Elite

Upper

Class

Privilege

Posh

Advantage

Aristoc

Grand

Nob

Gentle

Plush

Middle class

comfortable

fortunate

social grade

Some examples:

Michael Rothenstein

*It's funny now, using words like "working class", but one of the*

*reasons I reacted against* ***my parents' lives was it represented something upper class****, and I,*

*like so many of my generation, wanted somehow, to bridge over and be part of the large sort*

*of proletariat life.*

Hugh Peppiatt

**And my father built a substantial house, on about two and a half acres, not far from the railway station in Beaconsfield, in a cherry orchard, and so we lived in, in some middle-class comfort** in Beaconsfield, including, of course, during the War.

**Well, then I went to Oxford, which, of course, was, in those days, all of us, from what was**

**really a privileged background**, and we'd all assumed that if we wanted to, we'd go to Oxford

or Cambridge.

In those days, there weren't many other universities, well, not ones that we

counted in, no doubt, a somewhat snobbish way.

**Coming from, as we practically did, privileged backgrounds**, with, anyway, enough money, and having been in Winchester and, and an

officer in the brigade of Guards, you had, everything was open to you, in what was then a still

a very male world, so I'll come back on to the girls, which actually was a very important

feature.

The ... and everything was open to you.

We'd, we'd been, seen something of the

world.

Those of us who had had, as good a training as you had at Winchester, frankly could

do, could get by on a minimum of work.

If you hadn't been to as good a school, then you

probably had to work harder.

Also you were, probably more industrious, and more conscientious than I and a lot of my friends were.

He had been very well paid at British American Tobacco, and, in fact, now, we acted for the directors of British American Tobacco, here, I say here - at Freshfields. And none of them, as I recall, died, worth less than a quarter of a million. Now, a quarter of a million then was an awful lot of money. It's like sort of 10 million, is it? It must be at least that now, the 1930s, surely it must be 2O times, I should think. Well, anyway, it was that sort of thing.

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**We were very comfortably off. You word, correct. Absolutely correct word. We were very comfortable. No question at all**, I mean, now we've seen the accounts, that income was declining in the thirties, and was quite modest through the forties, at Freshfields. And, in fact, this was, this went to, to this point, that my father, of course, then, had also made restricted provisions for a savings pension. He could only, as I recall, save up to about £1700 a year, my father, as a senior partner, which is one reason why he had to go on working till quite late. And he, well, of course, obviously started with absolutely nothing, I suppose there's some measure at the end, **the end of his life he wasn't badly ... his estate, I think it was about 100,000.**

**But that said, we, we, we lived perfectly comfortably. I mean, we had a full-time gardener. And up to the War, we had maids, two maids, not very good maids, I mean, they were Irish girls, but that, but that was how people, and, of course, we had a nanny.**

David Steel

Yes, it was mainly...it was very quiet. The houses there have remained...well some have changed, a number of the houses are the same. And ours was a three-storey house, and it had a garden to it, as I say large enough to run around and play cricket in the back. And we had at that stage, I mean it sounds terribly ritzy now, I remember my parents had a cook and a...I think she was probably called a house parlour maid or something like this, but they lived on the top floor, and we had a room on the top floor. I think there was probably only one bathroom in the house at that stage. And these two women as I say each had their own room at the top, and my brother and I shared a room at the top, and on the next floor down my parents had a bedroom, and there was a study which we used quite a lot. And there was a spare room there, and a bathroom there. And then on the ground floor, which actually was up a little bit because there was a floor below that which looked out onto the garden, but really the main ground floor there was a large, really quite a large drawing-room which ran the length of the house, and on the other side there was another large room, which was a dining...well, it was a dining-room. And the kitchen was below, and there was a funny little lift that brought up food. But as I say, they weren't well off but we had these servants and that time.

John Barkshire

I suppose you would describe them as upper middle-class Midlands professional would be

the sort of bracket. That's the bracket I think they would like to be put in, so it's probably

reasonably fair. Mummy was very clever, and went to Birmingham University and read

science, which in those days for a woman was fairly unusual

Kenneth Baker

And I like the army. And I like the army because you met people from all different sorts of walks of life, and having been at grammar schools and St. Paul's, I’d had a fairly protected middle class, upper middle class life, if you like, surround. And you certainly met people from a whole different range of activities, lives, experiences and classes, and it was a very class divided society in those days, and that was good in itself. And I think that's something-, those who did national service in the 50s had a slight flavour of people who served in the war, not quite the same as fighting day by day, but the comradeship, the coming together, and all of that was very much part of army life and I enjoyed it.

Peter Moro

In fact I remember being very upset that I had to wear brown shoes, which was a kind

of upper-class thing and everybody else had black shoes, and...

Sorry, brown shoes were upper class?

They were rather posh.

I see.

But black shoes were the rule in all of my fellow pupils and I was so ashamed to have brown

shoes.

Robert Medley

*There was a certain amount of money knocking about there, because he seemed to move from*

*one sort of journey to another, and slightly hypochondriac, but could move about the place*

*quite a lot. And the children were extremely well brought up, those Birrell children. I*

*suppose I'm talking about Augustine Birrell's father. Yes, they had of course, now I*

*remember from his biography, little biographical notes which are published, a very good little*

*book actually, and it's a fascinating book. They were brought up in Edinburgh in some*

*considerable style, and of course they went to private tutors, and my grandmother, those two*

*girls could read Greek at about the age of seven or eight; I mean, it was that kind of family.*

*And of course their ancestors again had been again ministers, but one of them had been the*

*first moderator of the Church of Scotland, I mean it was a substantial, substantial uppermiddle-*

*class professional family, with surgeons and doctors and that kind of thing. And one*

*of them must have...because their cousin was John Grey Dilston, who was a cousin of Earl*

*Grey do you see, and Dilston is just outside Newcastle, and my grandmother was brought up*

*largely there in company with very distinguished people like Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and*

*various social reformers.*

*So, I thought I would ask you, Robert, something about the sort of financial circumstances*

*that you were growing up in.*

*Oh, yes. Well as I said we started off when I was small, I remember in Campden Hill Square*

*as I've described, everything appeared to be set fair so far as I could see for a successful*

*young lawyer's career, you know, proper upper-middle-class do you see.*

George Baring

If you'll excuse me, may I just ask you, how you felt, sitting in the Royal Box? Were you self-conscious about that?

Oh not at all, anybody could buy it, I mean, they can now. It's called the Royal Box because any royalty can go there, but I mean, anybody can buy it. There's no privilege in it whatsoever.

I was wondering if you had yet developed a sense of your position, as it were?

No, not in the least, no, except I thought other people in the stalls had better seats!

Was your father giving you any guidance on how a, the young aristocrat should behave?

No, not really. I mean, if I behaved out of line, he'd make it quite clear.

I don't want to labour the point, but were you beginning to feel that you were treated slightly differently?

No, not in the least, no.

Because you must have been addressed as Viscount Errington.

No, not in the least, no that never really came up in life at all.

You'd think it would though. Was that because the circle you moved in, was very much of a similar class and nature?

Well, I think that, if you go back to the Eton days, you see, there were lots of boys with titles of one sort and another, and a Viscount wasn't very high. It didn't make any difference. I mean, it was in the school list, it was known, but if it was a list of boys in the class or whatever it is, you were just the same as anybody else, I mean, you weren't Viscount then.

Chandra Wickahmsingh

*Could you do something similar for the life of your mother, to give me an account of the life of your mother up to the point that you were born?*

Yah. I mean she was also from a middle-class family. Father was a sort of landed, belonged to the landed gentry of Colombo and he was a rich man, he owned a lot of houses. And he, he was also quite stern in his disposition to his children and to everyone, an austere character, very sort of, formidable looking, moustache and, and acted the, tried to act like an English gentleman. Again, I didn’t know him that well. My interaction with him was just sort of, family visits a couple of times a week and sitting in a veranda and listening to the parents talking and talking to their parents. So, the relationship was far from being close. I mean my, the closest family relationships I had were within my own family and with my father who was a very gentle person, and he was very keen on talking to me and talking to his other children about life and, and the world, and, and science and so on.

Peter Miller – does not have a single line but lots of bits and pieces.

he then lived the life of a retired gentleman. But he was a City man really, all his days.

Yes, very much the traditional society, I suppose, of a professional family of those days. Plenty of

home help and nannies and things,

David Scholey

Ah. So, your home, I mean was it...well you said your father was a merchant banker so presumably you had a fairly comfortable childhood.

Yes.

Were you brought up by a nanny or was your...?

Oh yes, by a nanny.

Jeremy Morse

My mother came, originally, of a Liverpool family, Cheshire farmers, sucked into Liverpool in the early l9th Century, but they made a lot of money in the late l9th Century.

In the late l9th Century?

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Of course, presumably at the time when you were settling yourself a property, it wasn't at such a

ridiculous level?

No, it wasn't. It didn't matter, we both had capital, I mean, I had quite a lot of capital, both from my

father and my mother's side, and my wife has inherited, from her grandfather, one of the farms in Gloucestershire, and also had some other capital. So we have never been short of money. And my

father was always very insistent on that, he said, "If you have some capital, it gives you some freedom,

you're not at the beck and call", and I note that the tax system in this country has been extremely light

on capital, I mean,if you inherit capital and you look after it, it's been very tough on income, at some

times, but it hasn't really touched the capital very much. So, anyway, I've never been other than

comfortably off, and I've never felt I have to, you know, take every penny from my work, etc., etc..

And that's just a bit of luck

Peter Carrington

PC - Well, I mean, my family … we were Smith, we were able Smith's and we started the first provincial bank outside London, in about 1650, or something, something like that a long time ago, for the Bank of England and it spread to-, they did very well, and they spread to London, and they were very successful in London. And my forbearer, the Lord Carrington, was Robert Smith and he was quite distinguished. He was a member of parliament and a minister and one thing another. And he was made a peer in 1790, something or other. And everybody in the house Lords got up and walked out because he was in trade. He was a banker. Most probably would know, be exactly the same now (laughing). But he was pretty upset by that, because he was a good deal more respectable, a member of parliament, he was a good deal more respectable than some of the people in the House of Lords at the time, sort of royal bastards and so on, but he was a bit upset. And he was a distinguished old boy, and but before that, quite a lot of our ancestors, Smith's, have been members of parliament and he himself had been a member of parliament.