. Some of them are more than sure of themselves.

To Geoffrey's room afterwards to rehearse 'Gosh, How I Love My Cloche' with Ju. G. has thought up a lovely Charleston step to go with the song or possibly remembered it. At any rate there we were in Geoffrey's outer room with its bare fireplace bedroom staircase, large armchair, grand piano and standard lamp, jigging away with the carpet turned back. Through the half-open double doors, you could see into the inner room, a big fire leaping over the walls, big deep chintzy sofas, upright Chippendale armchairs, a big round table with big blue and white teacups round a blue and white teapot, flanked by a plate of digestive biscuits thick with butter, and the thick lit folds of the voluminous pink-silk lampshade, and we were lapped in a safe little world of tea and music delicious, secure and mysterious.

To supper at Lucy's where some of the 2 year people from John's came in. Rather horrid to me, though probably imagine I'm much horrider than I am.

Friday October 27 1950

Cannot imagine what has happened in the last three days. Cannot remember why I have not entered anything in my diary.

Wonderful wonderful day. In the afternoon to another deathly footlights rehearsal where even more awful people than usual had got together, but I moved off fairly soon with Julian, Julian More and Geoffrey to G's rooms again. After he had rehearsed the Cloche song again to the accompaniment of screams of laughter from JM, and tightened up one or two of the movements and intonations, we went through the dance five or six times to get it right. Then J.M. has to go, and Julian and I went on with the new opera, Ju trying to teach some of it to Geoffrey, who plays the piano marvellously and has a splendid ear. The new waltz song 'If I've got to do a dance with Someone', he played brilliantly, as he always does waltzes sweeping us away into a sort of waltz fervour which sent us whirling round and round, swirling imaginary kisses and sketching steps we couldn't really do. I can't I can't I can't put on paper how we danced and turned and span round the floor. We seemed to go on for ever, a whole chorus in ourselves. When we left I went to the ADC found Peter Wood there with whom I had a gay little word, during which he said that if we did Twelfth Night with Othello on this Henry Hall tour, he wanted me to play Malvolio. Really I did not want to say anything, for fear it should be inadequate. I must try to be properly grateful for such good

luck. To a stupid rehearsal of Patience afterwards, and straight on from there to a Footlights smoker, to do the Cloche thing. It was a huge success, and the only number which was encored, an immediate spontaneous encore too, as was 'One Two Three One' from 'Bang' afterwards.

At the very end two of the cast of the Young Vic came in. I saw them yesterday and in The Merchant of Venice. Philip Guard who was in the Godfrey Tearle - Edith Evans 'Anthony and Cleopatra' at the Piccadilly during the fuel crisis, and the man who played Bassanio whose name I can't remember. Guard who is staying with Geoffrey, is very nice, but seemed depressed, and I understand from Ju that he is discouraged because he isn't getting on as he would like. In Geoffrey's rooms we had another wonderful time playing and singing to them. I hope they enjoyed it. We rather forgot they were tireder than we were. Ju was depressed afterwards, seeing how we would be in a year or two. Still it might not be as bad as that, but I did feel we had been perhaps too gay, when they had to go back to awful digs, and move off somewhere else on Monday. I heard from peter Wood that Denys Amos is having a party for them tomorrow to which he has not asked me. Peter thought that v. rude, but he just doesn't like me, that's all.

Sunday October 29 1950

Too tired last night to write after the Nurseries had dragged their slow length along for three hours. This afternoon to tea with Susan, leading into a long and complicated discussion into the nature of drama with Jane Goddard, a very pretty girl, whom I have long admired from afar! Very abstruse talk but great fun, though the result as usual of a confusion of terms rather than ideas. So good for one.

In the evening to the ADC for the party to welcome new members. Was looking forward to it very much indeed, and I must say it surpassed my expectations. To put it crudely first, I was a great success. That is to say, I made people laugh a lot and they didn't seem bored and to go on from these, and realise by this time that I do seem to others very self-confident, rather brittle and to some no doubt odiously over-bearing. I still seem to myself...

2 PAGES MISSING

Monday October 30 1950

Can write of nothing, but the first 'Patience' rehearsal. Little wizened man, Mr. Arnold, from the D'Oyly Carte, I believe, came down to produce. To begin with, he recites all your lines, before you say them, and his ideal is that you should copy him exactly. He adopts all the worst tricks of what I imagine to be the Doyly Carte method, the perky fossilisation of a once efficient but eighty-year out-of-date treatment of examples of the most ephemeral of all stage arts - the musical comedy. He is still living pre-1914, and whether that is or is not an era or purer theatrical-comic technique, I am not interested. The fact is that his method is out of date and mine works. He has never heard of 'throwing away', and it is, judiciously used, one

of my greatest strengths. He wants me to overact madly, me, who generally gets his effect by rigidity. I have no doubt I am too rigid, but in any case he won't get me out of it by trying to make me copy him over-acting. He applies his beliefs in reproduction to the text as if he were dealing with a religious ritual. I shall just have to say to him, 'I can't have you repeating the lines over before me like this, or I shall begin copying you, and that would never do, would it?' (sweet smile). All the little dances have nothing to do with anything, and I shan't do mine, whatever noise it creates. I went through the first rehearsal of the first act more or less quietly, just to find out what I was expected to do. Until I knew, I could hardly start protesting about anything. Oh Mr. Arnold, just you wait!

Wednesday November 1 '50

I heard this morning that Bernard Shaw was dying. I have not been watching the newspapers, and it was with a sudden sick shock that I noticed a bulletin published in The Times saying he was sinking fast. He is a link with so much that is gone, and that so much will seem so very much more remote when he is gone, that I cannot help feeling personally very very sad. A sort of vague nineties nostalgia.

I went to my second 'Patience' rehearsal and came away immensely invigorated. For the first time over a business like this, I got in all I had meant to say, and it produced the right effect. I said I simply couldn't say a line like that, and after much expostulation and some annoyance, we continued, the line spoken my way. I am seeing him alone tomorrow. Goodness knows what embarrassment will happen then. I will not budge. No, it's not tomorrow, it's Friday. Went to see Ju, very heartened by his response to what he called my 'bravery'. I must say if I bring this off, I will have struck a blow for comic truth. Quite important.

Friday November 3 '50

To private rehearsal with Arnold. Thrashed out problem of dialogue and he has given in. Now it only remains for me to make a success of it my way, and the thing is done.

Saturday November 4 '50

A curious sort of day. Spent the whole day pursuing people I wanted very much to see. Raef Payne left an exquisitely written note in my room beginning 'Angus, pomme de mon oeil' and asking me to go to Kathleen Ferries tomorrow. I tried to find him all morning and left him a note about twelve. Came back here at five, and found - 'Please' scrawled thickly on his letter and his request underlined. The ink....

PAGES MISSING

... of the audience. She makes gestures, allows the expressions which a song calls up in her, to chase each other across her face, and never causes one to think to oneself 'She's overdoing it.' Everything is so deeply felt and vested that nothing in her performance could be inappropriate. By a happy chance she substituted by request John's favourite Der Mussensohn for another of the Schubert group, the Schumann song cycle about a young wife whose title I can never remember and her first song 'Du bist bei mir' moved me most to tears. As for her encores, well - her voice is extraordinarily compelling, and on a word like leaves sounds like a cello.

In the evening great argument-quarrel with John about his vacillating nature and his fundamental weakness. Most boring and it seemed to matter to him so much in a terribly and shockingly adolescent way. I tried to be as good a listener as I could, and we went for a long walk and talked about it for ages. Why I am a confidante to all these vanities I can't imagine.

Monday November 6 '50

Wasted vapid day about which I do not deserve to write anything.

Tuesday November 7 '50

To the Marlowe Society auditions for George Ryland's production of 'Coriolanus' Decided after hearing bits from the play that it was so dull and so heavy and so classical, that I would find nothing but a courtesy part in it, and determined to refuse to be in it. Really 'refuse' is not the word I mean, because no one would really mind whether I was in it or not, but I did decide not to bother. Dadie's ideas are so fundamentally opposed to my own that I cannot see how I could profit from his producing, and in any case I would have such a small part that he could do little or nothing with me. I feel of course as I always do at refusing any part, however meagre, rather forlorn, but it's for once genuinely baseless and only a reflex feeling I am sure. At least I shall have a good view of a Marlowe Soc. Production, and after all I never enjoyed either of the Marlowe's I've been in, particularly, the first one, not at all, and the second in only a limited way, nor quite honestly do I think I would have enjoyed them as <u>productions</u> any more if I had had a big part. I would have enjoyed doing my <u>part</u> more, of course, but the atmosphere, the dreariness of the whole thing would have got me down just the same. I felt this forlornness for the first time this term, because everything else has been and is so happy, and extra-strong because of that. I must be careful not to talk about 'giving up the Marlowe' because people will simply thing it's sour grapes, which it is in a way, but in a much more important way, is not. I think I am frittering away too much time. I must try and write more.

Thursday November 9 '50

There was no night last night so no entry in the diary. After the 'Patience' rehearsal went to see Ju to see if he would come out for something to eat, just before ten struck. He was in the

middle of an agonising rehearsal of 'A Phoenix Too Frequent' which he is rehearsing for the University Actors, with Joy Langdon and Pat Cullen as Dynamene and Tegeus. Quite the most hysterically shy pair there ever was. He couldn't come out, and so I decided to go by myself. On my way out, I saw a light in Geoffrey's window and went in to ask about a Trinity man who wanted to join the ADC. I stayed of course about two hours, singing and dancing and drinking. David Davies the Vicar of Little St. Mary's came in with dull dark, red hair and fascinating hooded eyes. John Whitley one of the 'Bang' chorus last year, and two dull ordained stooges. About 12.30 I left, meaning to go home, but passing Julian More's window heard Ju's voice, went in, stayed till 1.45, when Ju and I decamped to John Whitley's rooms, he having come in too. We stayed with him drinking and talking talking talking about the theatre, and eating melon in huge slices, chocolate and cornflakes until dawn, when I tottered back. Today one delicious drowse.

Saturday November 11th '50

Poppy Day, and all hell let loose. The sights one sees in Cam. on this day. All rather dull and raggish really, but it gets lots of money so it's well worth it. In the afternoon to see Varsity playing Leicester. Scrappy on the whole but some good bits. We lost, in the maddening way one does even when one is the <u>better</u> team. Lovely crisp shining day. On our way back we walked round the backs, and all the trees seemed to be making autumn in a new spring. The leaves, turning all shades of brown, had only for today, the dazzling gold which comes only once in every autumn. On the sides of the moats, there was thick pale grey mud, and the air was soft with damp. The ground was soggy with leaves, and mud.

In the evening to the Victoria Cinema to do the 'Cloche' for Poppy Day. Terrifyingly proletariat audience...

PAGES MISSING

... the dress rehearsals of 'The Browning Version' and 'A Phoenix Too Frequent', I should still remember such a trivial little incident, and that it should still have power to hurt me so much. I won't, I think investigate the snobbish cause of the hurt, That would only make too aware of it. Let's forget about it.

As for the plays, the first, which I have only read and never seen, is almost unbearably moving. Even at this rehearsal, with the set half-built and the actors fluffing their lines, the tears rolled down my face, and down Julian's, too! David King was so quietly pathetic, that his sudden burst of hard violent sobbing came like an unexpected blow in the stomach. Julian's production of the 'Phoenix' was delightful to look at, and to listen to, nearly always, except that Pat would not sit up straight, and the whole thing seemed occasionally to deteriorate into a wistful moaning...

PAGE MISSING

...he knew he could do it if given time. We had him in DRI and Peter W., John B., Toby R. all had a go at him. He seemed to me to take it well at the end, but I was so lost in how terrible I should feel if it were happening to me that I was prepared to take anything the poor fellow said without passing any judgement on it. The others rather took the line that he had behaved badly, and that he had not enough humility. As I say, I could not really tell, could not bounce my spirit up enough to hear what he was saying. I only hope he does not resent anything they said. It was all most distressing.

In the evening to a 'Patience' rehearsal at which I felt myself, (for I act completely in a vacuum at those rehearsals through no fault of my own, I hope) to be coming to grips with the technical difficulties of the part for the first time. I do hope I'm not a flop, so easy when I'm so full of myself.

Thursday November 16 '50

Today when I was in the ADC after lunch, Ju asked me to go for New Year again. I was quite speechless and rather rude, I was so delighted. So you see what all my silly fancying meant.

House-managing show at ADC tonight - very dull, though show more delightful than ever. Am now Librarian of the ADC and pleased about it. David Sawyer came to the show tonight, and I had him in the Clubroom where he seemed most impressed, though by what I really don't know. I think he is foolish to go about so little when he would really like to. It is so silly to give up 'society' for no reason except fear of entering it. And it isn't as if I haven't introduced him to lots of nice people because I have.

Friday November 17 '50

Went to see 'Orphee' this afternoon. Cocteau is just an idiot boy. Fascinatingly made, but simply cheap tricks about death, on the level of a Jules Verue mystery story. Very very silly. Can't imagine what all the fuss was about.

John W. with whom I went, talking boringly about his 'little friend' having found some religious scruples all though tea. Full call of Patience. Death, dear and straight to bed.

Monday November 20 '50

Last two nights too late, and XX anyway. Saturday the B.V. party where we had a lovely gay time, singing and drinking and kissing and talking. Joyce and I were very gay: I nearly went too far. I wish I had. Went back to her flat with Ju and Susan, and stayed till about 5.30. Sunday rather a grey day. Have been made Librarian of ADC by the way, and spent most of the day poking about among the old albums seeing what there was to do. Quite a lot on the whole. About 7.30, Ju came in after a rehearsal and said come out for dinner so I went. Then

we went for a session to Geoffrey's room where there was quite a crowd. Followed usual lines - most enjoyable. Tired rather today, but very full day. ADC committee in the morning all routine and very dull, too. In the afternoon the second Othello rehearsal, first one forgot to mention yesterday afternoon, at which I said two things quite naturally which were screamed at as examples of highly premeditated wit. Baffling at first but understandable when I think out what I say and how I say it. Rather negative. Back in the clubroom saw Ju again. Got me alone to tell me that Peter Wood had been getting at Peter Frith again. Peter F. had asked Peter W. why he (P.F,) was such a bed actor on the way home from the party on Sat. Peter W. being rather drunk, told him; in such a way as 'You're quite a different type from all of us. Your background is different, your standards are different, and so they will always be apart from a superhuman effort on our part which we aren't prepared of making, or an even more superhuman one on yours which you're incapable of making. He also said that acting and religion couldn't go together, a criminal thing to say to someone with as strictly stupid a background as P.F. has so obviously had, and went on to give a catalogue of the perversions of the whole club to poor Peter, first to convince him how unsuitable it was that he should act. I agreed with J. that true or not, it was a viciously stupid thing to do. Peter F was apparently much upset, and last night while we were in Geoffrey's room, came up to see J. and waited as long as he could and then had to go. While he was waiting however he wrote a poem, called 'Dissonance', all about two friends, very dissimilar who like each other very much, but ultimately drift apart. This seemed really rather a hint, and Ju. is tackling Peter F about it tonight, telling me the result tomorrow. Incidentally I had supper with Peter Wood tonight, and he gave quite a different account of the Peter F. conversation, at least not different but very incomplete, which only confirms what I should in any case have believed, that Peter W. cannot be trusted to tell the truth ever. What he said to Peter F. factually speaking, is unfortunately perfectly true, except for the catalogue of perversions, details of which I never heard. Peter F. has apparently imagined himself to have been accepted as one of us, when in fact all that has happened is simply that we have withheld from him the fact that he has <u>not</u> been accepted, a kindness we show to very few.

All very intriguing. Peter told me a few morsels of one sort and another, amongst them that 'Simon sleeps with Dadie', which I can well believe, but disbelieve on principle because Peter told me.

Tuesday November 21 '50

Everything about Peter F. cooled down, but will break out one day and hurt someone very much.

To a private rehearsal with Mr. Arnold this afternoon. He impressed upon me again the fact that my part was funny, and suggested one or two things to make it funnier, which they don't. I am myself worried about it, because I don't feel quite easy about it; perhaps I will after this week of rehearsals. Was upset tonight to hear from my only ally in the chorus that the old members were grumbling about my performance. One of them said 'Well, of course, he's just not Bunthorne, and I think he goes rather too far - he's a bit vulgar.' And of course I do find it difficult to keep going when there is a whole roomful of people who think quite differently

about everything. I must admit they nearly all seem intolerably vulgar to me in real life, or is that too horrid of me? What I don't understand is how anyone could think I acted a part vulgarly. I - who have for years been accused of rigidity, of under-acting madly and so on. I must say it upsets me, especially as Mr. Arnold said he didn't think I was very funny and at rehearsals I don't get laughed at nearly as much as the others. I looked through my part very carefully just now anyway - just to make sure.

Wednesday November 22 '50

Am feeling rather better about it now, 'Patience' I mean. Have talked a lot with Rosemary Hart, and Anne about it, and they seem to think it's all right, and that has heartened me somewhat. Rehearsal went better tonight. No one there except those two any use to me at all as a standard. Must try for more elegance, and more affectation. So difficult to pick one's way between the properly artificial and the absurdly artificial. They all seem to me to be playing as if they were members of one of the old stock companies Shaw is so fond of describing. What was it Ken Tynam said about the D'oyly Carte, 'They need a little pizzicato of the spirit. There is a lot of it in the music, and it cries out for the light printless touch of the aristocrat. Gilbert demands poise and genuine refinement of temper and diction, not bored exaggerations and the utterance of every long word with grotesque contortions of the lips expressive of vulgar astonished contempt. Aristocracy of mind, sportive and zestful, is the first requisite for a singer of Gilbert & Sullivan.' Whether I have the light printless touch of the aristocrat I don't know. I can only hope. At least I am sure that I am at least sixty times nearer it than all the others.

Spoke to Ju about it today, and he was encouragingly cautious. He said most sensibly that although he knew I would do far better than the others, it might look to people who didn't realize what I was trying to do, as if I just couldn't manage the D'Oyly Carte way, or as if I just didn't fit in. That is just what I am afraid of. I know just how good or bad I am in things usually, and in this I am not too bad, not brilliant but not bad. For once it matters enormously what the audience thinks, because I am trying to do something particular, namely to show that Ken Tynan is right when he advocated a light touch and genuine refinement. I am trying to use modern style, not to spoil by modernisation, but by using a modern stylishness of delivery and action.

Friday November 24 '50

Cannot imagine why I didn't write in here last night. Possibly it was because of my landlord and landlady inviting me in to a cup of cocoa; they were so dull that I really hardly knew where I was when I got away. Still feeling unhappy with 'Patience', they all seem so certain of themselves and their way: but they are wrong, they are, and if only I can do my way well enough, I'll prove it on Tuesday night. I am terrified I shall forget something or drop something or just not bring it off. Must go to bed and sleep - sleep.

Monday November 27 '50

Again have forgotten the last two days, and can remember nothing of why I didn't write in here. Dress rehearsal terrible, and I am quite sure I shall flop magnificently. Oh why do I go into these things?

XX Mike Hall was terribly upset by the news from Peter W. that he could not produce him as 'Othello'. He broke down when I spoke to him, and went out of the theatre; came back in

twenty minutes and asked for me. I was already rather overdue for the DR of 'Patience', and I didn't want to see him at all. Such an uncomfortable interview because I couldn't say anything comforting to him at all. I wanted so much to go on to the theatre, but was glad on the whole because it might have helped him a bit. When I see someone as upset as that, I get a great big rush of oh I would anything in the world to stop them being upset, and nothing is more awful than having no comfort to offer. On the way to my digs to pick up my things, I only said I know a bit of what you must be feeling, and after all Peter W, isn't the be-all and end all of everything. And the tears ran again.

Tuesday November 28 '50

First night of 'Patience'. Feel fairly happy over it. Reception all that could be desired, but not as good myself as I should have liked. Various things wrong and unfinished. John Holmstrom came round afterwards, and said it was stupendously good, and so did John Wilders. I doubt it myself but am more than pleased, and quite looking forward to the rest of the run. So so tired.

Wednesday November 29 '50

Much more satisfied with myself tonight, and feel I deserved the cheers and applause a hundred per cent more than last night. Felt much happier in the big song, and the first scene went very much better. Wonderful review in the silly old Camb. Daily News, which I believe when it says nice things, and refuse to believe when it says nasty ones. George Baker and Olive Groves came round behind in the interval, and said quietly to me (and I am not going to resist the impulse to quote them) that I was streets ahead of the rest of the cast and it was the best amateur performance he had ever seen. They are tatty old professionals, but still professionals and it must mean something.

Two parties before the show. One in Geoffrey's rooms to meet Joyce Grenfell. She was sweet, far funnier when she was trying to be serious than when she was trying to be funny. She strikes as one of those gawky intense women who are intrinsically funny, like a custard-pie. I imagine she doesn't always know when she's being funny, though ravishingly funny she is in her episodic way. Absolutely brilliant at throwing away. Second one dreary thing of David Sawyer's with no one knew saying nothing one wanted to hear over sherry one didn't want to drink.

Thursday November 30 '50

Another successful evening. There was a woman sitting in the middle of the very front row who screamed with vulgarly hysterical laughter throughout. Quite off-putting. When I am in a play I find it difficult to do anything serious during the day at all. So terrifying wondering when I'm going to forget a line too. Must get to sleep.

Thursday December 7 '50

'Alchemist' party last night. No bed for Angus. Really splendid party. Nigel spent nearly the whole time with Ju and I, and we talked and laughed goodness how we laughed and got tight and danced and sang. About 4.0 we were doing an impromptu pas de trois variation on the Charleston. Nigel proves a splendid acquisition to a party, and it is lovely to have him in the club. The whole thing subsided at about 4.45 into Ju and Peter Wood and Nigel and I left alone, and going to sleep on the sofa under great coats. Peter W. and Nigel and I came away about 7.0 and wandered back to our respective digs, Nigel to get ready to go home at 11.0: he has a dance at home tonight. We wished him a happy Christmas, and parted till next term.

In the morning we had the ADC committee photograph. All of us were feeling and I must say looking pretty ghastly. Everyone except me was wearing his oldest clothes. After the grisly ceremony was over, we went to a very slow motion V.A. committee to talk about Othello finances. Then to a lunch I didn't want and Othello rehearsal in afternoon. Ghastly.

Thought I would never get through 'Patience' tonight, I felt so terrible, but making up made me feel better, and I gave my best yet. Ju was thrilled and so was I. Am almost sick with tired.

Wednesday December 13 '50

At home again. Remained so tired. Could write nothing more any night. Was up till 4 on Friday and again on Saturday. Intensely wet on Sunday. To a gloomy little tea in the Copper Kettle with Susan. Prevented her saying goodbye to Julian; she cried, of course. Went to the pictures with Ju. We had to do something to stave off the sleep we intended to engulf us for the next fortnight. To John Barton's for a last drive. On Mon. morning with Peter W., without Ju who missed the train, for a quick lunch at La Caguille, and on to 'All About Eve'. Most brilliant and entertaining film I have seen for at least a year. Peter W. very loquacious about family. Result of them coming closer, and his realizing he belongs to them again, and thinking what hell. We saw John Macgregor in the cinema, but he is a different person now.

Wednesday December 20 '50

A week of vegetation passed deliciously.

Daddy has been appointed a director of Radiance and may apparently expect a cheque any time. He is buying me a new suit-length in grey worsted which I shall have made up in the latest fashion, and am going to stay with Ju on Tuesday and were it not for Donald and Joan, and those children coming tomorrow I should be perfectly happy.

Thursday December 21 '50

They're here. God three XX and die. Pen's running out and I wish I were. Thank heaven for Ju and Painswick on Tuesday.

Friday December 22 '50

As for Donald and Joan, they are accepted more, and accept more. (Not by or from me, needless to say). How perfectly terrible to have to have for Christmas two dull and ill-mannered strangers with children too.

Saturday December 24 '50

Am reading that lesson tomorrow. Can not help feeling very nervous, for that sort of thing is very different from acting! I am quite quite positive that Daddy will say something stupid about my reading of it that will send me mad with irritation which he will increase by imagining he has made me feel valuably inferior. I feel so so glad that I am engaged to Julian's on Boxing Day. Very selfish of me perhaps to spurn my own parents and home, but I must grab happiness where I can see it, and I will <u>not</u> be infected by their misery, their complete lack of fun, to the extent of giving up a whole week of great pleasure for myself while giving them the equally selfish pleasure of having me around the house doing nothing while they are working. They can provide me with no ready-made friends at all, no background, nothing but the small amount of money they are able to spare from their small salary, for which they work hard. They don't understand my sort of fun, and would simply restrict me to theirs without realizing it if I allowed them to. I couldn't bear it here much longer. I get stupider every day here.

Sunday December 24 '50

A pleasant day, spent entirely in listening to cards, at which D. and I became very impatient, but could do nothing because Daddy was listening too. Read the lesson quite well, this morning, though I missed out a lot of the things I had wanted to put in. Of course they all thought it was marvellous. What can one do? Quite unpredictable in the silliest way. Just because I spoke loudly and didn't drop any aitches.

Wednesday December 27 '50

In Painswick. What heaven! Have been doing nothing but talk to the great boredom of everyone, I expect, but never mind. It is so wonderful to find oneself relaxed and feeling duller than someone. So bad for one and somehow so shaming to find oneself brighter than everyone else, as it's so easy to be at home. Party at The Goodmans last night or rather dinner and some music. Most agreeable. Tonight the first runthrough of the opera, to the Stokes and Goodmans and Slades. Cam Mansell who is staying with the Slades, fair, with a large soft chin like the XX and a fund of heavenly stories about Sir Gerald Kelly whose

private secretary she is. Mrs. Stokes is tall, ruddy in the face, very charming, very fair and intelligent, children (grown up) all enormous and stodgy. J. and I spent all morning and afternoon rehearsing. I'm not as quick at learning the tunes as he'd like, but I think I managed to get through most of it fairly successfully. It is quite splendid. The lightest of light music, but wonderfully gay. 'Tonight's The Night' and 'As Long as You're There', especially the first one, are irresistible waltzes, and 'He's Got Absolutely Nothing' and 'Oh if Only' are very very sweet. I wish I could really describe the whole thing. Nothing will do that, except Ellen Terry's 'Gay, Gay, Gay!!"

Thursday December 28 '50

In the afternoon on the golf-links and thro' the woods for a walk. Chris and Pam, together (Chris Ju's tall legal deliciously serious brother) most of the time, so I had Mrs. Slade. Quite fascinating. If she had a chariot, I should have bound myself long ago to its wheels. Talked about orchids and films and food and beauty and servants. In the evening to the Blue Bird Ball at Cheltenham rather amorphous affair, masses of children, girls in shapeless net frocks with huge feet, and boys all red and uncomfortable in flannel suits. I was sure our partners were the prettiest in the room. Diana was wearing a dress made of some material her great-great grandfather brought back from China, a lovely shimmering blush pink net sort of stuff. Pam was wearing black net with a black velvet bodice, and halter and a very full skirt. Monica a black taffeta with deep collar and cuffs in white lace like a Rubens portrait, with aquamarine rhinestone earrings and necklace. Monica is Monica Craven, whose father used to be the Vicar of Painswick and she is long-nosed, demure, vague, and sleepy. Rather boring in the end, though basically ought to be fascinating.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 16

Angus Mackay

Being the twelfth volume.

From October 30 1951.
To January 9 1952.

Tuesday October 1951 (cont.)

This discussion was made almost intolerable by the ponderous intensity of Miss Sayers (an enormously fat woman of middle height, with straggly straight grey hair, a very square stern face, wearing an extremely tight extremely mannish suit with a collar and tie) and the paralysing volubility of Graham Soutar, obviously a second-rate artist. He persisted in throwing off hopefully revolutionary sentiments in the most tiresomely off-hand voice. A double irritation, since it is indicative of the double attitude 'I don't need to stress this, it's a basic assumption, while hoping that you are really conventional enough to rise to it. Very conventional little man, very weedy and Welsh of course.

Today has been until this evening rather hopeless. I developed what I suppose must be lumbago. I was starting a cold and I had to wander round all day looking for a job. I was too scared to do more than look at the staff entrances of the big hotels. The trouble is I look so wildly unlike someone wanting a washer up's job.

Finally I noticed in Charing Cross Road the advertisement of a cinema employment agency. I went, but it was shut. However outside it has so many jobs listed surely I'll get one. Roy Limbert rang up the old Grand.

Wednesday October 31 1951

I almost dislike to write in my diary these days. Just a moan of failure. I must find some work, and as I cannot go on like this, I think I shall go to the Labour Exchange tomorrow. I don't know whether I am allowed to go there, but I shall go and inquire. I wandered all round the service entrances of the big Mayfair hotels today, but never had courage to go and ask for a job. I am a fool, but I will not go home, I will <u>not</u>, I will <u>not</u>.

Thursday November 1 1951

Still nothing happened. I went to the Labour Exchange but again hadn't courage enough to go in. Stupid stupid pride. The agony is that I can't take any ordinary job because it won't leave me free at the right moments.

I go to see Roy Limbert tomorrow. He won't have anything to suggest from an acting point of view, but who knows, he may know of an ordinary job. It is worth trying at any rate. The extraordinary thing is that I am not really worried - fatal. There is no piece of luck to come to my rescue. My pieces of luck never seem to have anything to do with hard cash. I wandered so far yesterday and today, all over fascinating Soho. So many good little shops and restaurants. 'A good little place in Soho' really means something all too expensive for me. I have exactly 11' left.

Friday November 2 1951

At 1.45 I went to see Roy Limbert, not so fat nor so vulgar as I had expected, but bad enough. He was much less theatrical than any of the other men I have met, and he strikes me as a survival of the 1920 theatre speculator. We had a most ordinary dull talk, during the course of which he asked me if I would like a tiny part in the new Priestley play, called 'Trouble in Pelican' or something like that. I told him about the Tennent audition. I don't want anything to get in the way of that. He said, very decently and most unexpectedly that he would hold up that casting until he knew what I was doing. Most uncommercial. He was vague and blimpish, but because he promised so much less, I felt more inclined to trust him. While we were talking, a Mr. Harold Clayton was announced. He turned out to be short, brown-faced, with a great deal of very white hair and rather self-consciously piercing eyes. He is apparently a television producer of whom I had to pretend to have heard. He said after he'd been mumbled to by Roy L. outside the door, that he had nothing for me at the moment as the only part he had in the present play that would suit me he had just given to David Aylsner. Well! I have to write to him, and to E.P. Clift.

I have just been reading Max Beerbohm's 'Around Theatres'. How ivory tower he is! He makes one long for reality, just as a tea party with a little old spinster makes one long for a rugger match. Tonight when I went in to dinner, there was a little bright fortyish woman, rather like Mrs. F.A. with Gerard and Christoper. Rather tiresome in some ways, because just sufficiently intelligent to make really stupid remarks. Mrs. Philips or something talked a great deal about a Major Rook who has just taken Wootton, which is near them. Apparently he is <u>most sinister</u>.

Saturday November 3 1951

I spent an uneventful morning going to the library again to refuel for the weekend, and met Hazel Young there. She is not quite as affected as she was, possibly because she is married to the most bowler-hatted thing you ever saw called Geoffrey - from King's.

I spent some more time worrying about my rent here, but was soon reassured by Christopher that I could pay when I wished. In the evening Gerard Irvine, the curate under Patrick McLoughlin at St. Thomas', Regent St. came round to dinner and asked me to go to a film with him - as his guest, I may say. He is a remarkably volatile young man(!) fervently adoring the most unlikely things, and 'rather liking' every thing you talk about. Christopher

joined us and we went off to see 'Sous Le Ciel de Paris' at Studio One, a bad film with lovely bits - a charming boy girl sequence, and an absurdly harrowing murderer whom I hated. Then we went back to Gerard's rooms in the vicarage. His sitting-room is boringly unconventional. Striped red and white curtains, a great many rather dog-eared books with their dust-covers askew, two Umpire chairs and a chaise longue covered in dirty red nap and painted with very thick white and gold enamel, and a really delightful bowl of wax fruit under a glass cover by a signed portrait of Queen Mary. Over his bed in the next room, he has an enormous red silk canopy, with a huge crucifix at the head of the bed. The figure of Christ is highly coloured and most realistic, rather strange for someone so scared of the sight of blood as Gerard seemed to be. He has a dribbling teapot, and reads Burke's Peerage in the lavatory.

Sunday November 4 1951

I can tell that tomorrow I shall feel impatient to begin. Today I have lazed secure in the feeling that I can stay on here.

Did not get up till 4.0 as I was not feeling well, and spent the rest of the day talking. Not very good talk, but fills me with a pleasant conceit of myself - always a good thing.

Monday November 5 1951

Really if I go on writing my diary in bed just before I go to sleep it will go down to history as the most tedious document since Pepys. Imagine having 'And so to bed', as your epitaph.

I have sat here writing letters all day. Letters to agents, managers, friends and relations and acquaintances. At about 6.0 I got up to post a batch of them, put on my coat and scarf, picked up my...

PAGE MISSING

... and on and on, while the cars squelch past on the greasy pavements.

Friday November 9th 1951

Was amazed to hear Geoffrey's voice outside the bathroom this morning. He was looking very well, (no us to make him have late nights) though I only had time for a little talk before rushing off to see E.P. Clift. He is a small white-haired feeble man, who, after years of experience, should really have been able to manage me better than he did. It was perfectly obvious from the first that he had no desire to see me at all and wished to heaven that Roy Limbert had not sent me. He mumbled one or two feeble sentences, and then there were a lot of frightfully embarrassing pauses interspersed with even feebler phrases. Finally he stood

up. After about three minutes, and said something about 'when I did a show, I must let him know, and he would come to see me;. I then put him out of his misery by going.

I don't know whether I should have done anything; I can't think of anything I could have said or done, since I had been sent there, as I thought, for some specific purpose. I must say it does strike me as extraordinary that after all these years of unexpected discoveries and the money that is to be got out of them, a manager of his prominence should not even bother to imagine what someone like me has done or wants to do. I mean I do not regard myself as God's own girft to the English stage, but how does he know I'm not? What's more he can't see so many people as all that, because he's a manager not an agent. If I'm ever in any position of authority, I shall try to give everyone a fair hearing, for my own sake as much as theirs.

As far as my own pride goes of course, there is also the thought that he might think he has all the actors he wants and a lot over. All I can say is that...

PAGE MISSING

Monday November 12 1951

I am absolutely in a dream. Like being at home without any annoyances to disturb the day. The dream occasionally becomes a nightmare, as I am shot through with fear of not being called for an audition and fear of being called for one.

Mary Webb called up today, and announced herself as Mary Hobday.

Tuesday November 13 1951

Was most surprised this afternoon to be interrupted while writing a letter to Peter Firth, by Gerard Irvine. He was in his usual excitement, and wanted me to go downstairs when the refreshments were served at the end of the meeting of the Society of King Charles The Martyr. There was to be at the meeting an elderly pansy named Hedley Hope Nicolson, whose Bible is Debrett, and to whom any other firework than a Roman Candle would be anathema. He went away, having got my promise to attend, and in a moment was back to say that an even more exciting guest was present, none other than the celebrated architect, Sir Ninian Comper. I was soon made to feel what an ignoramus I was not to have heard of him, and properly chastened, followed Gerard downstairs.

In the lecture room were collected the usual intense High church spinsters and desiccated High Church litterateurs that meetings of this nature always call out. I first met the Nicholson queen, and was confronted with the usual stigmata of the well-preserved nancy, over-manicured nails, pearly pink poudre skin, getting dry round the neck, thick grey hair closely brushed, looking like a toupe but real, in fact, a quick nervous glance, and the unpleasantly high voice, marked with that unmistakable emphasis on t's d's which nothing

can conceal. More of him later. Then on to Sir Ninian, whose charming manners, button holing finger and white beard, all stopped me from seeing him as a real person at all. We talked for a long time, he in his quavering forgetful soft voice about his first love-affair, with Swinburne's sister, Isabel. She had told him that Watts-Dunton biography of Swinburne, for long accepted as gospel, was a tissue of lies. He never actually met Swinburne, nor though he was very intimate with his aunt, Lady Bright, did he ever meet Wilde, though he frequently seemed to have entered her house, which Wilde often visited, just as Wilde was leaving. He suddenly said, 'And then there was that tall thin chap - knew Wilde very well - great friend of mine, too, what was his name? Beardsley that's it, Aubrey Beardsley, did you ever know him?' I was not cruel enough to say that he died when my father was ten! He also said that he remembered going out to dinner on the night Rossetti died. (This had taken place about last Thursday from the way he talked about it.) Someone was telling the tale of Rossetti's deathbed, and at each revelation, no matter how trivial, there would be raised round the room, the exquisitely delicate Pre-Raphaelite exclamation 'How beautiful, how beau-ti-ful!! I much enjoyed my talk with him, a neat little man, with what used to be called 'a fine head'.

Later in the evening I went round to Gerard's where H-H. Nicolson had been having supper. The conversation which ensued was brilliant. H.H. is a walking Debrett and a professional snob. He imagines that Osbert Sitwell is offended because he, H.H., cut him in the street the other day. In fact Sir Osbert does not know him at all. He complains of having had his car stolen by a Princess during the occupation of France, and bewails the agony of coming back to England after Dunkirk with a lot of common soldiers. He is quite heavenly!

Thursday November 15 1951

Did not get back till 6.0 last night, after dinner and dance with the Fabers. Dinner usual dull affair, enlivened by Mrs. Faber's quite strikingly bad manners. About to couple for dinner, I was between Jessie and Mrs. so had little chance to talk to the rest. Adrian Whitelegg was there, and Jane Murray, a girl I remember meeting at the Mackworth Youngs - that time in Glos. Nice sensible girl in green, now working for the Embroiderers' Guild. Also a v. striking girl in black, called Fiona Ross, with lively almost naughty eyes, forever saying 'flirt with me'. Men all boring. Dance was at the Hyde Park, organised in aid of a charity supported by the school all the girls had gone to. Quite nice dance, though supper rather mouldy, made me feel sick. Did one splendid waltz and polka with Jessie F. Duchess of Gloucester came, (she's an old girl) and I see she still looks the same age. Quite incredible she never gets any older. She screamed in the ear of the oldest headmistress in the world for about half an hour, and then left without as far as I could see dancing at all.

Later we all came back to Jessie's for more dancing, but everyone was tired, and had to go to work in the morning, and everything folded up in the most awful way. Finally Jessie and Tessa and I were left and we played The Comedy of Errors' music mournfully, and then I walked home from Addison Rd. W.14 to here.

Friday November 16 1951

Completely forgot to mention that I went to dinner with Webbs last night. Very dull really, flat shining like and with new paint. Honeymoon snaps and wedding groups to the fore. Everything clean and fresh and new and dull.

Today nice because J.B. rang up. We went out for lunch and then on to Peter W. and John H. who are living in The Earl's Court Rd. in a nice roomy airy flat which will be cold when it gets cold. They are both well and happy, and though not <u>really</u> any more settled than I am, one at least earning, which is a great deal. Peter, who had an audition at Tennents' too, said the standard was terrible - worse than at the ADC. Which is encouraging in a way, but not very helpful. We had a very pleasant heartwarming talk and I shall go to see them again. I said everything I wanted to say to all of them, and J.B. was sweet and took me to Othello and gave me lunch and everything.

Peter gave me a great deal of theatrical gossip, among which a delicious snippet about Noel Coward. During the making of 'In Which We Serve', they had to use a great tank of water for the shipwreck scenes. As he was producer-director-composer-author-leading-man, C. always entered the water first. On the XX 8th day the water was stagnant and very unattractive. Coward dived in, came up for air, looked at his cast, and said, 'My dears, dysentery in every ripple'.

Saturday November 17 1951

Oh! <u>God</u> what a nightmare this is! I would give anything to have it brought to an end. I am so circumscribed I can hardly move without expenses which I can't meet. Oh dear oh dear. What I owe to Christopher cannot be told.

I found him stroking Kevin's cheek today. I <u>thought</u> he was like that, and he is. Stayed in bed most of the day, played Dover Patrol with C. I'm all in pieces.

Monday November 19 1951

My depression was deepened by Christopher mentioning the rent to me. Although he mentioned it to me because he said he was afraid it was mounting too high for me to pay, I know it was just ordinary dunning really. When I came in from my evening walk, I found a bill on the mantelpiece. Only £10, but still, I am intolerably depressed, because now my own weakness is to blame. I have been too scared or too proud to go and get any work. This is the result. But why should...

3 PAGES MISSING

Tuesday December 4 1951

Somehow, though I hesitate to say it, things are improving a little. Gerard has offered free lodging for a bit, and I have accepted the Limbert offer, if it still stands. I have got Patrick to write a letter to Kitty Black, the woman in charge of 'Tennents', and I shall go and see her as soon as possible. Tomorrow I must set about getting a shop-assistant's job pronto. Beastly but necessary. Susan's music appointment, I forgot, but it was all right after all, though hell while it lasted, specially as she is lending me some more money. Must also ring Lionel Gamlin, too.

Yesterday was the nadir of my hopes and spirits, and today had not I forced myself to do something, would not have been much better. Oh, I have been so slow and silly, but I can at least comfort myself that on the theatrical side I could do no more. The Limbert offer is accepted, and my luck being what it is, Tennents' will probably offer me a lead tomorrow. I haven't signed the contract yet!

Wednesday December 5 1951

Time seems to be going very slowly. Went around looking for a shop-assistant's job over Christmas. What a simple phrase 'went around' is, and what unpleasantness it cloaks. I walked from here to Selfridge's in Oxford St. and then on to Harrod's in Knightsbridge, then back to Austin Reeds' and found Savile Row for the first time. A very nice street, with neat well-kept houses, plastered with the arms of their royal customers. Time and time again I asked if they were taking on any people and they said 'No, full up'. I must have gone to about twenty shops, I should think, all 'full up'. I felt ashamed of wanting work at the end of it.

In the evening dinner with the Webbs, very pleasant and amusing. Colin B. also there, and the Mores came round afterwards; there was a great deal of amusing conversation, Julian being very attracted by the idea of D. being in toffee. Dishonest of me to make interesting capital out of anything of his, I suppose, but I am an old gossip! Julian also told me that the Watergate people want me to go along to the audition-reading at 11.0 tomorrow morning. What a quick decision to make! I understood from Julian that a part for me was almost definite if I wanted it. I think I shall take it after all. It will be money however little, and as far as I can see will not stop me doing anything else. Nobody will hear of my doing it, really, and the objection to the Watergate is much less than to the Irving.

Thursday December 6 1951

To the Watergate this morning to my first 'pro' reading. quite interesting and pleasanter than I expected. My part small, but one or two chances all the same, and songs all good. Cast is small, and hardly any of them were there. Names I cannot get hold of, as rather inaudible Christian-naming is all that counts. Pam Trevas (principal girl, tho' why when this is scarcely a conventional panto, being much more like a revue in panto...

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Saturday December 8 1951

Staying with Mary and Colin Webb, in their charming flat in Cornwall Gardens. It is really too delightful, very well-furnished, particularly for a newly-married couple. They are both dears, so long as one does not ask too much of them. That is not meant to be quite as serious as it sounds, or as smug. They are sweet, but somehow faintly sugary sometimes. I have had a soothing quiet homey evening, reading and talking and listening to the wireless. This afternoon I moved all my things over to the vicarage, and found the room on the whole slightly less dreary than the one at St. Anne's except for the naked light. Still a free room one can't expect very much from. Nigel sent a p.c. this morning, saying meet on Monday not Sunday - much more convenient because of this weekend. How funny to have come away for the weekend to Kensington!

This morning was at a rehearsal till 1.30 in a mews flat belonging to one of the cast in Wilton Row, which you get to by going through Old Barrack Yard, a very pretty little street of small Georgian cottages. The rehearsal was long and very dull for me, and very misery-making really. It's the same business of learning to be a nobody again that is so beastly, and theatre people, although really unusually kind, are careful to keep everyone in their place, because they're none too sure of their own.

Gerard Irvine told me the most heavenly thing that old Mrs. Phillips had said to him the other day. 'My father was so unworldly that if it hadn't been for us girls, he would have taken a house in Earl's Court'. Truly witty!

Writing on my knee v. difficult...

PAGES MISSING

... should be gone in a moment.

The rehearsal this afternoon was fun. Gabrielle Brune came along, and acted the Principal Boy in various ways all over the stage. She is doing the part with a different make up for each entrance, with a huge picture-hat for Dorothy Ward, an eyebrow in her hair for Evelyn Laye, and so on. Her burlesque is acute, very funny. John. W. rang up and we spent the evening together. So nice, but awful to feel I'm in a fast train, and talking to him on the platform.

Tuesday December 11 1951

Rehearsing all day, with lunch with John W. and Peter Wood in the middle of it. I though Peter W. subdued, and not very welcoming, but nice to me on the whole. Tried many times to ring Nigel up but Timmy must have forgotten to pay the bill or something, because from all three phones I tried, I could only get the 'unobtainable' scream. Ring tomorrow, I suppose.

Had another little natter with Freddy Nicolle and thought we might...

PAGES MISSING

Saturday December 15 1951

What a different trouble to record! Told off in a great shout by Eric Berry at rehearsal this morning for not minding my own business. As it happened what I actually did was simply to repeat something to Pam Trevers, the principal girl, that the producer had just said. But I admit I might have said it myself anyway. I was shattered. I don't think I've been so embarrassed since I first went to up to Cambridge, and jolly good too. Julian M. took me on one side, and gave me a 'little talk'. (Oh how I hate the awful hot feeling knowing that you have dropped a brick produces.) I believe though about this I am not quite clear, he had been asked to speak to me about it. I am very glad he did, because as usual I was doing my too-intimate (well, not exactly that, cannot describe it property, usual sort of thing when you come from reigning in hell to serve in heaven) thing, and although I can stop it now, as I almost did at Cambridge, I drifted into the panto without preparing myself at all. I think now I had better keep my mouth shut all the time and behave to everyone as if they were Edith Evans. Never speak till I'm spoken to, all that sort of thing. I really don't mean to throw my weight about, truly. But that's what it comes out like.

Apologised to Eric Berry after lunch, and all was fairly well. He told me to keep a zip-fastener on my mouth, so now I know where I am. If I keep quiet, nobody will really notice me. Geoffrey, or indeed any of the pianists, did not turn up, and Julian M. was blamed for it, so that altogether Cambridge was in bad odour. It is perfectly true that there is a tremendous gulf between the amateur and 'pro', I do see that. Still I must just do my best, not mind and be glad it happened at the Watergate and not at Tennent's or somewhere.

Tonight John B. called for me at the theatre, and we went off to tea with the Mores, and afterwards he took me to two plays - 'The Moment of Truth' and 'Rainbow Square'. I cannot get over such kindness.

Sunday December 16 1951

Rehearsal this afternoon long and yet not exhausting. The thing is taking shape, and really there is quite a bit of spirit about it. A woman called Estelle Brodie, an old silent star, small, thin, and with a curiously pathetic air of ingénue who wonders why there are bags under her eyes, is playing the Fairy Godmother. Until today she has had a terrible air of apology, a beseeching 'please excuse me singing' feeling about her which couldn't be more wrong. She got rid of a great deal of it, and because she is a sort of compere to the show, the running was much improved. My part is too feeble, and a few years ago would have intensely embarrassed me. Still it's money.

I had a card from E.P. Clift yesterday asking me to go along to his office tomorrow to see about 'Treasure on Pelican', the Priestley thing. The horror is that now I probably can't be in it, because the panto will run too long. And yet I cannot get worried. I wonder if fate means me not to get in it. I must write to Ju. I am terribly behind.

Tonight I went off to the Granville, Walham Green, to hear (and see) a number of 'Variety Bandbox', the Sunday night BBC show. Utter hell. John Holmstrom was announcing it and signed it off the air. The programme was terrible - a great number of English comedians in American clothes and accents, and singers who sang to their microphones so that not a word was heard. Back in the flat Peter W. came back, having wept through 'The Red Badge of Courage', a new film about the American Civil War. He was talking all about his play, and how he is being paid his salary by Tennents all through this holiday fortnight his play is having, and how Ronald Shiner gave him 200 cigs for a Christmas present (only him getting the salary and the Christmas present) and how he knows Binkie Beaumont very well, etc. etc. etc. I wonder how much it all means. His way? My way? Which was more a success at Cambridge? Though of course C. means nothing nothing nothing in the outer world.

Oh dear, I hope it's not going to be a case of 'I shall never be so successful again'.

Monday December 17 1951

I went to see that nasty smug man, E.P. Clift today about 'Treasure on Pelican'. It opens apparently on January 28th - a fine thing. I shall now have ghastly negotiations with John and Mary. I think I have probably got the part, and if so, it means I shall have to come out of the pantomime a week early, if it runs its maximum time. They will be beastly I should think, because after all they did me a special favour to give me the part. What hell the theatre is, is it not?

Rehearsals today were slightly easier. Things are going smoothly enough now. Our little number has been 'set', and quite amusing it is, too. The running order is still very shaky, and I think that the Principal Girl and the Fairy Godmother are worse than their average pantomime counterparts. There is no hint of burlesque in either of them. Eric Berry as the Dame is funny enough, but not the sort of performance I really like - too heavy and again funny rather as an ordinary pantomime dame is funny, instead of burlesquing them. I am not yet very sickened by the thought of being in this absurd thing, though I will be. If it doesn't pay quite well to make up for it, I shall be so cross.

The dressing-rooms are such agony. Pray heaven that I don't have to do anything very elaborate to my face.

Met Dennis Milmore on my way home tonight. Looking as revolting as ever. Have just remembered that I have never described nor even mentioned the place where I am living now...

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...difficulty is I'm not a genius. My ambition is low to be supreme in high comedy. Really how can one be ambitious for such a low thing. I cannot even write well about it in this pathetic apology for a diary. Perhaps fifty or a hundred years from now people will find this diary (I suppose it is unlikely to be destroyed except my some accident) and publish an excerpt or two in some anthology of letters and diaries, excepts from days when I was bright and cheerful and silly and nobody will ever know the long dreary hours when I was alone, alone, alone, with nobody near me. Is everybody alone so much, so envious of other people with so many friends? Or is all this self-pity? I enjoy myself so much with people I like and who like me, that it seems a waste to be with anyone else. The cast of this panto don't like me though don't want to get to know anyone any better. Is it because I behaved badly at the beginning, because I'm an amateur, or just because I'm not very likeable?

Christmas Day

11.0 p.m.

The day has finished up a little better than it began. At 6/0, Gerard took me to the Bag O'Nails, a second-hand night-club next door, where a social for the Westminster Darby and Joan Club was about to be broadcast. I had a great time handing round jelly, and talking to all the old people, and finding myself so much luckier than they were who have no homes to go to even if they would. It made me feel very small, though really the world is so topsy-turvy nowadays that one suspects oneself the moment one writes down a feeling like that. I was happy to be helping them, and happier to find that they liked me for doing it. I also met Gilbert Harding, whom I made cry so copiously last summer, and he promised to get me some work at the BBC. Bliss again! Then we came back to the flat with the Nortons and various of their relations and dogs and things, and had a glass of sherry together. The Nortons organised it. She is a typical organising woman, wearing inevitably the common sense neat clean cut brown expensive clothes and tight grey hair that every sensible organising woman has and always will wear. Rather thick ankles. Mr. N. dull, stiff solicitor. Fragile old mother and kind step-sister. Never got their names, tho' I think Mrs. Murray.

Then I rang up home and that being done (the stupids had not sent my presents because they didn't know where I'd be) Gerard took me out to dinner, which we ate underground with London riff-raff.

Wednesday December 26. 1951

5.45 p.m.

Arrived at the theatre early and had a very merry time with Geoffrey, Bruce, and Bit Thorndike, until the rehearsal began. There was a good deal of backbiting and quarrelling and another row between Chris and John Jones, stopped by Eric Berry (who can, I am glad to say shout just as rudely at them as at me) and Gabby Brune, who announced that she was beginning to be upset by these tiffs. I was late again in the final chorus of the first half, though genuine mistake, not through carelessness, and later on, in the second half, I came on

without my hat, where Tony K. and I had arranged to come on without our hats, - and Tony was wearing his. Afterwards Freddie took me on one side, and said that he had been sitting next to Chris, and Chris didn't think much of my discipline apparently. How annoying when I happened to be trying particularly hard, and also for Freddie to tell me. Of course he did it in the nicest possible way and for the kindest reasons, but still it is mortifying just to think that he and Julian M. can sit back and talk to the producer and the managers as equals, when I, who did twenty times as much as Freddy, and twice as much as Julian at Cambridge, have to stand on the stage and never speak to anyone as an equal. Of course I can never speak about it to anyone except Ju, but I feel it as most deeply galling. And on the first night, too.

Thursday December 27 1951

Last night a success, I think. I must get out my habit of expecting ringing cheers and awestruck notices of every play I am ever in. The only vital thing wrong with the show is that you are required to take seriously in the last act what you have been invited to laugh at in the first. Then Pam Trevers is definitely rather bad, Estelle Brody is weak, and neither Eric Berry nor Dennis Wood can really expect very appreciative reviews of such crude work. However after the show was quite gay, with a long party in the bar, at which I saw lots and lots of people, among them Mark Boxer, Mark Matney and Bidi, together again with Mark still drunk, and really what more could I say about either of them nice as they are. The Brumners, whom I met on the first night of 'Lady May', and Toby R. He seemed very fit and happy, which I was glad to see, because I was really expecting him to be an absolute wreck, after the ghastly glimpse of him I had that Sunday in C. With all of them I had a long talk, and then suddenly the party broke up, and off we all went to carry on the party elsewhere. There was a large collection of people from the pub where Geoffrey plays 'The White Swan'. They wanted us to go there, but someone suggested St. Anne's and that's where we found ourselves. The Brumners and I had taken the landlord of the W.S. off to New Row to pick up some gin and whisky. We crawled up the narrow alley in the car, and as we got out of the car, a window was pushed up on the other side of the road, and a voice asked 'for Fred to bring up a small brown when you come.' At St. Anne's everything was very flat for a bit. Then Christopher brought in a huge trayful of coffee and cups, put it on a big table, and started to pour it out. He turned away for a moment, Freddie squatted on the table, and broke it, falling to the floor in the most colossal clatter and crackings, spattering himself with coffee, sending streams of milk and bits of broken china all over the room. It was too much. The whole room dissolved into a morass of giggles, and the party was made. We went on until about 4.0. I sang for what seemed like hours to Fred and a member of the Household Cavalry whom Christopher was pawing in a corner. I wish I didn't sing so much!

Today very pleasant. Had luncheon with Freddie, who turns out to be even nicer the more I know of him. We had a long quite intimate making talk, walked down Bond Street to Bendiks where he gave one of the assistants back her sweet coupons, and wandered into the R.S. Watercolours Galleries. Really quite interesting considering some of the muck they have in there. We went on wandering and talking until about 3.30, when he skimmed off to South Ken (the tarty end), and I came back to tea with Gerard. Show tonight as boring for me.

Friday December 28 1951

Lunched with Robin Tuck at Lincoln St.; their house, no. 14, is, I see, exactly opposite Hedley Hope-Nicholson at no. 4. On our way to a cinema, we met Hedley himself, returning from an expedition to the post office to buy 'Country Life', his bowler-hat at an improbably youthful angle above his powdery face, and a scarf flung roguishly round his scrawny neck. He was peevish about the caption under the photograph of a bedroom at Yarnton Manor, which he insisted should be described as his bedroom. Yarnton belongs to Gerard's friend, someone named Kolkhoist, whom he has nicknamed 'The Colonel'.

Performance tonight ragged, and audiences uninteresting. Geoffrey told me that someone (unidentified) had said I never did anything the same twice, and away I went feeling all insecure again. Lionel Gamlin and that Machell man were there, and were in the bar afterwards. I wrote to L.G. a fortnight ago about the work he offered me, and have had no reply. He sent Geoffrey to the dressing-room with a message to Eric Berry that he wanted to see him madly, never a word to me. I felt I could hardly go without shaking hands with him - only common politeness. I did so, exchanged a word, did not stop to allow awkward silences of unwantedness to fall, went away to get my coat, came back, waved goodbye from the door, he said 'See you again'. That was that. So much for his promises. I always suspected him to be like that, now I know. I hate the theatre - I think.

Saturday December 29 1951

Wrote a few of the many letters I must write in the morning, and phoned up a few people to arrange next week nicely. Decided to ring Colin up to see if he could go to the last matinee of Peter Watling's new play 'Indian Summer', which has lasted about a fortnight - poor dears. C. couldn't come, so Gerard came instead. Must remember to ring John H. to see if he can come and see 'Third Person' next Saturday. Very much enjoyed J.S. really. One of the ushers was sitting right in the middle of the stalls, and kept on yawning and stretching very audibly. There was a general hangdog air about the theatre, because of the failure, I suppose. Gerard met a friend of his, a Canon Hood, a round smiling person, whom I felt sure I had met before. But then the world is full of people with such unoriginal faces that one spends half one's life disentangling resemblances.

Eight performances of this panto past, and it seems like eighty.

Sunday December 30 1951

Nothing done about my bank business after all these months - now what am I going to do? I hardly seem to care. I have wondered really what is happening to me. Why am I such a success socially everywhere (what an awful thing to say, but on the whole I do get along with people well at parties and dinner parties and so on and so on, and am yet an absolute flop with the cast. It's weeks since I could have behaved badly, and even then I can only have behaved ordinarily as I would to anyone. Tonight for example the Ugly Sisters asked the

little pianist, Julian Dale, and one or two others, back to coffee, but not me. I must admit that Julian D, whom I found out was surprisingly enough at Oxford, hated his time there, so how could they like him and me. I wonder what it is about me that makes some people hate me so? I expect it's the air of self-confidence produced by my insecurity. My goodness if this journal gets any more self-centred, it'll die of inbreeding.

Gerard had a delightful girl to tea today called Pamela Fildes, who is a cousin of Audrey F. the actress. Very amusing and very gay and charming. One of John Betjemann's assistants on Time and Tide. Plump, with reddy-gold hair and a very satisfactory laugh. We had a very funny conversation, particularly when Gerard was out of the room. She caught me enjoying a very contrived and self-conscious metaphor.

Tuesday January 1 1952

Saw the old year out in the most boring way in Piccadilly Circus, though less boring because with Gerard.

Suddenly feel am too tired to write another syllable.

December January 2 1952

Must begin again, or never will begin again. Yesterday John and I went to the pantomime 'Aladdin' at the Casino. In front of us was sitting, I think, the younger Sergeant from Kingswood. Did not speak of course, but heard them whispering my name. Always remember him as a nice boy.

Today has been very full. This morning I wandered round doing some shopping before going off to have luncheon with Biddy, and when I dropped in on St. Anne's House, there was a card from Rea and Co. saying I must be at Lime Grove at 11.0. It was then 12.10, so I rushed to a telephone, and got an appointment for 2.45, and began to quake. Rushed off again to Bruton Lane to the Two Chairmen, and saw Biddy skimming out of her office from my taxi. Called her, and we went to the 'Coach and Horses' instead, where we had a plain but nourishing lunch and a jolly good gossip. She had just had <u>another</u> quarrel with her father and mother and was on the point of walking out of the door when they decided to make it up and indeed made it up so well that they opened a bottle of champagne to celebrate the reconciliation. Mark W's mother is apparently worse than I thought. Once when Mark was only 20, he took her out to dinner, gave her some money, she went to the Ladies before dinner, climbed out of the window, went and bought four bottles of gin and drank them. Too Hogarth. Going to Bid's for a party a week on Mon.

Gerard had a party tonight, most exciting, attended by Rose Macaulay, 'Rachel Dent' whose real name I've forgotten, Jocelyn Hillgarth, and his very good value American pickup, Mrs. Rice-Marks. Rose Macaulay is medium height, very thin, very fine-boned, tremendously elegant, though nothing to do with clothes, exquisitely well-bred, and with a delightful

halting lisping XX voice. Her attention to general conversation seems to be failing a little, though privately person to person, she could not be more attentive. I expect she found us young and boring.

'Rachel Dent' writes extremely sloppy women's magazines stories, and unlike the general run of their authors from all I've heard, is commonplace and wordy in person. Mrs. Rice-Marks is energetic, personable, and a truly pre-Hollywood American. About half-an-hour after the party had begun, the door opened, and Gerard ushered in a tall pale young man, with an energetic handshake, and eyes surrounded with tired wrinkles. After a bit I was pulled away...

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...letters, and went off to the theatre as usual. I find I am not so bored as I have been, as it is all becoming quite mechanical, which is something. The first house was terribly dull, and the second almost as terribly good. It was full of most exciting people, like Frith Banbury, Andrew Crawford, Hugh Caldwell (a big TV man who came round afterwards and said it must be televised) J.B. Priestley (hope he didn't notice me) and Vernon Sylvaine (not very exciting people really when I come to think of it). I still feel horrid about being so unimportant, and having to turn away from every animated group. On the other hand walking home with Bit tonight, which I seem to have done quite a lot lately, I was surprised to find that when I mentioned the Ugly Sisters and so on, she said 'Oh, they're so vulgar' which was just what I've been feeling all the time, but had attributed as usual to their not liking me. I quite see that I am right to dislike them and shouldn't want them to like me. Bit, I think, does like me, and I like her and Bruce very much, the only two I do really like down there.

Gerard told me lovely remark of General Chetwode's the other day. 'You young fellows don't know what buildin' is these days. Went round a house with me wife in St. John's Wood. You could see it hadn't been build by gentry - no brushin'-room'!

God only knows what the post will bring tomorrow morning.

Saturday January 5 1952

The post has brought only an extremely affable letter from the Bank. They have every reason to be affable, of course. It is D. who will be rude. If only he does not come up here, I shan't mind. I really cannot face losing my temper with him again which I always do when I meet him face to face. I cannot stand his attitude to money. If he can afford something, or not afford it, why can't he say so and not shill-shally? When he...

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...bare three months here. I am beginning to wish that I didn't use this diary as a sensual or nostalgic indulgence. My <u>goodness</u> it's going to be boring.

I am becoming bored and browned-off with the dressing-room talk - so second-rate on the whole. Eric Berry is a very heavy ponderous person, and awkward and bumptious though I may be, I wish he could forgo a little of the head of the house attitude. I must say in all conscience that I felt exactly the same about Melody thing whatever her name is, but surely I am a little more appealing than she is. Perhaps am not, what a thought. Antony Kearey is too much of a yes-man, and simply won't commit himself about anything let alone acting. I am trying as hard as I can, not to let this show have any effect on me at all, but to teach me to keep quiet and listen and learn before speaking, something I find very hard. These people are merciless is you do speak before you have learnt.

Tonight I simply scrounged my dinner. Father Casey, the big square American clergyman whom I met so often in Geoffrey's room who lectures at Cambridge (a fellow of Sidney S.) and who is rich enough, though a clergyman! to stay at the Dorchester, asked me over to his hotel, St. Erwin's in Caxton St. for a drink. St. Erwin's is not his style at all, being family and chintzy, but after quite a good martini, we moved on at my suggestion, to the Ivy. Oh, the thrill, but oh the dullness. Nearly empty, and very boring looking the people who were there. I suppose all the thrillies go to the Caprice now. However decor all pink and dark oak, charming, and he pronounced the food excellent. Complimented me on my taste in restaurants. What would he have said if he'd knew that I had never been there before! He paid a bill of about 4 guineas at the end. We had oysters, my first! At the first one of which I was nearly sick, but afterwards found the extraordinarily strong taste of sea fascinating. Duckling done with oranges, peas, and roast potatoes, and fruit salad. Oh the joy of it all, added to by the fact that I had enough in my pocket at the time for a glass of milk and a ham sandwich at a milk bar!!

Must write and thank him. Did not scrounge really. He did ask me when he needn't have done, and he must find that Scots boy so dull.

Saturday January 6 1952

Stayed in bed all day until 4.30, to avoid eating because I hadn't any money. By the time I'd finished washing and shaving and bathing it was almost time to go to the theatre. I had just enough for a glass of milk and a sandwich at the milk bar near the theatre. When I came out of the theatre I went round to St. Anne's House on the cadge, and got four pieces of bread and butter, some bits of pork...

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... Hedley Hope-Nicholson
4 Lincoln St.

Over the windows, ornaments, photographs, paintings, china, everywhere, every chair piled high with papers, all the table lamps heavily shaded, so that he can float about in a thick rosy gloom the male (?) equivalent of rose-shaded candles. The book-shelves are full of back

copies of Burke, Debrett, Almanach de Gotha, hundreds of editions of Eikon Basilike on which he is an expert, and odd copies of The Royalist and hundreds upon hundreds of books on Spain particularly about bull-fighting, even more particularly about matadors. He talked for ages all about a battle of letters he had with Trevor Roper in The Times Lit. Supp. over a review of a book by someone about the authorising of E.B. Really, who cares?

During the first house I felt rather sick, but felt better after a sandwich and a glass of beer. During the second suddenly noticed, I think, Bernard Stevens and his wife B.S. being the composer chappy I met at Bournemouth in '46.

Wednesday January 9 1952

Felt better today, and went out shopping in the morning. Tried to get more notebooks like this, and could not anywhere. Isn't that odd? In London, too. Had a letter from the Bank saying D. had guaranteed the o/d which is bliss and just what I wanted because it gives me a chance to pay it back myself. Then he won't be able to do such misery-making things about what I gave up for you. Cannot hope that I will not receive a huge moral lecture by mouth or letter.

A card from Nigel saying wire me where to lunch tomorrow, and I couldn't because I was ill all the afternoon after eating unwisely at luncheon after my long fast. I shall never forget Woburn, Bedford or Gordon Squares again. I walked round them for two hours in a biting East wind trying not to be sick and got a cold in my eye. It's dripping teas all over the place.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 17

Being the thirteenth volume.

From January 14 1952
To April 3 1952

Monday January 14 1952

I could not find a notebook like this anywhere, until today when I found one - only one - in a shop in Baker St. I must go on trying in every stationers I see so that I shan't be left high and silent without one again.

Little happened curiously enough in the five days or so since I wrote last. I had tea with Bit on Sunday and think she has taken to me, which is nice. I shall invite her out to lunch sometime this week. Peter Lewis turned up on Friday and we spent most of Saturday together seeing a good prosaic very well-acted film called 'The African Queen', but today has been a most full and interesting one. Last night was diversified by the presence of Prince and Princess George of Denmark, who I suppose are HRH's only I can't remember, the Princess' sister who is a niece of the Queen, and Sir Malcolm Sargent. The Prince, a slightly vacuous tall fair man very much resembling the portrait of George III in the National Portrait Gallery, and Sir Malcolm, who is very brown, gay in a rather irritating way and a colossal social climber, laughed immoderately and as it seemed to me, with very little discrimination. However I suppose they lent prestige, which means money. The Prince said he would bring his children, which shows how little he appreciated what is anyway in my opinion, a pretty weak do. However, this is not today. Today I had lunch with John Barton, with his lady mother there, and what a nagger - what a nag! She is exactly like a fairly well-bred stud mare who has long ago made it clear she's not going to have any of that nonsense with stallions thank you. There is a wonderful air of cleanliness, neatness, well-orderedness. She is as sterilised as a scalpel, and about as useful. I find her fascinating, very masterful very well-run, quite pleasant as my mother, but impossible as John's. I could make quite respectable compromises with her and keep myself intact (sounds very Brighton weekend) John can only quarrel unless he surrenders his whole personality. Just shows how even a personality like his can be subdued by duty. We stayed talking, then went off slowly to the West End where he had to see his osteopath and I had to do some little bits of shopping. I rushed into Gerard's room at about 6.0 , to find two people in there, a man and a woman. The woman was tall, stupid-looking, with very little chin, big sleepy eyes, a good complexion and a bad figure. She was introduced to me as Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, and I can well believe it. She looks so stupid she must be very well-bred. The man was small, meek, surprised-looking in a faint way, with a turned-up snout of a nose, like Olly Goldsmith, going bald, and revealing very small green teeth at the bottom of very large red gums when he smiled. He was apparently the great John Betjeman. I suppose one day the smart and the famous will stop disappointing me with their looks. But really! We only had a word or two, during which Gerard introduced me as Chapel, which is apparently a great thing to be in Gerard's eyes, and in J.B's.

I rushed off to Kensington again to have a drink with Biddy, and found Julian, Sheila, and Mark W. there. Quite delightful little drinky, then on to the Players' where we saw the panto. I do not think I have ever been quite so enchanted by anything. Such perfect taste, such exquisite consistency, such triumphant finish. Oh dear how even more awful than I ever feel appears ours by comparison.

Tuesday January 15th 1952

Wrote letters all day, and got through a little of the pile. The unpleasant thing is that the duty letters crowd out the pleasure letters which are an even deeper duty. The principle that the better you know someone the ruder you can be to them, dominates one with letter-writing completely.

To tea with Gerard, and found that John Betjeman's secretary, Jill Menzies, was coming to tea. She arrived, turned out to be large, square, red in the face, with prominent hair-slides and a would-be straight-forward manner that made Michael Davy, who came in a little later, say she needed spanking. She was certainly very irritating, but I expect it was shyness. She suddenly looked at me for instance, and said 'You are pretending to be very brittle and sophisticated'. Too stupid. Pointless if true, and unkind if untrue. Either way in the worst of taste. Michael Davy seems nicer than ever. It was his 28th birthday, and as he said he doesn't look a day over 25. He is very white, too white, with many wrinkles round the eyes, not all of them from laughing. He is untidy and needs a wife I should think. Pamela F. I found more fascinating than ever. Her sense of humour is the same as mine, and her laugh comes pouring down in a way I could listen to all day. Her hair is exactly like an Edwardian deb. and her ankles are bad which is so Edwardian because the dresses hid it.

Taking Bit out to luncheon tomorrow.

Wednesday January 16th 1952

I bought a bowler today, and what a piece of good luck it brought me. I bought it at Lock's in St. James's St. that charming shop which revives me after all those chromium-plated horrors. The man there was most kind and well-mannered, paying great attention to the curl of the brim and having it re-ironed twice. I walked out in it to St. Anne's House, and the first thing I did was to pick up a telegram asking me to come to the Duke of York's theatre tomorrow morning at eleven for a rehearsal of I suppose, the Priestley play. Does that mean that I am in? I hope it does, though I am sure I shall have trouble with old man Clift over money. I shall ask for £15, and get goodness knows what. It will all be horribly embarrassing and dull, I prophesy now, and I shall put my foot in it a good many times. Oh dear!

Took Bit out to lunch and a film. Left me quite broke, silly old me. Now how am I going to eat for the rest of the week, I wonder. Still I enjoyed it very much, which is what counts, and so I think, did she. She is a curious little thing, attractive in a very odd way. Far better

advisor than Tony on stage matters. Do you think perhaps I ought to be a member of Equity? Anyway I'm going to wear my bowler to the audition.

Thursday January 17 1952

To the first rehearsal this morning of 'Treasure on Pelican', which I suppose I am cast for, though nobody has said so yet. The telegram said the Duke of York's at 1.0, so along I trotted, and wandered round the side of the theatre to the stage-door where a very rude grumpy stage-door keeper said there wasn't no rehearsal, or he'd have head of it, and I was to try the Duchess. So along the Strand I rushed, and panted to the stage-door of this little theatre where Emlyn Williams is playing. I had just got inside the door, when a nondescript man in a dark overcoat with dyed hair and a peppering of buckshot in his cheek, came up past me to the telephone, had a long conversation with Mary Leigh about an ASM and understudy, turned round, announced that he was Mr. Darrell and what was my address now. He went on to say that I wouldn't be wanted to rehearse this morning, but I'd better come down and see Mr. Clayton. We clumped down a lot of stone stairs and through some wooden doors marked 'stage' onto the small stage, where the curtain was down, and a rehearsal of the first Act in progress. I looked round at the other members of the cast and saw to my surprise that the woman playing the blonde bitch was Anne Crawford, the film star. Basil Sydney was there, Julien Mitchell, Eileen Beldon, someone who I think is Heather Thatcher, and two or three others whose faces I cannot put a name to. The rehearsal seemed tedious in the extreme, partly I think because half of them had acted the play before, and half had not. Having now read the play, I can very well understand the tedium. It is very very boring, in the most dead and alive sort of way, with all the characters doing everything a little bit out of character just to show that they are alive. Darrell or whatever his name was, gave me the touring dates, starting from Feb 4 Cardiff, Southsea, Hammersmith, Golders Green, Streatham, Brighton, Bristol, Bradford, Sheffield, Bournemouth. Not so bad as they might be, particularly with four altogether so near London. Oh what a difficulty the digs will be!

Friday January 18th 1952

To rehearsals of 'T on P' morning and afternoon. At the end of the morning, J.B.P. who had been sitting listening in a broad Yorkshire way to the progress being made, and making homespun suggestions from time to time, was introduced to me, heard me read a line or two, asked me about Cambridge, said 'So you want to go on the stage' and gave me the part. I went along to Mr Clift the old nasty who actually had Rea in the office with him, and had my first business talk with him, after which we agreed on £12 per week; I am quite proud that he suggested £10, then £12 on tour and 10 in the West End, but I got £12 all through. So that's that.

The cast are beginning to sort themselves out a bit. Anne Crawford is fattish now, rather lazy, vulgar and not I think very nice. Basil Sydney is nice but lazy too, and bored. Julien Mitchell is as much like a tired business man as a good actor can be. Ruth Lodge, not Heather Thatcher, is fascinating, very like Gloria Swanson, even to the dark glasses, though I

know no more about her yet. John Hayter, one of the people I'm understudying, is young, straightforward, (I think) fresh and quite enthusiastic. I think though that he, along with the whole cast, are going to be extremely irritating because they will never do anything but play cards and talk shop. I wonder if I shall be as vulgar as all the actors I've met so far, in a year or two.

Monday January 21 1952

The whole of today except this evening spent in watching very boring rehearsals. A play of this kind full of active dramatic tension, depends largely on the dramatist and actors combining their skill to keep one ignorant of the events until they occur. Once they are revealed, in however unrehearsed a state the play is, the interest is gone. I am not in the least bored in fact, because I am watching real, even quite famous actors, working up their parts with more or less skill. I am fascinated to find that they do it more like me than I could have imagined, much more by hit and miss, but feeling their way, by trying out variants by giving way to what feels best, which generally means easiest, than by working on their parts rationally. Anne Crawford is very pretty, but lazy and shipshod and ordinary. Basil Sydney is lazy but superb.

The stage manager, a woman called Milly something turns out to be a great friend of Dorothy Ward, and was telling us a most striking story about her and her husband, Shaun Glenville. Apparently his favourite brother died on the opening night of their panto at Nottingham, and D. Ward kept it to herself until the first night was over, and told him the next morning, though the strain on her must have been terrific.

To Teddy Fraser's this evening for dinner, and very quiet and pleasant, too. She is much changed for the better, and we had a good old natter. I talked much too much about myself as usual. Have been thinking about Julian D. How funny it all was! Please let me do something nice for him!

Tuesday January 22 1952

Very late, and I must be so busy tomorrow. Rehearsals still dull, because nobody is really working on their part, and forgetting badly. I had an interesting gossip with Eileen Beldon and some of the others. She remembers Ellen Terry coming to their house, with frightful make-up on and looking too raddled for anything but even she remembers her as having the most lovely voice. P.C, from Dadie today saying he had dropped a word to Binkie's secretary. V. good, I suppose, oh God....

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... back!

Tonight Ruth Lodge came in to the show. Bother! Still she and Eric were quite nice to me afterwards. Perhaps I'm all right after all. Oh dear, oh dear. Cardiff a week tomorrow. My God!

Sunday January 27 1952

So the panto has come and gone. As I was packing everything away at the end of the show, I felt for a moment quite sad. Silly of me really, because I have rarely enjoyed a play less. I did not say goodbye to anyone, because I shall be in for my money on Tuesday, but I was glad to see that Bruce and Bit were careful to find out whether they would see me again. The dreadful squalor of the dressing-rooms and the uncongenial people are behind me. At least in an ordinary theatre one can keep a little away from them. It is pleasant to look forward to a rather more restful week, but I am scared of the tour ahead.

Must do something about Tennent's and the touring digs. I wonder why no letter from Ju. Is he all right? Must be, or Michael W. would have written. Nothing from Nigel either. I <u>am</u> deserted. Ha! Oh stop drivelling on!

Monday January 28 1952

Felt quite limp today with relief at the end of the panto. Day full of rehearsals as usual and very dull, too. J.B. Priestley back again. He is a short square man, with a sloping forehead, receding hair , and small eyes like a badger. He is genial and bluff, two <u>very</u> disagreeable words, and yet, though the initial impression he makes on me is not attractive, I have not seen enough of him to be able to say what he's really like. The conventional unconventiality of his plays and characters, though, is quite enough to set me against him. So little seems to happen at these rehearsals, and there is so little honesty and plain speaking that it is a wonder that rehearsals go forward even in time, let alone in quality. Harold Clayton becomes more and more irritating, a silly little man. Of course he never speaks to me. I am just sitting watching. Nothing for me in the play at all, of course. Very un-me.

To dinner tonight with Hedley Hope-Nicholson. I find him much nicer and much less tiresome than Gerard and James had prepared me for, or indeed than they are themselves. We had a long talk about them, during which he told me two or three appalling pieces of tactlessness which they had been guilty of, either singly or together. He left me alone in his dining-room cum study, while he prepared the dinner, as it was his maid's night out. What a full room it is! The many heavily shaded lamps give a misty golden dust to the hundreds of vases, boxes, books, papers, pictures and books everywhere. It is like a room in a Dutch interior, unexpectedly rich and mysterious and <u>safe</u>, as if nothing could touch it. Unlike its owner, who looks as if he need only be separated from his dressing-table for a day to fall to pieces at once. Dinner was delicious, hot soup, tender chicken, crisp mince-pies, moderate port. Afterwards we went up to the drawing room and I spent an unexpectedly genuinely delightful hour or two turning over a portfolio of Bakst drawings and gossiping about the sexual vagaries of the Royal family. Home in the still icy cold, although warmer weather is

forecast, thank goodness. The fountains and their statues in Trafalgar Square were icy green when I passed them on my way to rehearsal at the Duke of York's this morning.

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Wednesday January 30 1952

Rehearsals all day today again, in the icy Whitehall Theatre. Hideous jazzy decorations, all time-worn and beastly. The wretched management who own the place must have made so much money out of 'Worm's Eye View' and this thing 'Reluctant Heroes' which has followed it, that they will be too mean to decorate the theatre they will be able to occupy for years.

Went to Gerard's room when I came in at six, and found him with James very soigné in his city clothes, that charming Michael Davie, and an unidentified small dark uninteresting-looking stranger whose name I didn't catch. He looked a little like a pale Red Indian and had a slight colonial accent. Gerard revealed to me afterwards that the name I had failed to catch was Christopher Isherwood. Oh dear! I cannot forgive him for running away from England to America on the out-break of war.

Michael Davie seemed nicer than ever, and I asked him to have lunch with me in February. Oh! how many people will I see than! I shall forget half of them, I am sure, and offend the other half for life. I went off by myself to see 'Summer and Smoke' at the Duchess, where I went for my first rehearsal. How odd to see a play like that on the stage where I'd rehearsed myself. How different it is seeing a play as a 'pro' and not as an amateur. It does change things completely. I wonder why other people seem to have so much more time to think deeply than I do. I suppose I must be content to be shallow.

Thursday January 31 1952

Still am not fixed up at Cardiff. What a bore! Must wire all round again tomorrow. I have had a very pleasant day. Rehearsing more fun because we were out of that wretched Whitehall, which made me think of a hideous rep.

Went to Win's tonight, and had a lovely time. I like them, they like me, and I enjoy myself. Oh they are sweet to me. Lent me £5 can that be the reason I like them?

Friday February 1 1952

Fixed up at Cardiff. Late again tonight. Oh dear! Am too tired to write really. The heaviness of my eyelids.

Saturday February 2 1952

Broke again. Isn't it extraordinary? I suppose I don't spend on essentials at the right moment. I bought a sponge for £1 yesterday. Couldn't resist it. Spent the morning rehearsing, and the evening with Gerard, seeing Gerard seeing 'Blood and Sand' and visiting The Fitzroy and The 'Black Horse'. Dull day, really.
Sunday February 3 1952

In Cardiff. I hardly know how or what to write. A swift change of scene removes me many miles from reality, and this particular one, accompanied by a great deal of rushing about, strange digs, and a long dress rehearsal is worse than most, at least in that way. The 'digs' as they call them, are comfortable enough, a large 'first floor front' with a good coal fire, luxury this these days, no hotel except the best would give you that, splendid plain food, just my idea of deliciousness so far, and all very clean, though the bathroom is rather small and badly designed. It is all a very typical little working-class house, really, just like a 'dig' at Cambridge. What a curious attitude the company has towards these things particularly the older touring members. It is perfectly obvious that this is the sort of house they regard as normal, no matter what they live in now. The landlady is short, exhausted looking, and very talkative. We have arrived at a bad moment, because her son, a boy of 13, is to appear in court tomorrow morning for stealing water-pistols from Woolworth's. Rather tactless to tell a stranger in her house quite so soon that there was a thief in it!

The feeling of really being on the stage and with a company so difficult to catch at the Watergate, is gradually coming over me. To see my name, on a bill on a huge hoarding, in the same type as actors who have been on the stage for years is a daunting and exciting thing. And for the first time waiting for my entrance this evening, I got the sudden feeling of my audacity in going on to the stage of a full-size theatre, as this is, to act among people who have been doing it for years. And yet I did it. such a tiny part, and I try never to mention it, because I do so loathe small-parters, particularly minute-parters, talking as if all sorts of things affected them as it does the bigger parts. Oh shall I ever get on again? Will some unmistakable avenue lay itself out in front of me, or shall I have to dare a lot of corners first?

Monday February 4 1952

The rehearsal this morning was cold, tight and flat. I slept all through it, had a lovely luncheon, chicken and pears, slept through a film I had already seen in the afternoon, and came to the theatre, late apparently. I should have been there at 6.30. Only John Hayten who shares a dressing-room with me, told me, and he said nobody important had noticed. Sat and fidgeted in my dressing-room, because I had no idea when I should start making-up. Felt still remarkably unreal and of course quite unmoved. This is hardly surprising since I am not on stage long enough to feel I am really there, and of course hear no sound of the play or audience in the dressing-room. Apparently the audience laughed a lot, and the applause at the end was quite encouraging. I still think it's very badly produced, and on the whole at the moment indifferently acted.

I scarcely know what to think of myself. The People are friendly, yet so distant. I feel I shall never make a mark on the stage. Here have I been six months without acting, and looks like

being six months more. This is useless as experience, good as something to quote, I suppose. I don't know what to do next, but whatever it is, I shall do it when I'm in London the week after next.

Tuesday February 5 1952

A quiet dull day exactly following the pattern of yesterday. Another of those dreadful rehearsals during which I have to sit and do absolutely nothing, in the dark theatre, too, so I can't even read secretly. In the dressing-room tonight, John Hayter, whom I am understudying, was talking about all he'd done at my request. He is tall, fair, with bony anonymous features, and very little personality, as it seems to me. He gets laughs on stage; after years of rep-experience so he ought to. I do not feel, in myself, that he can be very good, yet isn't it funny, I can't view him with the sort of detachment that J.B. would use. It makes me think of the sheer time involved in staying in this company. Ten weeks at least - probably more.

Cardiff by the way is a pleasant enough place in the centre, at any rate, not at all dirty, reasonably up-to-date, with goodish shops nicely arranged in arcades for the most part. The telephone service is appalling and they are very behindhand with their film programmes, however...

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...machinery that comes into operation on the death of a Sovereign. That, I find the most moving thing of all, and I cannot believe it is all an empty sham, as the Communists would have us believe. The lawn cuffs and full wig of the Speaker in the House, the taking of a fresh oath by the M.P.'s, the immediate proclamation of the Queen, how strange now to have a Queen! Queen Elizabeth II. Vivat Regina!

Perhaps we are heading for a new Elizabethan age.

Thursday February 7 1952

A cold grey day, suitable to be a background to the black-and-purple-shrouded stop-windows, where every item for sale is either black, grey or purple. The Times this morning appeared with double-leaded columns, and every paper had huge staring black headlines 'Death of the King'. There was an understudy rehearsal this morning during which we sat gloomily round reading two parts each. How we can rehearse, as we must tomorrow, acting two parts each, I can't think. It will mean twice the amount of rehearsal, doing everything twice, playing a different part each time.

I dashed home at luncheon to start my reading of all the papers. All most impressive and genuine, I am sure. It has been a remarkable achievement, to appear to the world as a good man, without any false piety or self-interest. Oh what a wonderful contrast to his undutiful brother! (How pious of me, but I know what I mean.) At tea, after an afternoon writing

letters, I got an absolute torrent of operation talk from my landlady, who is sagging, fortyish, scruffy, and exhausted-looking. She rattled on in her sloppy Welsh voice, with brutal frankness, 'Oh yes and I remember when the last King died, it was a week before my Jean was born, and that was the day my own doctor died, who always attended me on my confinements, when I had a very difficult time, and he was such a good one, him, not like that old bugger, Winter, who took out my haemorrhoids. I went to him, see, and I said 'Oh doctor', I said, I've got the most awful pains in my - well, I didn't know how to put it, but anyway, he said it was rectum and it turns out I've got a prolapsed rectum, because of my Johnny being such a good big child, though he caught a germ in the taxi coming back from the hospital, which affected his pitutroid gland, which accounts for him being so small, and o'course I got the germ through my titty and was so ill with it I was in the Daily Express, not that me rectum gives me any trouble, except when I has constipation.'

All this while my tea was in front of me. What endurance people like that seem to have of all kinds.

Friday February 8 1952

So the new Queen is proclaimed Elizabeth II. How strange. What thousands of millions of words I have read about her and her father, the King, in the last two or three days!

Another understudy rehearsal this morning, and what dull agony it was! How can you rehearse with everyone playing two parts? If I went on in either of them, I should come a dreadful cropper, I am sure. I wonder more and more what direction I should take after this is over, or even before it's over. The rehearsal this morning how can I describe it, was unreal because I briskly shrugged it past me. I am getting to feel that I will be hopeless once I get onto a stage again properly, because there is the sort of feeling that experience counts for everything, which is nonsense. Obviously experience, other things being equal, is everything, but in acting, as in every other real occupation, other things never <u>are</u> equal. The only thing is that it does seem to mean you must be a certain sort of person. I have not quite decided exactly how I am different from these other people, tho' I think it is a mixture of lack of experience, Camb. polish (ha!) and sheer reaction from their staginess.

I see in the 'Stage' today that Ju has got a lovely little notice for his music in the 2 Gents. Must remember to write and congratulate him. How lovely it will be to see him in London. Hope there is no awkwardness about seeing him a <u>lot</u>! Must try and do some matinees with him, and introduce him to Gerard. Sparks flying there!

Saturday February 9 1952

So this first touring week is over, and hardly anything left of my first week's wages, after all my good resolutions. I <u>am</u> extravagant sometimes. I say 'Oh well, I must just have this one treat' which soon spreads into 'just this one' and 'just this one' until I have had three or four last treats.

I spent a great deal of this evening talking to Peggy Burt, the other understudy. She is a blonde rather stupid but kind woman of about 35 or 40. I am told she is Roy Limbert's mistress. If so, it must be a very unromantic relationship. We talked a lot about the theatre, and I was glad to hear her come out strongly against going to a rep., although she had slogged in many herself. The A.S.M. was also there for part of the time, a poor pathetic little creature called Derek Ensor. He is small, bald, with the side hair he has left deeply waved, and no spirit nor ambition left beyond a vain desire to surprise one by a distinguished acquaintance or a particularly disillusioned piece of gossip.

Sunday February 10 1952

Settled in at this boarding-house at Southsea. Exactly the sort of place we might stay at for our holidays. the 'lounge' as Mrs. Salmon called the room at the front, is small yet bare, with hideous linoleum made up of vast beige squares alternating with teeny crushed strawberry ones; the chairs are bright green with orange home-made antimacassars, and arm-guards, the sideboard is of cheap stained pine, with metal handles flushed with an embarrassed brass plating. Mrs. Salmon herself is tall, with enormously plump legs, like Miss. Mumford, dark reddish hair, and the sort of small snub nose and amiable mouth that goes with a peevish temper. Everything seems clean, however, and there is a basin in my room, which is a great deal, and a decent bathroom. Mr. Salmon is contrary to nature, a smaller and much less showy fish altogether.

The only other person here so far is poor little Derek Ensor. We talked for a little while I was having some supper, and then after I had written a letter or two, we went out for a walk along the front. At this time of year, by night and with a stiff breeze blowing, it was almost deserted. Naturally we could only see what the promenade lights allowed us to see, but Southsea appeared to me to be an attractive place. There is very little of the vulgarity and loudness associated with 'seaside resorts', and a great many pleasant white Edwardian houses and terraces opening onto a large plain low promenade. The corporation buildings, the shelters, the kiosks, the bathing-huts, are all spindly white-wooden St. John's Wood Swiss affairs, with their little roofs edged with white fretted iron-work. The pier is far more building than pier, a very large, very pretty (at least by night) white wooden house, with big arching windows, and three or four curving cupolas. Rather Colonial, I thought it. I believe Portsmouth is very different. I am told it is full of sailors.

Truly, I don't know whether I'm on my head or my heels, moving from one place to another is so confusing.

Monday February 11 1952

Tonight for the first time since the tour began, I feel a little depressed. Nothing flattens my spirit more than a concentrated effort to imagine people are noticing me when they are not, and J.B.P., in his notes to the company after the show normally never looked at me; of course

I would be a fool if I couldn't deliver four simple lines correctly. Nevertheless, as Ju said, I hate being a nobody, and John Hayter's surely very self-centred conversation, is terribly trying, nice though he is to one in other ways. He seems to me to delude himself in much the same sort of way as Ju. He is suitable more or less, for the part he is playing, and for parts like it, cockney radio mechanics, because that is what he would have been in real life, had he not gone in the Army. He talks of Shakespeare and period plays and sophisticated comedy, for all of which, I would have thought, he was quite wrong. He says he loves Shakespeare because he includes everything, which is one of those things one doesn't say ever because every person of any sensibility knows it from birth! It's just saying, in another way, that you think Shakespeare is awfully good. I don't like to listen to him talking. "If his is the way to get on, then I won't get on, I know that. He's nice and carefully doesn't bitch, but he's not a real person, and has no real personality. He's self-centred in the wrong sort of way, not generous.

I have no regrets (too soon yet perhaps) about having gone onto the stage, except to see what has become of all the people who've been on it sometime. Oh dear! I must rest, or I shall cry just from being tired.

Tuesday February 12 1952

A featureless but pleasant day. Understudy rehearsal in the morning very dull, but very necessary, and I shall feel comfier when I know the parts really properly. Nobody attempts to produce them, and as everyone is simply gabbling through their lines or giving as good an imitation as they can of the original, (very indifferent usually), there is no chance of working up any sort of performance. I will write later on about how I am getting on with the parts when I have had a real go at them.

This afternoon I went for a walk along the beach, a broad shelving pebbly beach, with plenty of lovely shells among the pebbles. As I walked along towards Portsmouth, I passed a good many mothers and nannies bending very unwilling backs to help children to look for the prettiest shells. How very relaxing something completely natural like the sea, is. I seem to have cut out almost everything natural from my life, and of course it means that when I do look at Nature, I write about it like D., self-consciously.

Wednesday February 13 1952

Another negative but pleasurable day really. One that seems slightly pointless and rather dull now, but which I know I shall look back on with pleasure in worse times. It was announced on the one o'clock news that the queue to pay homage at the King's lying-in-state stretched for three miles. Tony Sharp, who went up to London specially to visit Westminster Hall, told me tonight that he waited four hours to get in. I am glad really that understudy rehearsals prevent my loyalty from being tested to that degree.

After writing to Ju, finishing off my letter to J.B., and scribbling notes to Geoffrey B, and Mr. Pottle, I went out for another walk along this lovely Edwardian sea front. Oh the pretty spindly empty look of it all! All white and spiky. Like Oliver Messel's 'Ring Round the Moon' glasshouse.

I often marvel at the difference of proportion of things in my diary because I write it last thing at night. If I wrote all through the day, like that absurd woman in 'The Moonstone', or is it 'The Woman in White', I should stick in all sorts of annoying little things, all self-centred too, such as the tiresome staining of my knees, arms, and neck for this two-minute part, and how sore all three are getting with all this washing in such cold weather. And how irritating Derek Ensor is, poor little creature.

Eileen Beldon, one of the featured supporting players, was talking to us at supper tonight about the Olivier's tour of Australia about three years ago. She is a tallish blunt-featured woman, with straggly brown rats-tails of hair, which refuses to grow and is even receding from her brow. Her nose is short and turned-up, her mouth toothy and generous. She comes from Bradford, has been on the stage for years, and has a style of wit forever aiming at the disillusioned wisecrack. She has evolved an inflection that does for every sentence meant to be witty, but leaves one rather in the air, when the wit is absent, as it rather frequently is, because it is still pitched obstinately for a laugh one can't produce. The Australian tour was obviously rather hell, the Australians being very uncivilized, eating far too much badly-cooked food, having no sense of dignity or fitness, and suffering from the inferiority of exiles rather than the independence of pioneers.

I was glad to see by the way in the Observer that the saying of the week was the last words of Mr. Churchill's remarkable unforgettable address last Wednesday, 'I whose youth was spent in the last years of the august, tranquil and unchallenged Victorian era, may well feel a thrill in invoking once more the prayer and the anthem, 'God Save the Queen'.

Friday February 15 1952

So the King is buried, and the poor Royal Family can be left comparatively alone to settle gradually into the new pattern of their life. We go back to London on Sunday, thank goodness. I am glad I missed the funeral by place because it would have been far worse to miss only by time. I <u>can't</u> write any more. This bedroom is so <u>hellishly</u> cold.

Saturday February 16 1952

Tonight after the performance, Basil Sydney talked to me for five minutes about my four lines. He told me to 'play 'em as strong as you like, old dear, authority, cold, impersonal, whistle in hand, ready perhaps to be shot, and he says he'll do something to get my position altered to my advantage. I told this to John Hayter and Derek Ensor, who were very scornful and said, in that ghastly knowing way that that type always loves, that B.S. was simply trying to get even the end of the play for himself by spoiling my tiny bit. Try as I would, I couldn't see it that way, because B.S. was obviously trying to get me to play it better, not worse. It

has occurred to me that I must get out of this dream state soon. All these stupid people round me, (and they are stupid, really, except that I say, 'No, it's me simply because they have their own catch-words that I don't know') stop me feeling because they live in a completely different way from me - not theatrically, - outside.

Sunday February 17 1952

Back in grey and raining London, but glad to be back. It oppresses me freshly every time I come here how little the huge place knows of me, and how even less it cares. I bought Panorama this evening - The Young Men's Magazine', edited by that man, Daniel Farson; all the people writing in that seem to have one thing in common, a marvellous publicity sense. I haven't the courage of my brief flashes of prescience about public demand, not even enough to sustain an ex...

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... to fritter life away, without even a social life to occupy them. How maddening all these rehearsals are, too! Tomorrow we have one, - at 3.0 in the afternoon. Now why couldn't it be at 11.0 in the morning, with the afternoon free? However if once one starts letting oneself get indignant about something that can't be changed, one's nerves are in tatters in no time.

I rang up the Slades' flat today, and Mrs. Slade answered. Wasn't that nice? Ringing up Ju tomorrow. Hope his first night went well. Cannot write on my knee.

Friday February 22 1952

Golly! Tottenham Court Rd. was foul - a male brothel. Back in Pottle's, and glad of it.

Ju has been here this week, with the '2 Gents' at the Old Vic. His music has been a success, and many people, including some names, have commented favourably on it. To see him, (I have just left him since so far we have only been able to meet after the show in the all-night Corner House Cafe.) has been a tremendous relief, and a tremendous recreation, as seeing anyone who is very close to you always must be. The relief of being immediately understood is at once relaxing and stimulating. We have had long talks and told each other everything from the last few months, quite untouched by the gap of time that separates us. After a long period of brooding, always a prelude, I know, to some revelation, he told me that he was 'near to being in love with Pamela Alan, the leading lady of the company, as he has been with anybody for years. She of course is 30 to his 21, and he realizes how absurdly conventional the situation would look to an outsider. I was very interested, of course, and let him talk about it, and talked as much as I could about it, knowing that I, in the same position, would want little more than the opportunity to air my feelings and mention the beloved's name as often as possible. He says himself it won't be a heart tearing thing, and knowing her I can believe it. She's a very nice girl. Still fascinating.

Tuesday February 26 1952

A terribly wasted day. Was slightly late for the understudies' rehearsal, which was the usual dull gabble. It is impossible to learn or work out anything because nobody else is acting.

Nobody except Peggy Burt and I seem to know their lines. Oh dear, I feel I ought to be showing keenness, but I can't in such terrible company. I must try all the same.

In the afternoon, after J.B.P. had given me a new entrance, which for once justified my appearance there, I had nothing to do except to try to watch the rearranging of bits going on through the prompt-corner curtains. I had to be there as an understudy to note changes in my principals' parts, and as a member of the cast in case I should be wanted to rehearse. I couldn't have read a book if I'd had one to read. I couldn't really see or hear at all. In any case I could have got all the changes from the stage manager afterwards. Now I see why actors are generally so stupid, because half their time is frittered away gossiping in the wings. The trouble is I am really denied even that pleasure, and I trudged along Park Lane, up the Edgware Rd. to Sussex Gardens, a long trek, but on a foggy night worth it. London looks so mysterious and full and a maze that will never come to an end but wrap you round for ever and ever.

Liz Jones, Geoffrey Howe and Robin Williams came to see the show tonight, and came round to see me. They seemed very pleased to see me, especially Robin, with whom I came back in the tube. I wish there were more young people in our company. Ju seems to have such fun.

Friday February 29 1952

Yesterday absolutely full, and too tired to turn to this page after tramping home from Brompton Rd. here. Ju's party a great success, really, and I enjoyed myself as I have not for months. We sang some of the old songs, and Eleanor Drew, who'd been in the cast of 'Oklahoma' sang with extreme vigour clarity and wit, and made me uncomfortable to be singing at all. I behaved badly, chattering metallically all over the place, but I hope not too badly. Songs and games rather...

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...hair, and skin still falling charmingly over most graceful bones. Dorothy Dickson, very baggy round the jaw, and hardly any makeup. Brenda Bruce, with a hideous cropped haircut, and an enormous tartan coat. Joyce Carey, Lilian Braithwaite's daughter, who of course was the original Florence Lancaster (L.B. not J.C.), plaintive and sweet and bony, very nice to me, whom she knows well from Cambridge where she will be on Sunday.

Today has been full of preparation for Sunday and rehearsals. Oh I hope Sunday is a success!

Tuesday March 11 1952

Last few days have been rather hectic physically, and have really not been up to writing. Caught the train on Sunday morning in a colossal hurry and by the skin of my teeth. Peter W. came and stood with me all the journey in the corridor which touched me. Arrived at Cambridge, rain still pouring down as it had been all day, particularly during a nightmare

journey through puddled empty city streets in a taxi cab on the way to Liverpool St. Rushed first to Geoffrey's room where I found the piano gone, the furniture with new covers and arranged all differently. The rooms where I was so happy and unhappy have really lost their atmosphere, and I'm glad. Went straight to Nigel's rooms, but he wasn't in, and there was no note. Went to the Arts and on the way met Mike Hall and Peter Om on their way to the ADC for lunch and to look at the film made last year. I went with them and found various friends there, Peter L. David King, Jean Parry, and John W. came in after a bit. We had as much talk as we could, and then Peter L. and I, who hadn't ordered lunch, went off to the Eagle to have some, as Nigel didn't seem disposed to find me. On our way we met Simon Raven, looking an absolute wreck. I found out later that he is married secretly to Susan Kilner, and had just become a father at 8.0 that morning. He told me that Nigel had booked a table at The Arts and was looking for me madly. He found me in the Eagle and we went off and had a wonderful cosy gossip-ridden lunch. Dadie came in with Joyce C. and Donald, and made me feel small as usual. Nigel was simply sweet, said I must go and see his parents when I was in Bradford, and said his mother was always talking of me. We went along (rather late) to the DR of the panto, which Geoffrey has produced as the Trinity show, and which I thought helplessly bad. Then we went on to the Arts where all was in full swing for the 'Julius Caesar' rehearsal. A full-scale Elizabethan stage had been set up in the Arts, which had had the first three rows of stalls removed to fit in the apron stage. I was most impressed by the whole conception of the production with its boy players and Elizabethan accents, and much admired its liveliness, its clarity and its muscularity. There are only two really interesting performances in it, however. Mike Hall's hard, slightly coarse tremendously determined Cassius and Tony White's noble Anthony.

Wednesday March 12 1952

What a pretty bright little light place Brighton is! At this time of the year at any rate. Of course like all other English towns its buildings are spoiled by enormous letters of iron or neon-lighting tubes sprawling haphazardly across their fronts, but I won't say anything more about Brighton until I have seen the pavilion property - inside and out.

The end of my day at Cambridge must be told it was rather extraordinary, because Peter Wood and I went to Colin T.W. and Trevor Stratford's rooms and got drunker and drunker and drunker on cheap port, and had a most marvellous time. We behaved very badly, monopolising the conversation in a very curious double act, quite foreign to our respective temperaments, but curiously successful. Then blessed bed, a hangoverish goodbye to everyone, and Brighton, of which more tomorrow.

Friday March 14 1952

I have spent so much time this week travelling backwards and forwards from Hamsey House, where I have been staying with the McLaughlins that I have had little or no time to do anything.

However this afternoon I did visit the Brighton Pavilion, and found it the most extraordinary experience. Nobody could call such over-elaboration beautiful, yet nobody could fail to be impressed by it. What impressed me most was the cruel irony that has turned a private extravagance of the only really vivacious Prince the British Royal House has ever produced into a dead museum for the Midland holiday-maker to gape through. The common man has triumphed indeed when he can walk into Prinny's bedroom, where who knows what took place, and stare with only fleeting interest at the concealed door which led to the apartments where the latest favourite was installed. It always saddens me to see a private house, a little fortress against reality, turned inside out for everyone to gape at. Couldn't somebody live in these houses somehow? Must they all die like this one? By the way how amusing to think of Victoria living here, which apparently she did until 1847, occasionally. Certainly somebody knew how to select a good position for a house. The smaller upper rooms are quite charming particularly the Duke of York's room, light, airy, pretty bow window, altogether delightful. The State apartments I would not try to describe. I really - well they are, there's just too much of them. Exciting.

Monday March 17 1952

I don't think I have anything to say except that I have seen Ju and am with him all this week and that if I do any more travelling, I shall never notice where I am again.

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...to feel myself expanding under his approval, to value myself properly. Contrary to what I suppose most people think, I am not sure of myself to the extent of taking for granted that what I like and think is right even for me, let alone for others, as Ju is. I am too apt to think of myself as wrong, and worms like John Hayter as right.

Bradford where we are playing this week is large, black and greasy. A fine drizzle has been falling ever since I arrived, covering one's clothes and face with smuts, and rendering the already stunted and scruffy people unattractive to the utmost limits of repulsion. John Hayter, who is tall, pinkly plump, big-nosed and mean-mouthed, takes tremendous pride in not being as vain as his success warrants him to believe a lesser spirit might be. He is madly suburban, imagines he is exactly the pattern of manly beauty and behaviour, and tells one in a marked cockney accent that people are surprised that he has no accent off stage. I said tonight I hated onions. He said, with a deprecating laugh, 'I'm afraid I find quite tasteless without them. I'm very fond of continental cooking. Of course my mother brought me up on really good cooking, and I can't seem to get used to ordinary food somehow.' He tells me when I curse the Yorkshire rudeness that Bradford people are 'very good at heart when you get to know them. I always get on with them, but then you see, (deprecating smile) I know them.' Oh he is hateful, and smugly complacent.

This is the city where Henry Irving died, I believe. And I should think that today has been very like an October day, misty and twilight with clouds. I went round to the stage door of the Theatre Royal, which is now a cinema, and looked at the old lamp-post, with its pretty

ironwork, and bright yellow-greenness, and imagined a lot of silly self-conscious nonsense as I...

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Wednesday March 26 1952

I had my photograph taken. A polyphoto. It is the first time I have had my photograph taken alone for years. A Polyphoto is a curious experience. You sit in a swivel chair and look in various directions; the camera clicks for each look, and you get a whole pageful of little prints of you at all angles. You choose the best - a good thing for me, who always seem awful from every angle in photographs. Afterwards I went to Leeds for the day - quite the tripper, and exhausted myself walking round the streets looking for shops that weren't open, and rejecting every restaurant for luncheon, one because it was too squalid, another because it was too grand a third because I couldn't see what it was like from the street and a fourth because I could. When I got back here to this superannuated boarding house, I found that someone had rung up called Slade, or I thought he said Slade. As it happened, I echoed...

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Friday March 28 1952

What a place this boarding house is! Every room in it has a dull cold aspect, the furniture standing about defying one to sit in it, the grate in an advanced state of refrigeration. I came down to breakfast late enough to encounter two of the natives. One is a big jovial-looking woman, with a large Persian lamb coat slung proudly across her shoulders as a talisman of wealth, who is obviously so lacking in her own mind that she will prolong any conversation however trivial to postpone the awful moment when she is once more driven back to contemplate her avid waste. The other, whose grunts she hastens to fall in with in case they should be discontinued, is a fat, thick-lipped bald-headed Yorkshire man, blunt, crude, selfish, old and lonely. He has obviously been at this place some time, for he takes great pleasure in saying what it used to be like, how much worse it is now, and how much worse it soon will be. He grumbles about everything, including, as I will set down, me. I am not at all in the habit of talking to people to whom I haven't been introduced, and so on entering the dining-room, I have only said 'Good-morning' when once the fat woman caught my eye. The other morning I put my ear to the door to hear what they said about me after I'd left, knowing neither of them, with the poverty of gossip-matter, could resist a new arrival. I heard, ‘They say he's an actor' from the fat man. 'He'd be all right for the silent films.' Appreciative giggle from the fat woman. She: 'I expect he's got a walking-on part'. He: 'Walking-off, if you ask me'. He then went on to complain that coming to the bathroom at 9.15, as I have no doubt he does without fail every morning, he has been amazed to find me this week, as he puts it, 'with his dressing-gown hanging on the back of the door, in the bath'.

Sitting out front for the first time this week tonight, I noticed that the two pianists rattling cheerfully through the First Hungarian Rhapsody were named Elsie Newby and Iris Roberts, both sleek and smart, the one an unlikely auburn, the other a suspicious blonde. I bet they have husbands called Douglas and Cyril, and live at addresses like 42, Weston Avenue. Bright, cheerful and absolutely nothing.

Saturday March 29 1952

2.30pm

I am writing in the smoking-room of the Grand Hotel, Sheffield. I really can't imagine why I am writing except that I would rather like to talk to someone and there's nobody to talk to. This is a big rambling ugly room, with walls defaced with scrabbled plaster (how does one describe this ghastly modern habit of covering walls with molten cream plaster, and then making scratchy messes on it and then letting it dry, which always tells me that nobody could think how to ornament it, and did that to it as an alternative to absolute bareness). This plaster muck is interrupted at intervals by pieces of sunburnt looking glass, rouge-tinted that is, and at one side is a wrought-iron grille in front of some rust-red curtains, with palms and daffodils in front of it. It is completely empty except for the waiter getting tea ready with much clattering of china. The carpet, from wall to wall, is an anonymous green, with cheap red moquette (what a word!) armchairs and gold and green tables. Now why have I described all that, and rather badly too? Really because I want to remember the oppressive mass-produced air of the whole thing, and my dissatisfaction, as being not quite sufficiently mass-produced enough to notice the deadness of it. It is I suppose a neutral background for colourful characters and exciting conversation. What a pity that interior decorators have only discovered the fascination of neutral backgrounds in an age which has witnessed the passing away of character and conversation! Bother why do I always sound so pompous when I really mean something. I think I'm very colourful and conversational. Yes, I don't think anybody could say I wasn't conversational!

11.45 p.m.

At no. 34, Holly Thorpe Rise, and well safeguarded by miles of blanketing suburban houses in every direction. Met Peggy in the lounge of the Grand, where she is staying, much to her disgust, for her bedroom has no central heating and no proper dressing-table, all for 27/6 per night, bed and breakfast only. The Tindalls, who are looking after me, through a connection of D's are very sweet in a stupid way. Caught them quite unawares by arriving earlier than they had expected, he in braces she in curlers. He asked me after supper whether I'd like to be comfortable. He meant I could take my collar off!

Tuesday April 1 1952

A charming day, not a bit foolish. In the morning to a film trade show, 'Boots Malone', a very sentimental picture about horse-racing in America, which I adored. William Holden is

not only my type - he's good. Rushed off to 'better part of Sheffield', to have lunch with Gerard's sister, the only Irvine I have never met, named Dawn. She is definitely good-looking, has all the delightful Irvine vivacity and none of the odious Irvine push, partly the result of a real like, consisting of a husband and two children. I was such a success with Helen, the elder of the children, that she would not go for her rest unless I took her. A small purple-cheeked child. She can't have high blood pressure yet. Also a mountainous Dutch maid.

After lunch a rather dreadful vicar called Selle called, and was Boy Scouty and Yorkshire friendliness all over the drawing-room. House rather pretty with some good furniture and some pretty pieces. Husband Martin de Bartolome was away in Johannesburg.

I read today Somerset Maugham's novel, 'Theatre' for the first time. Broadly speaking, as a description of how an actor feels, it seemed to me absolutely right - absolutely. I know now that the tour is ending at Oxford, yet I do not somehow feel as I ought about being out of work. I feel invincibly sure that I am an actor. I'm sure, yet that should not make me sure of a job. Yet in another way I'm terrified.

Wednesday April 2 1952

Just before my entrance, Alfred Farrell, the Production Manager, a hard-featured brusque, ill-mannered but basically, I think, kindly man, shoved a letter into my hand, and said 'Digest this, and let me have it back.' In my dressing-room after Derek Ensor and John Hayter had gone, I opened it. It was from Roy Limbert and read as follows, if I have time to copy the whole.

28th March 52

Dear Farrell, I beg your pardon for this further addition to your worries. I think a great deal about 'T on P' (then a couple of lines about the removal of an unpleasant line). Now another point (I told you I should be a nuisance when I got my health and strength back!) End of comedy. Entrance of newcomer. We are coming down too quickly to the curtain. I had that criticism at Bristol - as I think I told you - I have pondered on't. Can you persuade - no - instruct Angus Mackay as follows: entrance quite alright and right down to the following Sir G. But why come here? N.O. 'To take over the treasure, (STOP - here Mackay rattles off 'Crown Property you know etc. etc. This is too quick for the audience to intake - it is too near the final curtain - it is the complete showdown of 'Trea. on P' or let us say, in a game of poker. It should be taken as follows (then follows a close analysis of my little speech as I think it ought to be done, and as I thought I was doing it, but obviously not. He goes on to suggest a slight change of line and then. 'The newcomer had three lines to say - let him say them - and let them mean something. (A bit more about Roberta then -) The rest is straightforward and correct right down to the last line - then as the N.O. checks out he rushes his last business - he runs 'Well, where's the treasure?' into the line 'Better get cracking!' This is a matter for Producer - and I am not a Producer. But my dear Pat, a little thought, subject

of course to an insurgent telegram from the author instructing you to disregard my comments - will lead you to grasp what I mean - and I hand over to you - looking forward to seeing at Birmingham something of the sort come to life - at present the last three minutes of the play are wrong - and can so easily be put right - it is a matter of timing. Yours etc. R.L. P.S. a last word - the Author's mind - remember - is far more 'darting' and 'alive' than the odd audiences one has to entertain and deploy to in these days!!.

I wonder what I think of all that. For the actual practical advice involved, I care nothing; as I said I had seen all that and more in the speech. If he says pauses should be longer, then I suppose they should be. Nevertheless, I rather resent the tone. Personally I haven't much feeling about it because I think the play and the ending are so feeble and my bit so silly that really no blame can rest on me. As for the general intelligence revealed in the letter, it is not encouraging. The last remark in particular is a pathetic revelation of a 'left-behind' mind. The audiences of today can see the whole of this play coming from the first five minutes. One way and another, I shall be glad to be out of this company. None of its connections are pleasant to me, nor I think will any of my personal qualities or talents ever command respect with any part of it.

Am relieved to find that I am not as depressed by the letter as I thought I would be. Am I really as bad as that?

Thursday April 3 1952

At the understudies' rehearsal this morning, Alfred Farrell gave me a long and kindly dissertation on the importance of feeling important. I was to think myself a star, and then I would play the part with the requisite authority and weight. Mabel Evelyn, whose stupid mind cannot frame a sentence without making it superlative in some way or other, said 'Well, let's face it, dear, you come on and the play's over and nobody's noticed you've been there at all.'

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 18

Angus Mackay

Being the fourteenth volume.

From April 3 1952
To June 14 1952

Thursday April 3 1952

I know that to be untrue, because I have more stage personality than that. I also know that everyone (almost) in this play has too much weight, and drag the play ponderously down with it to boring disaster. As for Farrell and Evelyn, neither of them would be stage directing or managing if they could have been successful as actors. In any case, I went on and played to the house as well as I could, which was good enough even for dried-up old Farrell to say 'Much better, very good', and Basil Sydney to get annoyed, because I had up-staged him slightly by a new move.

I have spent quite a lot of time this week with Peggy Burt. She is vapid, rather stupid but at least is fairly nice-spirited, and has the right ideas about material things, clothes, food, digs and so on, and allows me to feel that I am not just a madman in the middle of hideous sanity.

Friday April 4 1952

Did anything happen to me or even around me, today? I suppose it did, and I ought to have noticed it with enthusiasm and described it with relish. The point is that nowadays life and people are as standardised as the houses they live in and the multiple stores they shop in. How can there be any individuality about a city when its shops are the Woolworth's, Austin Reeds, Cooperative Stores that are the same wherever you find them? Bother. Can't be bothered to fill my pen.

Saturday April 5 1952

This rather awful little visit to this rather nasty city comes to an end tomorrow.

This morning I took coffee with the Rev. Brian O'Gorman who used to be a colleague of Papa's in London and is now leading Methodist light in Sheffield! He asked why I was now an Anglican and I told him - everything, the truth, too. I expect he attributes it to his own hypnotic listening. I could soon enlighten him. It is simply my own emotional incontinence.

Sunday April 6 1952

Ensconced in rather seedy grandeur at Queen's Hotel Birmingham. I think I am getting less interested in my diary again because I haven't talked to anyone really for me for almost three weeks. I wonder why it is so essential to have someone by you to whom you can say 'That film is awful', 'That play is bad' and know that they will react in an intelligent way. I have nothing interesting to write. I am simply giving at the moment a splendid performance as a rich young man staying at the best hotel B'ham can provide and treating it as a second-hand boarding-house.

Monday April 7 1952

I have had some sort of a look around Birmingham, and find it an enticing place, well built, good broad streets, an air of good-will and prosperity about it, altogether more of an air about it than in any of the places we have so far visited.

My digs are in a clean and fairly comfortable house in a street called Balsall Heath Rd. The approach to the door tho'. It's no use. I can't write in bed and it's too cold to write anywhere else in an unheated bedroom.

Wednesday April 9 1952

I have so often wondered these last few years whether most people are as stupid as I think them or whether it is that I do not approach them selflessly. I am coming more and more to the conclusion that I do not ask or give enough to people, that there is a whole range of experience to which I neither respond nor appeal. Consequently my relationships with other people seem stuck at the moment, pursuing exactly the same line provided their backgrounds, taste and temperaments are sufficiently similar to mine. What I grudge most is the lack of authority about my personality, the lack of the innate feeling of importance, a lack which results in fatal timidity of assertion or equally fatal over-assertion. Obviously a reaction against timidity. I do lay that basic uncertainty mainly at D's door. When I was small, I never remember being built up always torn down at least in the ways I wanted to go. Always 'be quiet' unless I was being amusing.

Friday April 11 1952

Good Friday, and a strange day. John Hayter and I spent the time after lunch playing the records of a man called Edward Mulhare, who is going to stay at these digs. (Oh I miss my writing desk; having to write this on my knee in bed takes half the pleasure out of it) He has some American long-playing records, among them selections from 'South Pacific', 'Call Me Madam' (both on in London now, though the second without that clear column of noise that is Ethel Merman) and the new Rodgers and Hammerstein's Show, 'The King and I', with Gertrude Lawrence. The last interested me the most, as it was all new to me. One number

'Hello Young Lovers' and another 'We Dream in the Shadows', I liked at once. The others may grow on me, but I hope not.

I had arranged to spend the day from teatime with Effie, and found myself a little hurried at 3.45; I was nearly ready when the door-bell rang. The landlord went to the door, and a voice asked if I lived there. I came down the stairs, and saw a young man standing in the doorway, smartly dressed in the fashion of today, wearing fawn cavalry twill trousers, a buff hunting waistcoat with gilt buttons, a Brigate tie, a tweed overcoat, a corduroy cap well pulled down, and worn absolutely straight and thick-soled suede shoes. His face was slightly Jewish, with receding black hair and an unhealthy pallor. He seemed ill-at-ease, and when I said 'You...

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...Champagne. Strange that it should be on a fine day. As a rule I don't feel my best on fine days. But today I did. I wondered through the hordes of bawling Americans and perspiring trippers crushing the streets, and never noticed them as I would ordinarily. My only sadness is that there was nobody to share it with - nobody, not even an Oxford undergraduate in sight who might make me feel I had an ally.

I still think Cambridge is pleasanter than Oxford. Of course the cities, as cities, are remarkably similar in atmosphere to an outsider, though the Universities inside are quite unlike. Again even they are very like to anyone from another University, though very different to those who know them. But, as for looks, Cambridge 'has it every time' for me.

Oxford may be handsome, but Cambridge is beautiful. Take Christ Church Meadows for example. The building is handsome certainly, though in a style I do not admire. The meadows themselves are either too big or too small - too big if they are intended as a link between the college and the river, too small if they are meant for parkland. In either case they are flat and uninterestingly untended, having an air of plots over which much argument has raged, and on which something should the arguments ever allow it, will be raised. All those iron railings, too. We manage without them on the Backs, which have lawns to preserve, not merely rank grass. The house itself by the way is crumbling very badly indeed. The large eighteenth-century frontage of whatever-it-is, the Hall I suppose, is absolutely fragmentary even from a distance. As for the Emperors' heads on the Sheldonian, their expressions are not even blank any more, their faces are simply <u>flat</u>.

I walked around a good while, had a most pleasant tea at the Mitre, sat on their apology for the Backs, then went to the Cathedral, as I suppose one calls it, though it has never seemed to me that it is one. I should have called it the House Chapel if anyone had asked me. My favourite service Stanford in C and my favourite anthem 'Blessed be the God and Father of Mankind' SS. Wesley. I haven't been to church for far too long. How lovely it was to join in a service again - of that sort; I was surprised at myself. And how pleasant to find oneself praying for our most gracious sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, Queen Mary, Philip duke of Edinburgh, Charles Duke of Cornwall, and all the members of the Royal Family.

Afterwards I had dinner at the Mitre, some tasty duck, and sweet Bordeaux; I walked out about 8.30 to amuse the ghastly crowds with my bowler and umbrella. How they sniggered! One said 'Hello Clarence', just after he'd passed. The impudence! I must put them away anyway, for this week. No London clothes in Oxford - wait for a bit anyway.

Monday April 14 1952

How very trying it was to meet in Oxford with Peggy Burt and Hal Osmond, and even Tony Sharp, all rather over-or under-dressed. Very curious how Oxford (or Cambridge) shows people up! Spent an enjoyable day otherwise being mistaken for an undergraduate, but must start a stern now of visits tomorrow morning.

Wrote to Daphne Rye at Tennents' tonight. Have almost given them up, o dear.

Tuesday April 15 1952

I went to Oriel this afternoon to look up Roy Porter, the Chaplain there, as Patrick had told me. He is a small thin young man, with sharp acute features, listening eyes, and sat-about-in clothes. Very responsive and quick, and very pleasant. A great friend of Peter Brook's at Oxford, who he tells me never produced anything for the OUDS. If he'd been at Cambridge, he would probably have produced too much. We are lunching together on Tuesday.

Sunday April 20 1952

In the train. 4.55.

This morning at breakfast a misshapen German-American with a shrivelled arm, and one of those faces apparently built up from a bulging jaw muscle, giving him a curious one-sided mumps look, got into conversation with me.

Yesterday I had heard him give a compact, admirably factual and objective but remorselessly humourless lecture on Spain to some poor, unresisting Lincolnian. This morning his dazzlingly antiseptic sterile searchlights were turned on me, with some effect, because as it turns out, he is going to be a dramatic critic, and in discussing the theatre became almost human, without showing any particular qualities except this almost painful over-application. After taking my luggage to the station, I walked back to the Randolph, where I had agreed to meet Roy Porter for a drink. On the way there I found myself passing with many significant glances, the gilded flower whom I had observed with such pleasure in Falla's the other day. More anon...

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... to dullness and reproaches. I want so terribly to succeed, and yet I don't deserve to, because I'm not prepared to give anything up to do it. I have been wrong, I have been extravagant, though perhaps not so very, when you consider how much I advanced myself on how little. The trouble is, I'm not like Ju. I have to spend money sometimes to convince myself I'm gay and witty and charming, no not that, to keep on believing that people want me to give.

Tuesday April 22 1952

Home again and glad to settle somewhere if only for a short time. It is somewhere to take material refuge in - that is as much as I can say for it.

Wednesday April 23 1952

This morning about nine o'clock a telegram arrived for me, reading, 'Card from Tennent appointment Tuesday April 29th letter following Bill'.

Probably the first morning for three or four months on which I had not expected to hear from Tennents' and of course I did. It seems incredible that they have actually asked for me at last. The only trouble is that I do so badly at auditions my type of playing depends so much on the moment. I don't suppose they'll give me anything but still the bliss of it. However am I going to live till they do, with no money at all? Wouldn't it be wonderful if they offered me something though, so that I could give up that beastly Priestley for good. I am only now beginning to have horrid but marvellous bursts of prickly heat nerves, trembly all over, at the thought of an audition.

Also in the post a charming letter from Roy Porter who wants me...

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Thursday April 24 1952

No letter from Bill. Pleasantly vegetating.

Reading over old diaries am appalled at the poverty of their contents. What a very poor picture of life at Cambridge. So much of interest left out and so much of self left in. Still I suppose I can only write what every night I feel I must.

Friday April 25 1952

The actual card from Tennents', Tuesday at 2.55. Oh dear! Is it an audition? To see Daphne Rye only? What am I going to do? I'm terrified at this now it's actually arrived.

Tuesday April 29 1952

A very different mood tonight. The interview, as one might expect, has gone not unsuccessfully, just rather dully. She called me in, a tall smart brisk but pleasant woman, with heavily lip-sticked mouth and very thick-lensed blue-rimmed spectacles. She turned me briskly inside out, said they had nothing for me but she would keep me in mind, and would I understudy? I said I would because I have no choice, but without much real hope. I wanted something straightaway to allow me even to live. Gerard has offered me a sofa which I must accept, I suppose.

Oh I don't know what I'm writing. Why should I be depressed? If I had a little money to wait on, I would think the interview had been most successful.

Saturday May 3 1952

I have had a 1/10 lunch today, no breakfast, and nothing since one o'clock except a glass of milk and a sausage-roll in a milk-bar. Gerard gave me a cup of tea and a biscuit a few minutes ago. How can this future - blank and terrifying - how can this sort of thing do me any good? Whichever way I look, I can't see any help. How do I set about getting any sort of job?

Sunday May 4 1952

Expected today to be very dreary; am staying with Gerard again, really with him this time, sleeping on the scarlet white and gold chaise-longue in the sitting-room, among the wax-fruit and the crucifixes. Staying free and meals too. My pride is a tiny crumpled ball. What else can it be? I just live from day to day, and from free meal to free meal. Sara Lutyens-Humphreys, a sweet simple innocent child and friend of the Slades was around all day, and asked me tactlessly why I wasn't coming to lunch with the rest of them. I said 'no money', and Gerard of course took me out to lunch. In the evening he was eating at St. Anne's House, and said 'Come too, have a free meal. Nobody will know, everyone's out.' I went with him, after he had taunted me with not being hard enough to grab what I could where I could - and we met Christopher on the doorstep. Christopher Christian (I wonder if he has really entered these pages before) XX tonsured, with a strawberry mark under his right eye, and a slow heavy halting drawling voice, staggering over a succession of 'er-er-er's which threaten to stop it for good. Christopher, to whose accounts I owe £16, not personally, of course, but to him as Warden. He took us for a drink. I was so uncomfortable with him, and hardly knew how to speak to him. He must have known I would go back and eat, and I hadn't the courage to ask him if I could.

James Irvine said he would sent me a pound by post. I expect he'll forget.

Monday May 5 and Tuesday May 6 1952

Two shamelessly calm days. How can I sit down and do nothing, while I have £100 debts and am living on charity. I don't know, but I can.

Yesterday James left a letter containing a pound note in the room. I felt ashamed - and I mean that - to take it. I never thought I would feel shame at getting something for nothing, and yet it is very hard to receive. Oh! I am so dissatisfied with myself!

Wednesday May 7 1952

How different empty days are here! Not dull, as at home, but full of interest. Went for a long walk this afternoon, all round the parks and to the House Guards and Buckingham Palace. The sun was bright, the trees were green, the guards were gay, and I could not feel low. The Royal Standard gleamed on the crowned pole, and I felt I was myself.

Tonight sat writing letters until Gerard brought Michael Davie in...

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... Bedford Sq. trying not to be sick, and will probably not see again for another year. I dashed from group to group, behaving in my usual far too bumptious way. It is so pharisaical of me - you know it's thank heaven I'm not as dull as everyone else here. Colin and Mary W. they're very sweet, is she enceinte I wonder? Doreen Ansel wearing a hat. Ian Kellie, thank heaven the same as ever. Michael Miller, looking subdued, Jessie very gaie, in love with a Frenchie perhaps? John MacGregor and I hauled off for supper with Colin and Mary and Angela, of all nice people to see. Howard L. is coming back on sick leave from Malaya or Ceylon or Kenya or one of those places, somewhere in Africa anyway, and what a good thing it will be! Five years is so long to make an unofficial engagement last. Pleasant though perhaps somewhat vapid evening. If I wonder sometimes whether I talk too much, what must Gerard do?

Saturday May 10th 1952

Invited by the Faburs to see 'Winter Journey' with them, and in a box, too. Before I went, telephoned home to wish D. 'Many Happy Returns' and to ask about laundry. Before I did so, it had struck me with sudden terrifying clarity how precarious my position is, and how disgraceful my sponging on Gerard is! It is only by telling myself again and again that I must clutch at any straw to stay in London that I put up with it. Gerard is sweetness and kindness itself, and if ever there was a man who practised Christian charity, Gerard is that man. I try not to cost him any money by concealing from him my lack of money, but occasionally he finds out that I have had nothing to eat since breakfast (I never do actually except meals I happen to drop in for, as yesterday) and tries to do something about it, but I stop him. It is an

intolerable position, and almost more so because I am losing sight of my hopes and dreams. I did think Tennents' would do something for me, and now they aren't.

At the play tonight felt again the absurdity of my position; to be sitting in a dinner jacket, after a very good dinner, in the stage box at the St. James, with two comparatively beautiful and richly dressed young females and their father and mother, when I had no more than 7 1/2 in my pocket.

Sunday May 11 1952

Colin W. rang me up last night to ask me to lunch, as John W. was up for the weekend. Nice to see him, though slightly unreal for such a short time and with the Webbs about so much. They are very good-natured and nice to me in my penuriousness. John said that he had had a nervous breakdown in the vac. Really! how absurd! At his age indeed! He's younger than me. I declare, I think I'm annoyed with him because I ought to have one first. Our talk, I am afraid, meant less to me than it possibly should have done. He is too selfish, too much a materialist and a plump little, vain little man to make me more than still fond of him.

Spent the evening doing housework and reading G. J. Renier's book on Oscar Wilde.

Monday May 12 1952

This evening to the first of Gerard's splendid series of lectures at St. Anne's House. (Blast him! He is reading this upside-down as I am writing; silly him! I shan't write anything interesting while he's watching). John Betjemann and Frances Cornford on Tennyson and Rupert Brooke. Mrs. Cornford is a small superficially undistinguished woman who on closer acquantance proves to be sensitive, sensible, and clear, all unusual in speakers about Brooke. As she knew him personally and well, her paper need scarcely have been as excellent as it was, since her every mention of Rupert caused a real thrill to pass through the audience. John Betjemann meant to be amusing and was. Many celebrities there, among them Christopher Fry, dark, balding, heavy-jowled and dull, Lady Rhonddha, vast moon-face and tugging along with her moustachiod Theddora Bosanquet, Henry James' last secretary.

Tuesday May 13 1952

This afternoon I was writing some letters here in Gerard's room, when the telephone rang. I thought to myself 'A pleasant diversion' and answered it. A voice stumbled over the pronunciation of my name, then said 'This is Miss Rye's secretary. Could you come to the Globe Theatre at 11.0 tomorrow morning to meet Mr. Coward in connection with a tiny part and possibly an understudy in 'Quadrille'. I said I could, hung up the receiver, then walked helplessly about, tears bursting out of me. Could it - can it - be true? Ever since, in Green Park, where I went for a walk to try and think, up here alone while I wrote an endless letter to

Ju, the only thing I felt capable of doing. I cannot believe it, did I make it up? Will he like me? and through my head go those three questions again and again and again.

Wednesday May 14 1952

Like all occasions causing a great expenditure of nerves, the audition petered out into uninteresting uncertainty. I arrived there at three minutes to eleven, togged up the nines in my best suit and a high stiff white collar. I went on stage to find eight or nine other young men waiting, most of them fairly Americanised with trousers darker than their coats, draped jackets and crew cuts. I cannot now in my mind distinguish any one of them, except that I saw as soon as I got round behind, that Timmy F.A. was there, Nigel's brother. I thought, - a good omen. On stage was a smallish oldish man reading a scene with someone I took to be Barney Gordon or some Tennant official. When he had finished, the young men very very quickly run through. My case was typical. I walked on stage, had a brief glimpse of Coward, poised and enjoying himself. 'Good morning' he said neatly, 'Good morning' said I firmly. 'Now what have you done?' he asked pleasantly. I told him 'all right' he said 'I just wanted to see what you looked like' and it was over. Ever since yesterday at 3.0 I had worked myself up into an elaborate state of nerves, striding along the misty green mall, saying feverishly to myself 'Here is one of life's big opportunities Be sure you are ready to take it.' And it was over in thirty seconds. It was too ridiculous. I came out of the theatre into the hot sun, and really felt more like laughing than crying for having been such a fool.

I sat straight down, and finished my letter to Ju, and then went out to see two awful films on the strength of £1 D. had sent me. Surprise! I have come to the conclusion that cinema is to me what drink is to some men. Now here I am writing this, and what am I thinking now? I don't know, I just don't know. I have been sitting here listening to the life-story of Bill Tapper, a tired and pathetic worn-out pansy of 34 with an unfortunate and unhappy life behind him, and nothing but lost dreams and ambition in front of him. What <u>moral</u> nonsense!

I just don't know what I think.

Thursday May 15 1952

An anonymous little day. A beige-letter day. A day to dream during.

This evening I went out to post some letters, and went on through the glitter of Piccadilly Circus down the Duke of York's steps and across the Mall into St. James' Park. It was about a quarter past nine, and the big greeny-gold gas lamps lit with little pops as I walked along the first broad path. The grass and the path and the pond and the people were all the same shadowy greeny gold as the lights, even in the darkest shadows. On every seat there was a man and a woman, gripping hand or softly nosing at one another. Halfway along the path a duck scuttled across from the pond onto the lawn, followed with much squawking by two drakes. One drake got tired after a few yards, but the other with much fluttering and more squawking, covered her well and truly to the accompaniment of a good deal of 'Have you got a permit?' 'I'll take over when you're tired' from a circle of boys on the grass, whose crooning

had been interrupted by the ducks. A little further on I came to the bridge, where I am told, I can see the best view in London. It is certainly very lovely, Buckingham Palace on one side and the Horse Guards Parade on the other provide an appropriate focus for the play of water and islands between. But I am afraid I shall excuse myself of trying to write beautifully if I go on in this vein. Is it me, I suppose so. I should prefer to think our language was getting worn out. I do know that when I had crossed the bridge and was on the Victoria side of the pond, I stopped to look at a duck with her string of tiny insect-like ducklings, and heard the bugle ringing out from Hyde Park, and the boys' crude singing as a quiet little tune, looked up at the twigs and leaves of the birches around me so well displayed against the soft grey sky, and said to myself 'I don't care if it is like a Victorian landscape, or if I describe it like that Pontifax man, I'm going to write about it in my diary tonight. I am rather annoyed to find that I wrote so little about the lecture thing on Monday. How I could failed to note that John Betjemann looked exactly like the White Rabbit reading out the indictment of Alice. Just the same open mouth, protruding teeth, and general air of well-assumed and urbane terror. He told three funny stories, all favourites of Tennyson's, and all worth recording. A Russian nobleman, staying with friends in Sussex, was observed coming in before breakfast with a smoking gun in his hand. 'I have shot two peasants'. 'Your Highness of course means pheasants. Congratulations!' said his host. 'No', said the nobleman, 'they were insolent, so I shot them'.

Macredy, the famous actor, was playing the bedroom-scene from 'Othello' and was amazed to find the strangling of Desdemona greeted with titters. When the curtain fell, however he saw that the cause of the laughter was a white chamber-pot under the bed. Stamping off stage, Macready said to the S.M. 'Why the devil is there a white chamber-pot under the bed?' 'I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Macready', said the S.M. 'I couldn't get a flowered one'.

Great Aunt Jane's turban was on fire. She rang for the footman. 'James' she said, 'my turban is on fire'. 'Very well, m'lady, said James, 'I will tell Amy'.

Friday May 16 1952

I have just been reading the opening chapters of Charles Tennyson's biography of his grandfather, a plain story of actual events and obvious inferences with no adventitious aids to sensationalism, and I have found myself surprisingly susceptible to any number of sensations. First of all, to the sensation of emptiness of the appalling emptiness of the life I have led inside my head for the past fifteen years. Neither D's absurd little treadmill nor my own 'do what I like' affair will at all answer. There must be a combination of both. I never read poetry. I must try some. I used to write some, then imagined D. reading it and stopped, knowing he would make it a duty to write it better.

Now surely I am free of both D. and my own silliness, and when I compare my own mind with even one or two lines of one of Tennyson's juvenilia, I am amazed at the <u>emptiness</u> the littleness, suddenly revealed to me.

'I wondered with deep wonder at myself.

My mind seemed wing'd with knowledge and the strength
Of holy musings and immense ideas,
Even to infinitude'.

In fairness to myself though I must say that on the rare occasions when I do read verse, I am struck by the echoes awakened in my own spirit, echoes of thoughts or feelings it would never have occurred to me to be profound enough to prove the basis for a poem. Another legacy from D's absurd lack of real education.

Saturday May 17 1952

Suddenly an intolerably hot day, and nothing seems worth doing. With nothing to take me out, I might have stayed here dozing over a book, too indolent to brave the hot stickiness of a walk. While I was having a bath, the telephone rang and Peggy Holland, the mad woman, was there to say she had two stalls for 'Much Ado' and we would be eating at the Salisbury. There was my Saturday evening. No more, no more, look to another place for my raptures.

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I have lived on and off some four months, a task I hesitate to begin at this stage when our relationship is so complex. Well then when last December I felt I would not stay at S. Anne's any longer, and was in any case to be asked to leave, Gerard Irvine, the curate of St. Thomas', Regent Street, asked me to come stay with him at the Vicarage in Kingly St. just behind the church. This I did, and left only to go out on tour. Now that I am back again, I find it easier to describe Gerard and his flat than I did away from it. Gerard is a stocky plumpish young man of medium height and a certain immaturity of appearance. About thirty one or two, he appears younger because the restless excitability of his temperament causes his clothes to be disordered and untidy, his movements and gestures to be uncoordinated, and his speech and expression to be of a speed and complexity, which at moments of particular excitement, degenerate into incomprehensibility. His features, like his figure are undistinguished, his face having a faint touch of Hapsburg heaviness with its protruding under-lip and short broad nose, but their heaviness is quite forgotten in their extreme animation and amiability. I have said his temperament is excitable and I may say at once that he is a homosexual, a fact which I take to account in part for the quick nervous walk and gestures. (By the way, Angus dear, how pompous and dull you get when talking to yourself. I suppose I need an audience even to be fairly amusing - never mind). His voice is light, fluting, with a lisp, and most telling when engaged in the narration of some extraordinary manifestation of either the snob or the sex instincts so strong in all tolerable humans. His interests are literary, social, and religious in that order, though he would not agree. He writes well, though not very well, has an interesting circle of friends including John Betjeman, Hedley Hope-Nicholson (the old queenie I met). Colonel Kollehurst of Yarnton, quite an extra-Oxford figure, I believe, Michael Davie, (z.v.) Christopher Isherwood, Theodora Bosanquet, Father de Groser, and other such figures of doubtful though always fascinating value. In short he is ebullient, irresponsible, warm-hearted, exceedingly generous, though mean when he remembers to be, (about once a month he eats in instead of out!) intensely conscientious yet unable to resist all

sorts of temptations, superficial, passionate, clever, intelligent, tactless, sometimes tasteless, yet never purposely cruel and always exceedingly good company. His flat is like himself, slapdash, unfinished, sometimes tasteless, often affected, yet always worth bothering with. For instance, the sitting-room a largish square and undistinguished room gives at once the impression of tiresome and poorly executed affectation. Poor quality Victorian furniture two tall armchairs and chaise-longue, painted white with clumsy gold scrollings, upholstered untidily in bright red rep, bookcases in different colours all horrid, wood only held together by paint and varnish, two cheap rugs on a badly-painted floor, cream, distempered walls, and a general air of gilded rubbish. A closer look however reveals an extremely handsome, tho' now battered, console table against the wall behind the door, its white marble top supported by elegant fluted gold legs, entwined by heavy swags of gilt fruit and flowers. Some bright and (although I know nothing about them) obviously authentic Indian paintings on the right-hand wall, with a pretty early nineteenth-century gilt looking-glass opposite them. A john Piper, awash with green grey shadows and a red arch, of Gerard's church in Bristol. An Eric Gill crucifixion on the desk, some Georgian candlesticks on the mantelpiece, and probably the coal port tea service on the table. In the bedroom the same applies, though of the pictures I know nothing except that they appeal to me strongly and are obviously not reproductions. The bed is again cheap wood painted cheaply in white and gold, with cheaply skimpy hangings of stiff yellow and magenta tafeta. At the head of the bed hangs a large coloured crucifix, with a plaster cast of Christ with bleeding wounds and flying loin-cloth. Over the pillow is thrown a Spanish mantilla. On the side of the room nearest the door is an oval inlaid rosewood table, again about 1840, I should think, with four ladderback rush-seated chairs. Some more bookcases, a rather less handsome console table, silver this time and a cupboard painted in blue-grey and gold with cherubs by Sara Lutyens-Humphreys, completes the picture.

But I have been rather side-tracked from yesterday afternoon. Gerard's usual group of friends came in. Anne Egerton-Warburton, tall, dark, nervous, elegant, well-bred and brighter than she thinks she is, Sara Lutyens-Humphreys, good-looking, naive to the point of idiocy, but as clever as a pack of monkeys all the same, and James Irvine, Gerard's younger brother, better-looking than Gerard, just as nice, but less taste and charm. I proceeded to lecture the Irvines enormously in the course of the afternoon, on the detrimental effect on their public relations of their ebullience, bounce and too obvious self-assurance. They are far too familiar far too quickly with strangers, and consequently to my own knowledge get themselves cordially disliked. Ju hated James when they first met, and indeed so did I. All through the lecture I kept on stopping to say what a beast I thought I was but something made me go on, my Presbyterian ancestry perhaps and I am glad to say that Anne E.W. supported me. In particular James not from the highest of families by any manner of means, is guilty apparently of the most appalling lapses of taste, introducing people as 'this is Miss Pamela Berkeley, who has that marvellous castle in Hertfordshire' and so on. Te Irvines wriggled a bit, as I knew they would, and tried to make out that it was suburban to want to be private. I was finally reduced to saying that if they couldn't distinguish between rude familiarity and polite interest, they had better retreat into solitude. They received me well, and did not in the end leave me with the feeling that I had been satisfying my baser instincts, but that I had been sincerely trying to say something helpful. After all I know how odious people often considered me at Cambridge for exactly the sort of behaviour taken at 100% more power by

the Irvines. Afterwards we went to sit in the steamy warmth of Green Park, near the Palace, with the sound of the band drifting over the thick green shade. It was the hottest day I ever remember in May.

Today has been a very enjoyable day, tho' I shall not have much energy left to do justice to it. The evening saw the second of the talks in the series Gerard has organised; this one was a single effort by Mrs. Angela Thirkell, Mummy's favourite and much-loved authoress. The audience, much sparser than last week, sagged a little under the conventional treatment of an author, Henry Kingsley, of whom they had only heard sufficient to confuse him inextricably with his brother, Charles. Mrs. Thirkell, herself, unusually tall for a woman, slight, with small finely-formed features, which must once have been pretty, abundant grey-brown hair arranged in a large high bun held up by tortoise-shell pins, talked with forbidding gentility for about an hour on strictly chronological lines. She did read some enchanting passages from his best novel, Ravenshoe though in doing so she exposed the poverty of her own talk. Afterwards, as by a lucky chance Patrick was unable to come to dinner, I took his place. Christopher is always helpless on an occasion like this, having no chit-chat at all, and really I wonder how people who have not, ever get a conversation of any sort started at all. Gerard left the ball at my feet, partly out of timidness, I think, and partly, so he says, out of inhibitions created by yesterday's lecture, and Christopher's daunting presence. Anyway there I was opposite her, quoting her books to her galore. A great success and she's asked me in for a drink!

Wednesday May 21 1952

A day full of misgivings about my own self-respect, with feelings about what everyone is saying about my battering on Gerard so long. I have had two rolls and marmalade, some coffee, and two egg sandwiches to eat today. I don't think I'm really in a fit state to write unbiasedly about my state of mind. I have had little more than that to eat on any day during the last month, except for the meals I may have had, and I am feeling curiously light-headed and sad.

Thursday May 22 1952

To 'The Deep Blue Sea' tonight on which I spent seven shillings out of the pound Daddy sent me. I bought the ticket a fortnight ago, and am proud to say that I have resisted the temptation to turn it back into money for meals. Today have had only sketchy breakfast, an old crust I found in the cupboard, and a biscuit or two, with lots of cups of tea.

The play this evening sent me out with wet cheeks, plunged into all the agony of this time a year ago.

Saturday May 24 1952

I seem to have reached a little temporary harbour in my affairs. I cannot force myself, try as I will, to worry about my failing career, even though I get nothing like five square meals a day. I cannot believe that failure is happening to me.

D. sent me £5 today, more than he can afford, I dare say, and accompanied by a letter saying I ought to come home, which I won't won't won't do. Gerard has asked me to stay. He came in tonight by the way very tired after a day spent mostly with Sir Ninian Comper, who is 96 or some fantastic age, and might really not be expected to exhaust a young man of 32 or whatever Gerard is. Gerard is extraordinary. He rang Sir. N. up, said that he and his brother would like to call and pay their respects, did so, and got invited for tea and dinner. The thing is in the old days one always did call, but now young men, or most of them, no longer have the nerve.

I must definitely call and Angela Thirkell. I am sure it would be a success, or I hope it would. Last night Gerard took me to see the Irving Revue, with Anthony Bromley-Davenport, one of the family who is so keen on amateur theatricals. It was apparently his Uncle Arthur who figured so largely in the ADC album in the nineties. He is a tall dark heavy young-oldish man, with a markedly thirties empire-builder manner, superficially slow and stupid though that may malign him.

Sunday May 25 1952

Gerard, R. Parrott and I have just finished a long talk in which Gerard revealed that he thought I was very censorious, and had my own little standards of behaviour and was annoyed if anyone transgressed them and called them bad-mannered. He said it many times, always concluding with 'But we love you for it!' I am sure he sincerely believes this, and indeed always tries to do so. I could not but feel deeply distressed to think that I had repaid his hospitality so badly, especially with regard to James, whom he loves so dearly. I remember so vividly the pain Susan caused me by telling me diligently what others said of me. Fortunately in her case I had the consolation of knowing that she was a person who had made an intolerable mess out of all her own personal relationships, and of hearing a direct denial of the main hurt from the lips of the person supposed to have said it. Nevertheless right or wrong it was none of her business. And it is none of mine; for my own peace of mind, I must record that of all people known to both the brothers Irvine and myself, Bill, Joseph, Ken P., Chirstopher, Patrick, Olive McL., Anne E.W., and Peggy Holland have all said to me, (and quit unsolicited, too) at various times, how very very embarrassing they thought the Irvines could be. It is surely hardly as likely that they would say such things if I were as difficult to cope with. I was seriously, and am still, shaken by what Gerard said to me, but while I can convince myself of busy-bodying impertinence, I still maintain that far from being my own 'little standards, all I have ever wanted was good manners. That implies thought for the other person, and leisure in which to find out what their taste may be. With my usual thoughtlessness, I have stuck to that in last Sunday's conversation, in one or two others, and now tonight. As always the other person has got tired of the monotony and has told me off. Quite right too. But oh! I'm sad it's Gerard.

Tuesday May 27 1952

Yesterday the lecture had a certain historical interest. Gerard Hopkins and Derek Pertmore talking about their distinguished uncle and grandfather respectively. It is always incredible to me how hard it is, even for intelligent lively minds, to make someone live for you and yet these two very clever men did not succeed in doing more than tell a few stories about their distinguished relations. It is perfectly obvious to me that Gerard Manley Hopkins was as queer as a coot, a fact which, if suppressed, hardly allows for anything very illuminating to be said about him, since it was the cause of a good deal of the tension in his private life. His nephew was tall, bald with a fuzzy fringe of greying hair round his head, a craggy lined cheerful good-humoured voice, and a mellow expressive attractive voice. Derek Patmore, on the other hand, was completely bald, and remarkably purple in the face. His prominent nose, receding chin, protruding eyes and sloping forehead give him the beguiling air of a minor Royalty.

Talking of Royalty during the afternoon I had waited outside Marlborough House to see the Royal Family arrive one by one, or rather two by two, to call on Queen Mary, who was celebrating her 85th birthday. On these occasions excitement is generated to the utmost limits of endurance by the arrival of countless ambassadors and closed cars, a variety of visitors on foot, and telegraph boys and mail vans in shoals. Finally however false alarms were checked by the sight of a large Daimler sweeping across the bottom of St. James' St., with that insouciance towards other traffic that only royal cars may assume. Inside it were the Queen Mother, smiling graciously and Princess Margaret, frowning ferociously. As for the Queen Mother, I give her no credit for looking gracious. Who could not, dressed by the best dressmakers in the country, and sitting in the depths of a large car? For Princess Margaret I can say she is certainly attractive, even definitely pretty, though <u>not</u> nice-spirited, from her face. Later the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh with great demonstrations from the crowd. The Queen, not as well-featured as Princess Margaret, has yet an expression of real sweetness of character, not to be counterfeited and not to be discounted.

Thursday May 29 1952

I had not time to mention on Tuesday that I had spent the evening with Winnie and Ken in Sanderstead. It is extraordinary what a feeling of security those prosperous little suburbs give one. While those streets of comfortable small, infinitely respectable houses stand in their small well-tended gardens, with the local tennis-club in their midst, nothing, one feels, can happen to disturb the pattern. I felt the atmosphere to be quite unchanged since jokes first started to be made about that sort of suburb in Punch in the twenties. The streets are less new than they were, their trees are well-grown, their gardens mellower, but still the husbands run for their 8.20, and come back, trimly bowler-hatted and umbrella'd at 6.15. Of all the houses in Kenwortham Rd., number 32 is probably the cosiest. There are three steps down, from the front gate, giving a sense of remoteness from the road. The house next door is rather ramshackle, the garden over-grown, because the woman who lives there is brought home every afternoon in a taxi, dead drunk. This is a great boon to the whole street, providing at

once a wonderful source of gossip, and a harmless yet satisfying underlining of their own respectability.

When I rang the bell the neat green door was opened almost at once by Winnie, tall, thin, with pretty fluffy grey hair and a cool linen dress of ice-cream pink. She is 49, single, and perfectly happy, a good cook, a good sister and a contented woman. She brought the tea out onto the back lawn of the tiny garden well hedged, but still plentifully sunny, and we lay in deck-chairs and munched little iced cakes and drank strong tea. An aeroplane droned overhead, a lawn-mover whirred next door. Win talked about the girls in her office. The peace was pleasantly interrupted by the woman from next door, still friendly but distant after twenty-five years neighbourhood, offering two eggs fresh from her hens. We cleared up tea, washed up, and sat down to wait for Ken and supper.

Ken, a pharmaceutical chemist with his own shop in Shirley Park, is small, bright in a narrow way, hypochondriac and as contented as his sister. Supper, of salad, with home-cooked ham and chicken broiled tender in thick brown jelly, followed by strawberry sundae with home-made ice-cream from their refrigerator, proved a pleasant accompaniment to a conversation of the most titillating and satisfying vapidity ever known to me. This continued after supper, with a charmingly natural flow, wondering why people behaved differently from the way we wanted to, and wishing they wouldn't. When it was over, they walked with me to Purley Oaks station pushing into my hand as I got on the train a bag with some cakes and sandwiches, a pear, two oranges, the two eggs aforementioned, and a pound (described by Win as 'your fare' - the journey cost me 3/10).

Last night, on the other hand, I went to Colin and Mary Webb's, had a goodish dinner, dullish people except for the Webs themselves, and the Corbett-Singletons especially Mildred. I talked far too much, showed off far too much, and went home thoroughly depressed and shamed of myself. Today nothing at all except a long letter from Susan.

Sunday June 1 1952

We have been in the habit of talking late into the night lately. Since I sleep in the sitting-room, I have to stay up till the last, and have had no opportunity to write in my diary. I cannot really now because they are all talking, not that the last few days have been very eventful, not even very alive or real to me.

Tuesday June 3 1952

My money ran out on Sunday of course, and ever since then I have naturally felt little like anything. I am so hungry now, I am positively lightheaded. What does bread and marmalade do for one - almost nothing except keep one fleetingly alive? Alive but restless, unfocused incapable of anything but fidgeting and fussing. Bread and marge takes the stuffing out of one's very bones, and leaves one limp, prey to self-pity, squirrel-cage imagination and complete lack of resolution. As witness the failure of my pen for the last few days.

I wonder if my writing looks peculiar. I have been reading Wilfrid Blunt's new book on Handwriting and the Sweet Roman hand which Gerard has from Time and Tide for review.

Wednesday June 4 1952

Letter from Ju at last. Full of joy and fun. Though revue is off, Two Gents in July. Otherwise heavenly. Tonight to supper with Peggy Holland. She is flatly humorous and makes me laugh! She told me of her char called Lil, who came in one day and said "Ow, Mrs. Holland, you're lucky to have got rid of your hubby. My old man says to me when I come in the bedroom nights, 'Oh, 'ere comes elephant face.' 'Ere' I says, If you're going to come that, I'm going to sleep downstairs.' 'Oh no, you're not', he says, 'cos I've made some tea for you, all ready'. 'You can't have any tea', I says 'We haven't enough of the ration left'. 'It's made', he says, and I'm going to have it, hot or cold, come what may'. 'You can't have it cold' I says. 'Oh yes I can' he says. 'Oh, no, you can't' I says 'Oh, yes, I can' he says, and he did.

Thursday June 5 1952

Today the Queen's Birthday Parade. At 10.10 I found myself in the middle of a drifting crowd, forcing its way onto the Duke of York's steps already packed tight with people. I decided looking out over the Mall and the turning to Horse Guards Parade, that I should be better off in the Mall itself, where my height would be some advantage, and so it proved. Along Carlton House Terrace in the same solid wedge...

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Friday June 6 1952

A stormy black day, with heavy rain turning at times to thunder and lightning, with hail. I was feeling very down, and forgotten by everyone and everybody, when all of a sudden Joseph came in and said that he had a lot of old papers to be carried up, would I help? I would and did. Upstairs I found a tall thin cadaverous young man scrabbling about attempting to begin the task of cleaning out the positively Augean attic that Joseph lives in. The rafters cut diagonal lines along the whole length of this attic, so that to walk across it enforces upon one a sort of obstacle race through four quadliteral hoops. The floorboards are bare, the roof uncovered. Joseph has a bed in the corner, a desk in the window-gable, books everywhere, and scribbley drawings and paintings with tooth-paste tube tops poked into them.

The tall man got up as we came in, and seemed rather shy as we were introduced. His name is Germano Facetti (tho' I daresay I have spelt it badly.) He spent two years in a concentration camp, and although only the same age as myself, in his face there seems to be

the marks of many more years. His features were long, his cheeks sunken, his clothes unexpectedly respectable and clean and well-pressed. He needed a shave, but seemed otherwise a good deal cleaner than Joseph. I found that his wife was English and that explained a good deal. Joseph certainly does overdo the 'England is finished' line. Why does he live here in that case, why is his partner (for that is Germano's choice - even that must seem fun after the concentration camp) married to an English wife is also living here, and why does he not join his mother and brother in America? They took me for a drink, picking up Mrs. Facetti on the way. She is dowdy plump, clever and well-dressed, and I enjoyed myself very much. We sat in a close group near the Ladies Lavatory of the something de France in Frith St.? hushing obediently while someone told his wife that he was working, and being pushed rudely aside by Nina Hamnett, enquiring acidly whether we were a gypsy encampment and if so were we enjoying camping out? She is friskier than ever, and her face even more folded and peerish than ever. Later on I went to the Palladium and was thoroughly bored.

Sunday June 8 1952

A pleasant day impossibly overshadowed by my really desperate situation. A letter from the college threatening me with solicitors' actions if I don't pay my bill. Oh Heavens, have I really deserved all this frightful financial bother? Every thing is blackened and spotted by it.

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...would take a job permanently and I do not mean permanently. Nothing will induce me to give up the stage permanently, except the loss of my faith in myself, which is very far from vanished.

I see now what I should have seen years ago, that I have been beguiled by the top sugaring of sensible affection on D. into allowing him to make me compromise where no compromise is possible. I must repudiate him completely, at least in my own heart and mind with the least hurt possible to him.

Yesterday to cheer me up, Gerard said he would take me to see Ruth Draper. We were then on the way to Brompton House, where he was ordering a new frontal cloth of green damask at 79/6 a yard. It is to be edged in the most fanciful way with gold fan lace at 5 0/6 a yard. 'Extravagance I call it!' The shop, with excellent French brocades on show and so on, is charming - even its door is lined with green velvet and it is run by a tall thin diffident spinsterish creature, with a little Errol Flynn moustache and a whining high-pitched voice. On the way in, fascination of fascinations! We met a large lumbering walking on her insteps sort of woman, with yet a certain grandeur about her of a rather pretentious sort. Who should it turn out to be but Jacqueline Hope-Nicholson? Hedley's wife!

When we came out of Brompton House after stopping for a moment at that pretentious gilded mass, the Oratory, Gerard decided we might as well visit a friend of his, Jonathan Mayne, who is a curator at the V. and A. He was not in, so we pursued him to his flat in Hereford

Square which he shares with Hallam Fordham, another friend of Gerard's, and a good friend of Gielgud's. (Gerard says he might be of use to me!) Hereford Square - just off the Gloucester Rd., is a quiet, conventional typical London square with a lot of greenery in the middle. They have the ground floor and basement, pleasant and anonymous rooms carefully got up in a conventionally unconventional manner. Jonathan Mayne himself, (H.F. was away) is small, slight, with regular slightly insipid, conventional features, and the conversation of a confirmed member of the Girls' Friendly Society. Clever, but too clever by half, I should think.

Can write no more tonight. What a good thing I feel no inducement to write anything about today. Huge thunderstorm on, will go on tomorrow.

Saturday June 14th 1952

Thursday was altogether a curious day. The enforced tea-party, for poor Jonathan Mayne was obliged to produce tea for us, had an air of duty, as of a nephew entertaining a not very favourite aunt. Particularly as the flat was being redecorated at the time, with stiff blue paper and shiny white woodwork.

We came back up to the West End together, and found that Ruth Draper was, as I had expected, full-up; the alternative...

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...Greasy enamel tables and distempered walls. The clientele are much more interesting. We were lucky enough to meet outside a scrawny, consumptive girl of about thirty-five, called Pamela. She led us to a table at the back, and it became at once obvious to me that we had stumbled providentially on the biggest gossip in the whole of that monde. She leant over the table chattering excitedly under the mad stimulus of two cups of strong sweet tea, her dyed hair, coarse silk knitted blouse restraining two round little breasts from bouncing around like two apples in a bag, and a tied white and blue checked skirt, all accompanying her shrill voice assertively. Among other ravishing facts, she told us that Fay Compton was bald, "as been for years, dear', and that Mai Zetterling has a goitre, 'why else do you think she wears all them pearl chokers, she's waiting to have it cut, but they can't do it till it's ripe'. Also of an extraordinary little bunched up monkey of a dirty old woman at the other end of the room, who she said was a Countess De Vine and only 46, tho' she looks 100. She is so poor she digs in dustbins, has some disease which requires her to sleep in the looly at night. Pamela said that the other people in the Countess' digs told her 'O yes, we never think of using it between 1.0am and 9.30am. Sylvia's got it then'. She pointed out a thick-set man with a great deal of rather nasty hair and said 'That's Marcel. He challenged poor old Perce here (pointing to dim looking clerkly creature near at hand) to a fencing match, so off they went down to the area (pointing to the open window) like a couple of Dartadgenans, and we was all frightened because I mean, we all know Marcel wouldn't be satisfied till he'd drawn blood, and sure enough he did!' She pointed out a few artists, of some talent, one supposes, a dark glowering bitter-looking person with a mouth firmly folded against expression, a poet apparently named Bill Hopkins. He once asked her to read some of his poetry at a Poetry Society meeting (she is an actress of sorts) but she wouldn't because she thought 'Well, morbid dear, I mean not madly me is it talking about women with skirts of grief, well really!' A tall thin pop-eyed young man then came up whom she greeted as Johnny and who she afterwards explained, was John Larkmin 'writes poetry too dear, but his stuff's ineffectual, like himself'. She had been saying I reminded her of someone, and Gerard in his usual manner, asked this total stranger who he thought I looked like. J.L. misunderstanding the question, looked closely into my face and began to describe my character as it appeared to him from my face. 'Very sincere', he began, 'sensitive, sympathetic, cares deeply for truth, an actor perhaps.'

I loved him needless to say. I wonder if I do look so like an actor. Pamela finished off the evening, talking of a certain club, 'You wouldn't find me in any club that would accept me as a member'.