My Life Story

Hugh E. Wilkinson

1. Early years

I was born on May 26th, 1926, on my mother’s 26th birthday, in a small nursing home in Streatham, south London. This was just after the General Strike, which had fizzled out a week or two before because the government had organised volunteers to do the work of the strikers. (Two years later my sister, Joan, was born in the same place, and other cousins after that.) I am told that a great-aunt came and felt my back soon after I was born, found it was stiff and pronounced that I would be troubled by constipation; that prophecy, I am happy to say, did not come true, but it is a fact that I have never been able to touch my toes without bending my knees.

My parents came from families that were basically engaged in business. My father’s father died four years before I was born, so I never knew him, but he had the reputation of being a formidable personality. I am told he had come from Norwich and gone to London, having broken off relations with his family because they had repaid his generosity by doing him a bad turn. With a name like Wilkinson, Norwich is a very likely place for him to have come from. The name means “Wilkin’s son”, and Wilkin was a popular name among the Flemish weavers who were brought into East Anglia in the Middle Ages. My father’s mother’s family came from the east Midlands, and my middle name of Everard was my grandmother’s maiden name. (My first name, Hugh, was the name of a boy my mother was a governess to in Portugal, just after World War I; she also had a boyfriend named Hugh! – Note that I am not named after St. Hugh, whose saint’s day falls on All Fools Day!) My paternal grandmother died when I was two, and I just have faint memories of her. One is of sitting on her lap as she showed me pictures in a church magazine. Another is of her putting on her coat when we went on an outing to Croydon to see the aeroplanes; it was only a small aerodrome, and has now been built on.

I have no memories of my father’s family home in Putney, as they had moved away before I was born. My parents were both born in 1900 and went to the same primary school, so they were *osana-najimi* in Japanese! I have only slightly more vivid memories of my mother’s family home, which was in the middle of Barnes Common, very convenient for seeing the Oxford and Cambridge boat races. My maternal grandfather, Stanley Matthews, was an avid amateur carpenter, and carved many pieces of furniture out of solid oak, many of which are now divided among his grandchildren. The house constantly stank of glue. By the time I was old enough to know my grandparents, they were living apart. My grandfather, “Grandpa”, lived in a boarding-house run by the family’s former housekeeper, and my grandmother, “Granny”, lived near her sisters in the north of London. She was a hypochondriac, and most of the time I only saw her in bed. My chief memories of my Grandpa’s place are of the many dachshunds kept by his landlady, and of his stereoscopic photographs. The photographs were in pairs, one for each eye, and when you looked at them through a stereoscope the picture stood out in three dimensions. In the summer, Grandpa used to come down to the cottage we rented by the sea, as did other relatives and friends, and I have memories of him walking down to the beach with a small cousin on his shoulders. He also knew many old games, which were useful for playing at parties. All in all, he was a very good grandfather.

Both my grandparents had innumerable sisters, some of them unmarried “maiden aunts”. I only have clear memories of one great-aunt on my father’s side, but another married a professor of English in Amsterdam, much respected, as I later discovered, by one of the professors of English at Gakushuin. He was succeeded by his daughter, Kathleen (“Cousin Kathie”) Vandergaaf, and I once went and stayed with her in Amsterdam when I was at Cambridge, by which time she had taken her father’s place as professor. There were many (second) cousins on my father’s side, but most of them lived very far away, so I hardly met them. On my mother’s side, my grandmother’s sisters were a formidable bunch. There was Aunt Nell, who was deaf and carried an ear trumpet, and had a booming voice. There was a “Cousin Louie”, who looked like a dragon to us small children; she had bright red rouge on her cheeks and false teeth that clacked together every time she opened her mouth. They all wore ankle-length dresses in a single dark colour and their long hair was rolled up on their heads. With them was my mother’s cousin, Auntie Ella, who did all the housekeeping. Later in life she came to live not far from us, when we were in Hove. She was a good cook, and used to roast a goose with all the trimmings for our Christmas dinner, and made a lovely Christmas pudding. In fact, I think she may have produced a complete Christmas menu, with mince pies and a Christmas cake – a fruit cake topped with marzipan and sugar icing. Grandpa’s sisters were much more modern in their dress. One was very athletic (she had been a powerful swimmer, and her sons were also) and went around in tweeds.

My parents each had two brothers and a sister. My father’s brothers emigrated to Canada, living in Vancouver and Victoria, so I only saw them when they occasionally came back to England. The one in Vancouver had a daughter, so I had a Canadian cousin.

My father’s sister was our “rich” Auntie Stella. She was 17 years older than my father, so was like a mother to him. In her younger days she had looked after an old uncle, a Mr. George Smith, until he died, and he left her his enormous, four-storeyed house (plus a large kitchen and scullery in the basement) and ample money to live on. The house must have been on the outskirts of London when it was built. It had three big gardens behind, each one leading into the next. In the furthest garden were tall trees with owls, which terrified me at night with their hooting, when I went to stay there as a small boy. (And speaking of owls, I am reminded that in those days there were many, many wild birds to be seen, before extensive damage was done to their habitats by modern development. And even in more recent times I used to see a great variety of birds in Joan’s garden, whereas now there are only sparrows and hedge-sparrows (dunnocks) and the occasional robin.) We always went to tea at Auntie Stella’s on Sundays (she lived about two miles away from us), and she always had “Russian toffees” ready for me and Joan. She was always giving us treats like going out to lunch or going up to London to see a play or something like that (and, more importantly, underwrote our schooling). (Understandably, she was our favourite aunt!) When I was about ten, she married a widower, Thomas Rees, our “Uncle Tom”, who came to live with her, bringing his daughter Doris, and after that they used to invite us to a hotel for Christmas every year; the hotels always arranged many interesting events at Christmas time, and prepared a wonderful Christmas dinner, and part of the point of the invitation was to give my mother a rest from cooking! Uncle Tom was very good at acting little skits in which he himself played all the parts, like Japanese *rakugo*!

My mother’s brothers and sisters lived further away, on the edge of London, and we only saw them at intervals. My mother was the first to get married, so I was the first of the grandchildren, and my youngest cousin is 13 years younger than me. My parents’ generation are all dead, but we keep in touch with our cousins.

As I said, Joan in two years younger than I am, and when she was born I can just remember my mother saying “Don’t jump on the bed, you’ll hurt Baby!” She is adventurous, and is good at sports and liked climbing trees (she fell once and broke her arm) – all the things I should have been good at as a boy, but wasn’t (she can also whistle, which I can’t); this was all galling to my pride, and in fact I was jealous of her! We used to quarrel when we were small, but we get on very well now; in spite of our different make-ups we have similar tastes and interests. My parents had complementary characters; my father was quiet, and my mother very active and enterprising. I take after him, and Joan takes after her.

What I remember as my childhood home, to the south of Streatham (we were in a rented flat while I was a baby), was a semi-detached house newly built, right on the edge of London (we were in the London postal district, but in the borough of Croydon, which was outside London). It had a small garden in front, and a slightly larger one behind, where we had a swing, and was specially favoured in having a garage. My father was a motor engineer, and worked in a “garage”, that is, a filling station which also serviced and repaired cars. Our first car was an Austin 7, with the number YM 91 (or 19 – I’m not sure which); it had an open top and a “dickey” behind, that is, a folding seat for two people which could be opened up. The low number shows that there were still not so many cars on the road in those days. Horses were commonly seen. The milkman had a horse, and the baker, and the coal merchant. Small boys used to go along the streets scooping up the horse manure, and selling a bucketful of manure for a penny for householders to put on their gardens. The streets had gaslights, and I think they must have had pilot lights in them, as a man used to come round in the evening with a long pole with a hook on the end, and pull on a chain to light the gas. The ice cream man used to come by on a special bicycle fitted with an ice box, ringing a bell. Another vehicle that used to come down the streets was the “Carter Paterson” special delivery van; if you needed his services you put a “CP” card in your window, and he would call at your house. Other callers were the chimney sweep, the knife grinder and the chair caner. Many chairs had seats of thin strips of cane woven together, and when these broke the caner would reseat the chair.

Houses were warmed by open coal fires. We usually just had a fire in the living room, and a little electric heater in the other rooms (English bedrooms are notoriously cold!). But there was also a coal stove in the kitchen which supplied hot water. It had a hollow casing filled with water, which then ran through pipes up to a tank upstairs (hot water rises!) in the airing cupboard. The bathroom was also upstairs, not far from the tank. Our house had two rooms and a kitchen downstairs, and two bigger bedrooms and a smaller bedroom upstairs, with a bathroom and a separate lavatory. (Older houses, built in the days before there were bathrooms and indoor lavatories, had these rooms made out of former bedrooms! The place for the lavatory had traditionally been a wooden building outside the house.) Refrigerators were rare, and the kitchen larder had a meat safe on the floor (the coolest spot), with a door of wire mesh to keep the flies out. Roast meat could be kept cold for a day or two, and if there was any left after that it could be turned into a stew. In those days we also had salt beef, which could be stored. And eggs could be stored by steeping them in isinglass (a kind of gelatin). One old piece of kitchen equipment was a knife polisher. Old knives were not made of stainless steel, so they had to be kept polished. To polish them, you stuck them in holes in a wheel-shaped box and turned a handle. (They also had to be ground and sharpened periodically by the knife grinder that I mentioned above, who would visit the house.) We also had a mincing machine, for grinding meat. You pushed the meat in at the top, and turned a handle which operated a shaft with a thread to drive the meat along a tube and through small holes at the end.

I think my mother had an electric iron, but in many old-fashioned houses they used flat irons, which had to be heated on a stove from time to time. Before you ironed the clothes which had been washed (by hand), the wet clothes were passed through rollers on what we called a mangle, but is better called a wringer, to squeeze the water out. Yet another household item was a hot-water bottle made of stoneware. These were standard equipment until rubber hot-water bottles came into use. And while I think of old-fashioned items, we had an old gramophone which had to be wound up by hand, and records which played for about three minutes; one of them was a recording of the quartet from Verdi’s *Rigoletto*, which is quite noisy although it is good music, and I called it the “cat fight”. Another old-fashioned gadget, not in the home but in a shop, was part of the cash system in the larger stores which had many counters. There was no separate cash register at each counter. Instead there was a sort of overhead ropeway system. The salesperson took your money and put it with the invoice in a container, which was then attached to the ropeway. He or she then pulled a lever, and the container was shot to the central cashier’s office; the cashier then took the money, counted out of the change, stamped the invoice “Paid”, put these in the container and sent it back to the counter. It all seemed marvellous to me in those days!

2. My early schooling.

My first school, which I went to from the age of five to the age of eight, had the name “Aberdeen House Kindergarten”. It was run by a married lady, Mrs. Bishop, and there were three other lady teachers, Mrs. Libby, Miss Slight and Mrs. Coffin (in order from the bottom class up). The building was a semi-detached house like our home, so there were four big rooms, and each room had a teacher with a class of about ten or twelve. We learnt the three R’s, and occasionally had other lessons. The arithmetic became quite complicated as we advanced, because we had to do sums in the various units of money, weights and measures. So we had to add £7.16s.3½d. and £8.13s.7¾d. (£1=20s., 1s.=12d.), calculate the number of ounces in 9½ stone (1 stone = 14 pounds, 1 pound = 16 ounces), or the number of square feet in 6¼ acres (1 acre = 4 roods, 1 rood = 40 sq. poles, 1 sq. pole = 30¼ sq. yards, 1 sq. yard = 9 sq. feet)! In the top class we had to recite every morning first the Lord’s Prayer, then the Ten Commandments, and then the twice-times table (the multiplication table, Japanese *9-9no hyō*; we went up to 12 times 20 because of the English money)! Our occasional lessons included drawing and music, for which special teachers came in. Besides singing lessons, we had a percussion band, playing to a piano accompaniment, and I was the conductor, beating the time and signalling their entrances to the triangles, drums, tambourines, cymbals and castanets. (The piece we performed, which I later identified, was the third movement of Mozart’s Symphony No. 39.) A “Mademoiselle” also came once a week to teach us French; she was a grandmotherly figure in a long dress, and looked to me about 80! We used to recite the numbers and short phrases, and we learnt French folksongs. At the end of the year we used to perform a little play in French, and one year I was the Wolf in “Little Red Riding-Hood”; my opening line was “Que j’ai grand faim!” – “How hungry I am!” The final event in the year was called the prize-giving, and the children who were heads of their classes or had excelled in their subjects were given books as prizes, and I continued to amass a number of these throughout my schooldays. I should also mention here that our music teacher, Mrs. Bertha (“big Bertha”) Williams was also my private piano teacher, and she gave me a good grounding in both piano-playing and musical education. (Her sister, Mrs. Anderson, played the piano accompaniment for the percussion band.)

My next school, which I attended until I was twelve, was “Cheltonia College”, a boys’ preparatory school of about the same size as the other, about forty boys in all, which Mrs. Bishop’s sons had attended. Here I was to learn French grammar and Latin grammar, and, two years later, Greek grammar. The school was run by a Mr. Thomas, who was quite an old man (grey-haired), and his main assistant was a man of about the same age, a Mr. Reade (nephew of the novelist Charles Reade), who walked with a stick because his leg had been broken in an accident; he was also extremely short-sighted, and needed a magnifying glass for reading. These two both taught Latin and Greek – in the traditional English pronunciation, so, for example, *civis* ‘citizen’ was pronounced “sigh-viss” (in my next school we were taught the classical pronunciation, so I had to learn “key-wiss”!). There was one other teacher, a younger man, who taught mathematics, French and sports. The school building was a large old, Victorian house, in an area close to where there had once been a large estate, Streatham Park, the country house of the Thrale family, which Dr. Johnson used to visit (there is a Thrale Road there now). Only three rooms in the building were used for the school; another part of it was used as a school for small boys, with two lady teachers, and Mr. Thomas and his family also lived in the same building. It had a garden attached, of which Mr. Thomas was very proud, and he would spend all his spare time working in it; the lawn was spotlessly free of weeds. The school was lit by gaslight and I can remember Mr. Thomas coming round in the winter evenings with a taper on the end of a long pole and lighting the gas (each light had a flame surrounded by a mantle, which glowed).

We also had lessons in English grammar, which consisted mainly of parsing and analysis, and I think these were all taught by Mr. Reade. (We learnt our English grammar through the medium of Latin grammar.) We also had to write an essay for Mr. Thomas every weekend, as part of our homework. Mr. Thomas also taught history, geography and scripture. History (English and European) consisted of memorising a few pages of the history book every weekend, ready for a test on Monday morning; as you can imagine, I didn’t enjoy history, and the writing of the essay also spoilt my weekend! In geography, we learnt the basic information about every country except our own country – I suppose we were expected to know that without being taught it. I remember Mr. Thomas saying once that China was a very backward country and Japan was progressive, and he expected that one day Japan would take over China! Those were the days of the British Empire, “on which the sun never set”, and all the Empire countries were coloured red on the map, so the world map was one mass of red. We were taught that Britain was preparing all these countries for eventual self-government, so we were beneficent rulers; certainly it is true that when independence came to these countries there was basically a smooth handover, and the countries retained friendly relations with Britain, and were bound together in the newly formed Commonwealth, and still keep their ties in this way. For scripture, the whole school was assembled in one big room (which was used for the two top classes), and each boy had to stand in front of the class in turn and read from the Bible (the same practice was also used for English literature lessons), which was absolute hell for those who were poor at reading. When I first came to the school we were on the book of Exodus, and by the time I left we had got to the end of the second book of Kings. So I was quite well versed in Israelite history! The examinations consisted of answering questions about things like the names of the kings, and thanks to my photographic memory I used to get 100%.

The school had a big playground, next to Mr. Thomas’ garden, and was also equipped with gymnastic apparatus. One of our favourite games was prisoners’ base. We also kicked a football around, but for organised games we had to take a bus to a ground far away, to play football (soccer) in the winter and cricket in the summer. The only time that I ever scored a goal in football was in the first five minutes of my first game! A real fluke, as I was never any good at ball games (I could never catch or throw a ball)! In the summer we also had swimming lessons once a week, at the public “baths” which were almost next to my father’s garage. (The Streatham ice rink was right next door to it, and had a hockey team (Canadians), which was very unusual in Britain in those days.)

In the morning my father took me as far as his garage, and I walked on from there; we also went home for lunch (there was a break of 1½ hours), so I repeated the same process. After school I came home by bus, but after a while I started walking home and saving the penny to buy small model animals, made of lead, which I collected, as well as collecting stamps. It took about one hour, and during that time I finished my homework. There was never any written homework except for the essay; I had partly to memorise a large section of Latin grammar and syntax (I still have my old Latin and Greek grammar books! And use them!) and partly to prepare to translate the Latin textbook in class the next day. Thanks to this good memory of mine (when I was young – not now!) I quickly learnt my grammar; also I was fond of languages, and my mother said that I always had a dictionary in one hand and a teddy bear in the other! After two years at this school I had progressed in Latin and Greek beyond the rest of the class, and for the remainder of my time at that school, I worked by myself, preparing to take a scholarship examination for entrance to Charterhouse, one of the leading “public schools”, about which more later.

During my childhood, we had plenty of nice places to play in quite near my home, and our mother would let us go there alone, without worrying about whether we were safe. Those were the days! (We had an older friend with us when we went there.) There was a wood which was apparently part of the grounds of a house that had been burnt down; it had trees of many sorts, a lot of which were good for climbing (Joan would rush to the top, while I nervously made my way up slowly, afraid of falling but determined not to be beaten by her). It also had many elder bushes, from which we could cut branches to make huts. A little further away was a park, with a big expanse of grass, which was good for picnics and playing games. In another direction, there was a disused golf course with a little river running through it (where Joan broke her arm). In the summer, we used to go and stay at the seaside, initially in boarding-houses, but in later years we rented a cottage, and many of our relations would come and stay with us. There was also room in the garden for friends to come and camp! But then the war came and put an end to seaside holidays.

In those days there were also many entertainments for children, especially around Christmas time. One traditional entertainment is a “pantomime”, which must have originated in the days when people celebrated festivals by dressing up in other people’s clothes. The story in a pantomime was taken from a popular fairy tale; “Cinderella”, “Jack and the Beanstalk”, “Aladdin” and “Puss in Boots” were some of the favourites. In the pantomime the part of the “principal boy”, such as the Prince in “Cinderella” and Jack in “Aladdin”, was taken by a woman (shades of Takarazuka!!), while the funny women’s parts, such as Cinderella’s “Ugly Sisters”, or Jack’s mother, were played by male comedians. Most of the action in the pantomime consisted of singing and dancing and comic dialogues (like *manzai*), so the principal “boy” and girl were popular singers. Often there was also a “demon king”, who would try to make things difficult for the hero; the hero would say to the audience, “If you see the demon king coming, shout and warn me”, so there was also audience participation. A really good pantomime would also have acrobats and conjurors, so it was a real all-round entertainment. There still are pantomimes today, but they are not so common. There was also an entertainment for children presented on the beach at the seaside, this was a “Punch and Judy” show performed by the use of hand puppets, with a traditional story, and the hidden puppeteer acted the voices with a squeaker in his mouth.

Other children’s plays commonly performed were “Peter Pan” and “here the Rainbow Ends”, in which two children have adventures looking for the end of the rainbow. There were also film shows for children on a Saturday morning, when there was no school for small children. I saw my first film when I was about three. I think it was on Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, and all the relatives were at our house. I was given the wishbone of the turkey to pull and make a wish, and was told to wish to go to see the film “Treasure Island” (or it may have been “Peter Pan”) and we all went and did that. (In those days the bigger cinemas had “cinema organs” – big organs with many kinds of stops (I think all the sounds were electrically produced), and the organist would play for about fifteen minutes in between the films. There were also circuses, of course, and the nearest one to us was at the Crystal Palace. This was a big glass building, originally put up in Hyde Park for the Great Exhibition of 1851; after the exhibition was over, it was moved to a hill in south London. (To the south of the exhibition site, museums were later erected to hold the exhibits. One of them, I think, also houses a collection of Japanese *ukiyoe* woodblock prints, which became popular in the West after Japan was opened up by the Meiji Restoration. This was also the era that gave rise to the Gilbert and Sullivan opera “The Mikado”.) Besides the winter circuses, it had a big firework exhibition for Guy Fawkes Day (November 5th), with a magnificent set piece (*shikake hanabi*). The Crystal Palace was accidentally burnt down in 1936, and the only parts that remained were twin towers at either end; these were pulled down during the war, as they would otherwise have been landmarks for German bombers. The site is now a sports arena.

3. At Boarding School.

At the age of 12 I went to Charterhouse, one year younger than most of the boys. My parents had thought of sending me to a less famous school, but Mr. Thomas insisted I should try for a scholarship at Charterhouse. (There is another sort of link here with St. Hugh, as he was co-founder of a monastic order at Chartreuse in France, now famous for its liqueurs; the name of the order in England was anglicised as “Charterhouse”.) The school was founded in 1611 on the site of an old Charterhouse monastery in London, partly as a school and partly as a home for old men; in 1872 the school was moved into the country, to Godalming, and the buildings in London are now only used for the home. So on my 12th birthday (and the day before or the day after, I can’t remember which) I went up to Charterhouse in London for two full days of exams, probably two or three hours in the morning and the same in the afternoon on both days. Luckily I passed (I got the third place out of fourteen), so that in September I went for my first experience in a boarding school. (I couldn’t have gone to the school without the money from my scholarship, and two years later this money was increased when I became a “Senior Scholar”.) There were about 600 boys at the school, divided among eleven “houses”, where we boarded. Luckily, the year when I entered the school, the uniform was changed from black morning dress (like Eton) to a brown tweed jacket and grey trousers; each house had a different tie, with narrow diagonal stripes of the house colours on a black background (my house colour was lavender). Each house was in the charge of a housemaster who lived with his family in the “private side” of the house, kept distinct from the boys’ side, with a big kitchen in between.

The housemaster was ultimately responsible, of course, but discipline in the house was maintained by the “monitors” (called “prefects” in some schools). These are a small number of the most senior boys who have the authority to mete out punishment for breaking the house rules. One rule was “no running in the corridors”, another was “no talking in the common room during homework (“banco”) time”. If you broke the rules you were given bad marks called “meals”, and you had to work off your “meals” by doing duties such as making toast for the monitors or cleaning their shoes or bringing them hot water for shaving in the mornings. The monitors also had the privilege of using “fags” for delivering messages to other houses (this was especially necessary for sports team captains); the fags were the most junior boys, and when the monitor yelled out “Boy!” the nearest fag had to run (a person standing was nearer than one sitting). You can see from this that there was quite a *senpai-kōhai* system. The most junior boys had to sit at the lowest table in the common room and the dining hall, and you moved up to the next table as you became more senior. The most senior boys in the common room had “carrels” (like the cubicles with desks in a library), and the ones more senior to them had their own studies. Freshmen had to have all the buttons of their jackets done up; the next year you could undo one button, and the year after that two, but only “school monitors” (picked from the house monitors) could undo all their buttons!

In my house there were a few small bedrooms with three or four beds in them, but the biggest dormitories (communal bedrooms) were divided into “cubicles”. Each boy had one cubicle, which was divided off by wooden partitions above head height, and a corridor ran through the middle of the dormitory, with one set of cubicles on the right and the other on the left. Each cubicle contained a bed, a chair and a washstand, on which was set a big china bowl and a ewer of cold water (if you go to the Glover-tei in Nagasaki, you will see the same kind of thing). Our clothes were kept in a different places, looked after by a “matron”, who was a sort of mother to the boys, and tended to them if they had minor illnesses. (She went by the defamatory nickname of “the hag”; in my time it was a Mrs. Le Mesurier, who was known, more respectfully, as “the Mezh”.) If you wanted hot water, you had to take your ewer down the stairs and along a long corridor to a place where there was a hot water tap. (All the houses have been rebuilt or modernised since then; I don’t think present-day boys would accept such spartan conditions!)

In the morning we were woken by the house butler, Horace Edgler (referred to as “Edgler” by the housemaster, but known to us boys as “Horace”), who rang a large and very loud handbell. His domain was the “buttery” and he was helped by a young boy (not too bright) who was called a “buttery hop”, in my time, Roy. The first bell was three quarters of an hour before call-over (“adsum”), the second bell half an hour, the third a quarter of an hour, and the last five minutes (when most of the boys got up!). At call-over, all the boys’ names (only the surnames) were called by the monitor on duty, and we answered “’Sum”, short for “Adsum”, the Latin for “I am here”; then a short Bible passage was read, and the housemaster said a prayer. After that we had breakfast (but in the summer, when the days were long, there was one class before breakfast).

Before the classes began in the morning, we all went to chapel, where each person had an allotted seat, and the boy at the end of the row had to keep the attendance record. I was in the choir, where we had seats near the organ, for the whole of my school days except for one year while my voice was breaking, and this was very good musical training; the very first music I practised was was Bach’s “St. Matthew Passion”. In classes, we had one “form master” who took us for classics (Latin and Greek), and we went to other specialist masters for other languages and science subjects. For mathematics, the classes were divided up according to mathematical ability; I was able to do mathematics all right, except for mechanics and dynamics, but I never enjoyed it. In the middle of the morning we had a short break, when we gathered in our house groups and did “physical jerks” (muscle training exercises).

Among our teachers, some younger ones went to the war, but others who were teachers of specialist subjects were excused from military service, and some older ones who had reached retirement age still carried on. Some classes had to be taken by men for whom it was not their special subject. Thus Mr. J.S. (“Dickie”) Wright, who later became my housemaster after my first housemaster, Mr. A.L. (“Uncle”) Irvine retired, taught German, though he was a maths teacher. He could do this because he was a good teacher and knew how to make his classes interesting; he was also helped by the German teacher, an Alsatian, Mr. Alfred Tressler, who had worked out a system to make the complicated German plural forms and adjectival endings easier to learn. (In that class I learnt many famous poems, some of which were later set to music, and are now familiar songs.) All in all, the quality of teaching was not affected.

Apart from being in the choir, I also took piano lessons from Dr. Thomas (T.P. – “Tippy”) Fielden, and Mr. John (J.W.) Wilson (whose special subject was physics, not music). Dr. Fielden directed the chapel choir, and Mr. Wilson directed a “Small Choir”, of which I was also a member; this choir gave concerts on special occasions, and on one of them I had just been eating a lot of doughnuts and couldn’t sing the high notes! Besides this, Dr. Fielden also taught me to play the vast 3-manual Harrison organ which fills the great school chapel with sound. (It was a War Memorial Chapel, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.) So I was able to perform Bach’s “Toccata and Fugue in D Minor”. Another musical event was the house singing competitions, which were judged by the great O.C. (Old Carthusian – the adjective for “Charterhouse”) Ralph Vaughan Williams. I think I conducted the choirs – four-part and unison – of my house, Pageites, for three years, and we won it each time. And then my successor, David Raeburn (still very active in Oxford), won it the next year. (After his retirement, Mr. Wilson went on to play a part in the musical world nationally.) The school also produced a hymn book, the *Clarendon Hymn Book* (Oxford, 1936), and Dr. Fielden and Mr. Wilson, who was a nephew of the composer Sir Henry Walford Davies, contributed some of the tunes. One of the loveliest hymns in this book, which is full of old favourites, is Cecil Spring-Rice’s “I vow to thee, my country”, set to the theme tune from Holst’s “Jupiter”; I still treasure my copy of this book. During my first year, the choir performed Purcell’s “Dido and Aeneas”, with masters and their wives taking the principal parts; I was one of Dido’s maidens. Another musical event was occasional performances of string quartets by Dr. Fielden and his wife and two other music masters. The school had no teacher of wind instruments, and, though there was an orchestra, it was short of these players, so Mr. Wright used to play two oboe parts on his concertina! From all this you can see that the musical life in the school was quite vigorous.

Lunch was a formal meal, when we were joined by the housemaster, Mr. Irvine (“the Uncle”), and his wife (“the Aunt”) and the house tutor (assistant housemaster, who was in fact Mr. Wilson), and the duty monitor recited a long grace (in English – at Cambridge we had the same grace in Latin!). As far as I can remember we only had afternoon classes twice a week, with other activities on other days. Two afternoons a week we had organised sports, where the houses were divided up into teams according to ability (I was in the team for duffers, called the “Etceteras”). When I first arrived we played football (soccer) in the two winter terms and cricket in the summer, but after two years we also played (field) hockey after the New Year. Other games like tennis, squash and fives were not organised.

There was also a school “baths” (swimming pool), where we swam naked (that has changed now, as the school also has girls). One other afternoon was given over to the “corps”, the Officers’ Training Corps, where we did military training and exercises in World War I uniforms, with old-fashioned rifles. This was only for the older boys, and when I first entered the school I joined the Boy Scouts. We were divided into patrols according to our houses, and those of us in my house were all very small, so our scoutmaster, Mr. George Snow, invented a new Shrimp Patrol and made a special patrol flag! Mr. Snow was a very tall man, about 195 cm., who was also the school chaplain, and later became a bishop; one of his sons is a well-known TV presenter. (The founder of the Scouts, Lord Baden-Powell, was an old boy of the school, and other notable O.C.s were John Wesley and Thackeray.) Saturday and Sunday afternoons we were free to spend as we liked; parents sometimes visited the school then and took their boys out to tea. We were free to walk or cycle anywhere we liked as long as it was not “out of bounds”; the bounds were a river or a railway, which meant we could go for long distances into the country but not into the town (if we had to go into the town for something we had to get signed permission from the housemaster). I used to go for walks with my best friend in the house (and also in the choir, where he had a beautiful voice), David Stallabrass; one of the places within walking distance was a gallery of paintings by G.F. Watts. (I continued to keep in touch with David until he died in 2015.)

I went to Charterhouse in 1938, and one year later the war broke out, so I spent most of my school days in wartime. This had remarkably little effect on our school life. The school was in the country, so was hardly affected by the bombing. (One bomb, jettisoned after a raid, was dropped in the middle of a square surrounded by buildings on three sides, but no damage was done.). Some of the common foodstuffs were rationed, but Mrs. Irvine, assisted by her able cook, known to us as “Nancy”, still managed to produce interesting and substantial meals with what she could get (some of the dishes were given ribald names by the boys!). Mrs. Irvine kept our ration books, but each boy was given his ration of jam for his own use, and I remember being very careful to make one small pot last for a whole term (or was it just a month?).

When I first went there, I found the life very strange, and lacked self-confidence; many of the other boys, by contrast, had already been to boarding school before and had plenty of confidence. Still, after a while, I was helped here by the fact that I gradually became popular with some of the older boys in the house, when they discovered that I could help them with their Latin homework! Then, after a couple of years there I went through an experience which greatly helped me. It was time for me to be prepared by my scoutmaster/chaplain for confirmation, which is the time when you yourself undertake the promises to live a Christian life which were made for you by your godparents when you were baptised as a baby. Mr. Snow, who had got some ideas from Moral Re-Armament (see below), explained to me that God could always speak to you in your heart, telling you where you had gone wrong, and what things you should do – bad habits to correct, or restitution to be made, or good habits to cultivate. This made me see that I could decide the direction of my life. I had always felt inferior and sorry for myself because I was not good at the things like sports that other boys were good at, and felt that there was nothing I could do about it. I now began to see that this didn’t matter, and that I had plenty of other God-given qualities that I could use to help other people. I realised that everybody needs friendship, and I began to act positively to be a friend to others instead of waiting for others to become friends with me. I am still not naturally self-assured, but I know that I can always manage somehow if I try, and that the key to a satisfying life is to live for what you can give to others. I was also helped during this difficult period in my life by finding my feet in the musical life of the school and joining the choir.

Academically, I had no problems, and was always keen on my schoolwork. After two years I took what was then the “School Certificate” exam, in eight subjects, and got either “Very Good” or “Good” in all of them. This was a proficiency exam set by Oxford and Cambridge, which was later replaced by a state exam called the “General Certificate of Education at the Ordinary Level” (the “O Level” exam). This exam marked the end of one’s general education, after which one specialised, and I specialised in classics for the next four years (one year longer than usual, as I had arrived at the school when I was one year younger than the average). Normally at this stage one worked for the “Higher Certificate” exam (now replaced by the “A (= Advanced) Level”, but our classics master, Mr. Irvine, decided that that was a waste of time, and that we should all work to get a scholarship to either Oxford or Cambridge; in my case, he decided that I had the Cambridge type of mind – more practical than philosophical. So in my last year at school I took the scholarship exam for King’s College, Cambridge. (I don’t know why he decided I should try for King’s; perhaps because a former pupil of his called Wilkinson would be my tutor if I went there!) I succeeded in getting my scholarship, and this led on naturally to the next stage in my life. (Besides the classics, Mr. Irvine felt that we should also become acquainted with English literature, and set us the task of memorising poems to be recited in class. Bit by bit, I memorised the whole of Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”, so that in the end I could say the whole thing straight off! Another extra subject we were taught was history, and this was taught by the Headmaster, Mr. Robert Birley. He would cram in so much information in the course of an hour that I developed a note-taking handwriting, to take it all down. This stood me in good stead later in life, when I had to do a lot of note-taking, but my writing is the despair of people who have to read it! The classical sixth was the senior class in the school, and had a special classroom built for it, with William Morris-style desks and chairs and wall-hangings, all chosen by Mr. Irvine. As you can see, Mr. Irvine featured quite prominently in my school life, and there is an anecdote about him which gives some clue to his character. Some monitors were once invited to the “private side” for breakfast, and the Aunt, who was serving the meal, asked him “Do you feel like a sausage, Lester?”, to which he replied, with a straight face, “Do I look like a sausage?” They took it that he was putting her down, but I think it was simply an instance of his dry style of humour. (She was no academic, but he was very fond of her.) He was quite a formidable figure, whom we respected rather than loved, and boys would imitate his gruff way of speaking when telling stories about him. (By contrast, he had a very pleasant singing voice, and liked to give recitals of songs in various languages. I remember too his resounding “I know not the man”, as Peter in the “Matthew Passion”.

4. Learning Japanese

The year was 1944, and I was not 18, and eligible for conscription into the wartime armed forces. I had decided I would like to go into the navy, as this would not involve direct man-to-man fighting. Before I left school I got a letter from the army, which had been sent out to all those who had got classical scholarships to Oxford or Cambridge, asking if I would like to go on a Japanese language course for military intelligence when my call-up came; those with classical scholarship were selected because Latin and Greek were considered sufficiently different from English to provide a good basis for learning a completely different kind of language. As I wanted to go into the navy, I turned it down, but then I heard I could take the same course in the navy, so I quickly applied. The result was that from October, 1944, to April, 1945, I was on an intensive course, learning the Japanese written language that was used in writing naval messages (more archaic than the spoken language), which our intelligence officers were intercepting and decoding. We were taught the grammar and translation by an army captain Eric Ceadel (pronounced “Keedle”), who had taught classics at Cambridge, and had learnt Japanese on a previous course. He had created his own terminology for Japanese grammatical terms, thus the “attributive, conclusive and indefinite” forms of the verb and so on, and he said all Japanese parts of speech were in origin either nouns or verbs, which makes sense. When it came to pronunciation, he said that Tokyo should be pronounced as “Tawkyaw”. He began the course by explaining the difference between *wa* and *ga*. We were taught the *kanji* and *kana* by a retired naval captain Oswald Tuck, who had been the attaché in the embassy in Tokyo before the war. He started by teaching the simple *kanji* first, presenting the different kinds of strokes in order, and when we had learnt a certain number of them he introduced the *kana*, showing the *kanji* from which the *kana* had come. I probably learnt about 1,000 *kanji* at that time, all in the old style of writing (still in use in Taiwan), though we also learnt many of the *ryakuji* which are now in standard use. One day, as a diversion he recited his translation of Issa’s haiku

Katatsumuri

Sorosoro nobore

Fujinoyama

which he rendered, in perfect metre, as

Snail, my little man,

Slowly, very slowly climb

Right up Fujisan.

The texts we learnt to translate were nearly all in *romaji*, as this was the form in which the decoded messages were received, but we were occasionally given a text in *kanji* and *kana* (*katakana*!) to translate; one of them was called “*Ooyoo Senjutsu*”.

The course was given in Bedford, a medium-sized town between Oxford and Cambridge. An ordinary house was used for it, and we all lived in lodgings in the town, so it was not like being in the armed forces at all. I had plenty of time to meet friends in the town, and sang in the choir of the local church. Bedford happened to be the place to which the BBC Symphony Orchestra was evacuated during the war, and they broadcast concerts from there, which servicemen were invited to attend free. In enjoyed many programmes conducted by Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Malcolm Sargent (I was especially struck when I heard Ravel’s “Bolero” for the first time), and Capt. Ceadel invited Sir Adrian to come and address us once in class.

The course finished in April, and the war in Europe ended in May. We went for a short time to work at the intelligence centre in Bletchley, which has since become widely known through books published telling how the enemy codes were broken during the war by men like Alan Turing. Some of us volunteered to go abroad, which meant being sent to the main intelligence base in Asia at Colombo. We were given overseas service leave first, and during that time the war in Asia also finished. We set sail in a troopship, *The Britannia*, which had been a Atlantic liner before the war, and eventually arrived at Bombay, where we stayed in a camp outside the town at Chembur. (During the long voyage I read *War and Peace* – three volumes.) We had no duties, and it was a good chance to do sightseeing in Bombay. I remember my first dinner in the camp, where we had what seemed to be roast potatoes with our roast meat, but they were sweet potatoes – very disappointing! After a week there we proceeded to Colombo by train and ferry boat. I don’t remember how long it took, but certainly we slept at least one night on the train. We had one stop in Madras, where we had time to walk around and visited St. Thomas’ Mount. (According to legend, Thomas, one of Jesus’ disciples, went as a missionary to India.) The Deccan in South India was very arid, and I remember the terrific contrast when we got to Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was then called, where there was so much green vegetation.

When we arrived in Colombo the intelligence base had closed down, so there was nothing to do. The communal buildings in the base were only temporary, made of wooden frames roofed with the feathery leaves of the nipa palm. One night there was a terrific rainstorm and the roof of the recreation building where we were collapsed, and we got soaked as we ran for our cabins. I was playing bridge at the time, and others were playing mahjongg, which had become popular during the war, and the cards and tiles were all scattered in the rain. We were in Colombo for about a month, and during that time four of us spent a week visiting the ruins of the old capital of Anuradhapura in the north. My memories are of walking vast distances through empty country, going from one dagaba (stupa) to another.

We were in Colombo for four weeks while they decided what to do with us. In the end they decided to send us on to Sydney, where our future would be determined. This time we flew in a troop-carrier plane, where there were no seats but a sort of rack down the sides, where we could manage to sit. Our first stop, for refuelling, was at Christmas Island, south of Java, and our next stop was in Perth. I can’t remember if we stayed more than a few hours, but I went shopping and had my first taste of Australian English. I thought the girl said the price was “three and nine”, and was surprised when I got fourpence change from four shillings; she had actually said “three and eight”!

We had three weeks in Sydney, again with nothing to do. I spent one weekend visiting an old school friend of my mother’s who lived in Gordon, a suburb on the other side of the Harbour Bridge. It was now November, in the late spring, and a very pleasant temperature. I also spent a lot of time with another group of people in the city, who were working for MRA. Before I left school my school chaplain Mr. Snow had put me in touch with the Moral Re-Armament (MRA) movement founded by an American evangelist, Dr. Frank Buchman, which had, and still has, people working in all parts of the world to bring change to society by getting individuals to listen to the voice in their hearts which will check them if they are doing wrong and give them guidelines for constructive action. This movement played a great part immediately after the war in reconciling people from former enemy nations, and later in getting persons from management and labour in industries to overcome their suspicions of each other and work together; this was at a time when the communists were trying to foment the class war in order to create a revolutionary situation. Today it calls itself “Initiatives of Change”, as the old name was only suitable before the war, at a time of military re-armament, when Buchman felt that if nations were not morally re-armed, war was inevitable. He felt that to change the world you had to change individuals. But you couldn’t tell the other person to change; you had to begin with yourself, and then affect others by your example.

The question in Sydney was whether to send us on to Tokyo or send us back home, and happily they decided on the former. After about three weeks we were sent by aircraft carrier (converted from a merchant ship) to Hong Kong, where I once more made contact with MRA friends. There I heard my first spoken Japanese, in Chinese pronunciation from the lips of waitresses in a Chinese restaurant! There were half a dozen of our *senpai* from previous language courses there, and one of them, who was very fluent in Japanese, used to visit Japanese prisoners of war in a camp there, and he took us there one day, so that was my first meeting with a Japanese, though I don’t remember speaking with him. As we had only learnt the *bungotai* (old written language) on our course, all I could have said to him would have been “Ware wa Eikokujin nari”; I couldn’t even have said “O-namae wa nan desu ka?” (The first sentence we had learnt had been “Biruma hoomen waga rikugun butai wa Ranguun wo senryoo-seri.”)

Our last voyage, on which we were joined by the *senpai* in Hong Kong, was in a small destroyer, where we had no cabins and simply had to lie on the floor of the tiny officers’ mess. The sea was very choppy and I felt miserably seasick for three or four days, but as long as I lay down I didn’t actually bring up any food (I did this once on the aircraft carrier just as the captain was coming round on inspection). Eventually the agony subsided as we neared Yokohama, and my first sight of Japan was a clear view of Mt. Fuji. It was Christmas eve, 1945, when we came ashore, and we travelled from Yokohama to Tokyo in the back of an American truck. The whole way, we passed scenes of utter devastation, just rubble and twisted metal, until we arrived in Marunouchi, where we were to live and work in the NYK (Nippon Yusen Kaisha) Building alongside the Palace moat. As I got out, I wondered why there was a Japanese there in an American uniform, but of course he was a Nisei, as I was soon to learn.

5. My first visit to Japan.

I was now one of 26 British sailors among a large number of Americans attached to “ATIS” (the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service), which was part of the SCAP administration, which occupied all the big office buildings in Marunouchi, including the Daiichi Seimei, which was MacArthur’s headquarters, together with other buildings in the Hibiya/Kasumigaseki area. (It was said that these buildings had not been bombed, in order that they should serve the occupation forces later; whether or not that is true, most of them survived the bombing through being able to stand up to incendiary bombs better than the ordinary Japanese houses.) On the upper floors the offices had been turned into bedrooms, with about ten people to a room, and the dining room and PX were also upstairs. The ground floor was where we worked, and our job was to keep an eye on what was printed in the newspapers every day, to watch out for any subversive activity, especially by the communists (but I was so young I had no idea what communism was). What in fact happened was that the selected articles were translated into English by Japanese, and we corrected the English! We worked regular office hours, and had the evenings and the weekends free. Several evenings I used to go to the American army school to take the conversational Japanese course, which followed the old Naganuma textbook. And I also took a few lessons in Russian. The teacher was a “white” Russian who had emigrated to Australia and taken a new name; I can’t remember what it was, but it was a common name like Smith. Rumour had it that he had been high up in the old regime, and had had to hide his identity. He had a thick Russian accent when he spoke English, but what I learn from him was very valuable. As the weather got warmer, a few of us used to go walking round the palace in the evenings. We walked first to the left and stopped at the Red Cross Officers’ Club, which was on the left-hand side of the road going up to the Diet. There we would have a cup of coffee, and then continue the longer part of the walk, taking the direct road to Takebashi, on the inner side of Kitanomaru-Koen.

As we were the only British troops in Tokyo (apart from a handful of men occupying the Embassy), with no one to supervise us, someone had the idea of wearing American battle dress, with our own cars and shoulder straps, which had the badges of rank, and to keep our uniforms for formal occasions, and this made us feel more relaxed. Travel was free in all Japanese transport, and we had good use of this right from the start. Already in January we went to Kamakura, Hakone and Nikko Chuzenji, and I have pictures of these places in deep snow. On Sundays when we weren’t travelling we went to church in St. Luke’s Hospital, as this was an Anglican church, walking all the way. (In those days, incidentally, I was taller than the average Japanese; nowadays I am shorter than most of the younger ones, including the girls, one or two of whom can be over six feet (183 cm.) in high heels, and a great many of the boys are over six feet.)

I came to Japan in the frame of mind, “I know the Japanese have been very cruel, but I will be a good forgiving Christian.” But this decidedly condescending attitude was quickly punctured as soon as I set foot in the country. People came up to us, wanting to be friendly and practise their English, and I realised the Japanese were ordinary people just like everyone else. On our very second day in Japan, on Christmas Day, some of us went after lunch to Hibiya Kokaido for a concert of the “Messiah” conducted by the Rev. Ugo Nakata. (Interestingly enough, one of the young ladies singing there later joined the choir of the Tokyo Union Church where I was singing from 1967 on, and we discovered we had this connection when we talked together.) At the concert a friend and I sat next to a boy from the First High School (Ichiko, which later became the general education department of Tokyo University), and he invited us to his home in Ookayama, and we often called on him after that. On another occasion, a man spoke to us on the train, and later took us to Ito and Nagoya (we spent the night lying on the floor of the train).

One of the people we came to know well was a German, Joachim (Jochen) Paasche, who was working like the Japanese in ATIS. He and his wife Maria were anti-Nazi, and had left Germany to avoid persecution and had come to Japan because he was interested in Oriental thought. But they had had a hard time during the war, and now were still living a hard life, as were the Japanese in the period just after the war. They lived in Chigasaki, by the sea, with their three children (later four), and made us welcome in their home any time, and during the summer also in their summer house in Karuizawa. I was not actually conscious of how difficult life was in Japan at that time, but I remember that we used to bring food items from the PX when we visited them, and they would share whatever food they had with us, like fresh vegetables.

As I said earlier, Tokyo was completely devastated, but the trains were running. I remember standing on the platform at Akihabara once and looking out; the whole landscape was ruined as far as the eye could see. The trains were all made of wood (I can’t remember if the seats were also). There was one car in the front of each train reserved for Occupation personnel, and we were supposed to use only these, but we preferred to use the other carriages. The stations were full of homeless people, notably at Ueno, and others were beside the tracks. Everywhere there were men in army uniform begging, some with missing arms or legs.

Among the places we visited in Tokyo, we went once to the kabuki, which was put on in the Togeki as the Kabukiza was damaged; we saw the current Kikugoro, whatever his number was, as Benkei in “Kanjincho” and the other play on the programme was “Shiranami Gonin Otoko”. I think a visit to the Noh also belongs to this period, but my memory is very vague; I can only remember how slow it was, and how uncomfortable to sit! I well remember Ueno Park. I have pictures of the National Museum and the green area behind it, though I cannot recall going in, so perhaps it was not open. What was open was the Zoo, though it only had a limited number of animals; the entrance charge was something like 20 sen (I once had a ticket which I kept; I cannot find it now). At that time I think there were 15 yen to the dollar and 60 to the pound; when I came back ten years later there were 1014 to the pound!

After a time, one person made contact with Mr. Nakata’s choir, and some of us joined them to practise music for the Easter Sunrise service in the Meiji Gaien. We used to practise in the NHK building in Uchisaiwaicho. The service was held in what was known as the “Meiji Bowl”; I cannot identify the place now, but I think it must have been the open space in front of the Kaigakan. It took the form of tiers of seats arranged around an arena.

Immediately after the service some of us took a train to go for a week’s stay in Kyoto and Nara. This means that we saw many buildings that have since disappeared, like the original Kyoto station and the Station Hotel, and the old Kinkakuji before it was burnt down. I found Nara more attractive than Kyoto (just as I find Florence more attractive than Rome), because it was all of one piece, whereas in Kyoto the historic buildings were hidden among the modern buildings and seemed simply like curiosities. Unfortunately Nara has now been spoiled by modern concrete buildings and has gone the way of Kyoto.

Around May we were told that five people were needed at the war trials to translate German documents coming from the Nuremberg trials; we would translate them into English, and then they would be translated into Japanese, and finally we would have to compare the Japanese translations with the originals to make sure they were accurate. Having done two years of German at school I applied, imagining that I would be able to manage well enough with a dictionary. But I also supposed there would be plenty of Americans with German backgrounds who would be able to do the job. In the end, the group consisted of two Americans who had been born in Austria, and three Englishmen, although there were only 26 of us in ATIS against several hundred Americans.

To do the work, we went to the old War Ministry building, which featured later in Yukio Mishima’s suicide but has now been replaced. For the first two days we were picked up by bus together with the Russians who were also working there, and during the lunch hour I was able to practise my Russian on young Russians. But after two days the order must have come from Moscow “No fraternising!”, and we never saw them again. But other people we met there were two German girls, one the daughter of Prof. Robert Schinzinger, whom I was later to meet again in Gakushuin and also in the Asiatic Society of Japan and the Foreign Teachers’ Association, of which he was one of the founders. (I was secretary of this body for many years, writing the reports of what the invited speakers said at the meetings; it was founded at a time when teachers at different universities needed a chance to meet each other, but it gradually faded out when it no longer served a useful purpose.) I also met a young fellow, Cecil Uyehara, who had an English mother who had lived in Japan through the war, as had her mother also.

Around the same time I also found that Jochen Paasche knew the MRA people in Japan, and he introduced me to Mr. and Mrs. Takasumi Mitsui. Mr. Mitsui was the younger brother of the head of the family, and had studied in Oxford before the war and come into contact with MRA there. When he came back he severed his connections with the Mitsui zaibatsu, and started Keimei Gakuen school which was the pioneer of schools for *kikoku shijo* (students who have returned from abroad), as he wanted his children to keep up their English.

When I first met them, Takasumi and Hideko and their children, Naoko (my age) and Takayori (two years younger) were living in great discomfort in the *o-kura* (concrete, windowless, fireproof storehouse) of their fine residence in Akasaka Daimachi, which had also served as the school. It had been completely burnt in the great air raids on Tokyo in March, 1945. Later they moved to a house in Toranomon belonging to his brother, and the site in Daimachi was eventually sold to OAG, the German cultural centre, which continued to use the *o-kura* alongside some temporary buildings until the whole area was rebuilt. The Mitsuis also invited me to stay for a few days in their villa in Haijima, which later became the present-day home of Keimei Gakuen, and in the summer I spent a week or more with them in their summer house in Karuizawa. There was another MRA family also living in their summer home in Karuizawa, and this was the Sohmas (they always spelt their name this way). Historically, the Sohma family had been lords of an area in Fukushima (places with Soma in their names were devastated by the tsunami in 2011), and one of the activities of members of the family used to be to perform the *yabusame*, feats of archery on horseback. The Sohmas in Karuizawa were Yasutane and Yukika, with their eldest child Fujiko (the only one born at that time), and Yukika was the daughter of the noted statesman Yukio Ozaki, generally known as Ozaki Gakudo, “Elder Statesman Ozaki”. (He was also known for having sent the cherry trees to Washington in 1912, when he was mayor of Tokyo.) As her mother, Yei Theodora, was half-Scottish, Yukika spoke fluent English, and in later times played a leading part in international MRA conferences, and became the President of the MRA Association in Japan. She lived to the ripe old age of 91, still with all her faculties.

6. Studying at Cambridge

When my two years’ service in the navy came to an end in September, this also meant the end of my stay in Japan, and I returned to England to take up my delayed studies at Cambridge. As I said, I had a scholarship to King’s College, but the college only gave me the honour without paying any money, as I received such a big grant from the government as an ex-serviceman, and that alone covered all my expenses! Cambridge courses are divided into Part I and Part II, with a set of exams at the end of each, and I continued with classics (Latin and Greek) in Part I. But my interests were in language, not in classical literature or philosophy, and so I switched my course to Comparative Philology, in the Modern Languages faculty, which corresponded to what is now known as historical linguistics. Here I had to prepare to be examined in five branches of study, and I chose the history of Greek, which included all the ancient dialects, the history of Latin, Sanskrit, the Germanic languages, and the history of English. For Greek and Latin I went to my principal professor, Norman Jopson, always familiarly known as “Joppie”. But for the other subjects I had to go to various tutors, more than one each for the Germanic languages and the history of English. Joppie was a colourful character, a small man, who was reputed to be able to speak 37 languages; the one he was especially fluent in was the unusual one of Turkish. Outside class he was often to be seen with his students in a punt on the river Cam behind the colleges. There were only five or six students in his classes, and I was the only one completely specialising in the subject. During one class he casually mentioned that he had always thought Vulgar Latin (the popular spoken language, not the literary language) would be an interesting field in which to pursue further study, and this decided me in my later researches after I had become a full-time professor at Aoyama Gakuin. When I wasn’t in classes, I did a lot of my study in the University Library, which has open stacks, so it is very easy to pick out a book one wants to study. The Library was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, in combination with the New Court of Clare College, so that its tower could be seen through the arch of the court. Later the college needed more accommodation, and created a building in the centre of the court, committing the architectural vandalism of blocking the view of the tower!

In Cambridge, every student is attached to a college, of which he is a member, and so I was attached to King’s College, which is famous for its choir, with its Christmas eve service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Each college was originally a separate monastic community, the oldest dating back to the Middle Ages. King’s was founded in 1441 by King Henry VI. As far as is possible, one lives in a room in college, but for my first term I was in lodgings nearby, and then I moved to rooms in the college. My first room was in what was known as “the drain” because it was approached by going through a passage underneath the road, but after a short time there I was moved to my permanent room, near that of E.M. Forster; and I think Keynes, who had died only just before, was in the same part of the college, called Chetwynd Court. Two people who had been on the same Japanese course as me were now in King’s and one of them was in the same court, and we used to sit together in the dining hall (Hall). There was a bathroom in this court with four baths in it, with no partitions, so you could see everybody, and we used to meet there before going to bed; one other person with his room in the court who used to come there was John Habgood, who later became Archbishop of York. Breakfast and lunch in Hall were optional meals and informal, but at night dinner in Hall was compulsory, and we had to wear our undergraduate gowns, some of which were very torn and disreputable! We had to wait till all the dons paraded in and took their places at the high table. Then one of us had to read the grace in Latin, and I can still remember the words (we used to read the same grace in English at school, so I can remember that too). This was still the time of postwar food shortages, and meat was still rationed, so we were sometimes given whale meat to eat. It was very tough, and was cooked until it had lost all its taste, so eating it was like chewing string.

There were very strict rules governing students in those days. The college was locked at 10.00 in the evening, and if you were already in college you could not go out, and if you were in another college you had to leave it. You could stay out of college until midnight, but then had to return; if you were late in returning, without permission to stay out, you were in trouble, and one of the feats engaged in was climbing into college after midnight! (Needless to say, I did not partake.) When you were out at night you had to wear your gown, and if the proctor on duty (he was a don who was a sort of university policeman) saw someone in the street who looked like a student but was not wearing a gown, he would go up to him and say politely “Are you a member of this university, sir?”, and if you were you were in trouble. And if you tried to run away, the proctor was accompanied by two “bulldogs”, ex-policemen, I believe, who would give chase. (I suppose these rules did not apply to girls, as they were not members of the university at that time, merely allowed to study there and to take the university exams, but without being given a Cambridge degree, and instead having to be satisfied with one from London; perhaps they had their own rules.)

There were no organised sports at Cambridge, but there were sports clubs, the most famous of which were the rowing and rugby clubs, of which the university teams played in annual contests against Oxford. (I was not in any sports club.) For rowing, each college created as many boats as it could manage; these were boats with a crew of eight and a cox, and they were called “eights”. The rowing races were held on the river Cam, which was too narrow for two boats to row abreast, so a group of boats (I forget the name for this – was it a division?) were lined up one behind another at a certain distance apart, and the race consisted of each boat trying to bump the boat in front, hence these races were called “bumps”. When one boat bumped another, the two boats retired from this race; the races continued for several days, and the next day the two boats changed places, and the boat behind moved up one place. The boat at the head of one division, known as a “sandwich boat”, in order to move up, had to bump the bottom boat in the division above. So after several days of racing, the eventual order of the boats could be very different from the order on the first day; the races were continued from year to year, and the order in which they began in the following year would be that in which they had finished the year before. A sportsman who had a place in a university team obtained his “blue”, the colour of the team’s uniform (light blue in Cambridge, dark blue in Oxford). The university had, of course, grounds for all sports.

One activity I did take part in was the Union (officially, the “Cambridge Union Society”, now 200 years old). This was a club which had facilities for social activities, but its particular emphasis was on holding formal debates in its debating chamber, which was designed like the House of Commons, with parties facing each other across the floor. When a debate took place, notable personages were invited to make opening speeches, one for and one against the motion. The floor was then open to questions (the questioners had applied in advance to be allowed to speak), and finally a vote was taken. The President of the Union sat in a chair at the end of the room, like the speaker in the House of Commons, and presided over the debate, and called for order if necessary. Many Presidents, particularly those of the Oxford Union, I believe, later became Prime Ministers.

Another activity was singing with the Cambridge University Musical Society, which was directed by Prof. Boris Ord of King’s. We performed both Bach’s “St. Matthew Passion” and his “B Minor Mass”, and did a concert performance of Handel’s “Solomon” in the Guildhall, with the soloists dressed for the part. This meant turning up for practices every week, and was something I very much enjoyed.

At Cambridge I also met a number of students who like me were in touch with MRA, and we used to meet in one another’s rooms and plan activities. It was also a university custom that in the afternoon, when there were no lectures, which were only in the morning or after five o’clock, one would invite friends to one’s room for tea. There were some cake shops in the town and stalls in the market where one could buy a cheap cake suitable for the occasion, one stall being Grodzinski’s, where we would buy our “grod”. One of these old MRA friends, David Young, I continued to meet every summer in later days when I went to stay with Joan, as he lives in the same area. He is six years older than me, and served in the army right through the war before coming up to Cambridge. He and his wife, Margot, are still in good health at the age of 95 (as of 2015).

When I graduated from Cambridge, in July, 1949, I was in a quandary, torn between two possible choices. I was very interested in pursuing my language studies, including furthering my knowledge of Japanese, but at the same time, through my contact with MRA, I strongly felt the need to do something to help make the world a better place, following the devastation and the bad feelings between countries caused by the war. So that summer I went to the international MRA conference in Switzerland, held in Mountain House, a former luxury hotel in Caux-sur-Montreux, above Lake Geneva, and this was just the time when delegations were arriving from France and Germany to work for reconciliation between the two countries. In deciding what training I should receive, my natural talents were considered, and I was assigned to the work of editing the publications and preparing them for the process of printing and publishing, which included proofreading them, as the publications played an important part in spreading the message. Then when I went back to London I was introduced to a further activity, that of distributing the periodical publications. This involved the whole process of keeping the lists of subscribers and updating them, and all the expertise I gained when working on the publications was to stand me in good stead later in life, as you will hear.

7. My second visit to Japan, and an interlude.

I was doing all this as an unpaid volunteer, but I was not contributing any money towards my upkeep, and everything had to be paid for out of the funds provided by the donations of supporters. So after about five years, in 1955, it was decided that the work I was doing could be done by people working in paid jobs, who could come and do this work in their spare time. So I was asked if there was any other kind of work I would like to do, and I said I had always wanted to go back to Japan, as I had had such a good time there when I was there in the navy. (Part of this consisted in the fact that I was free of all the social restrictions I had been bound by in England; I was amongst Americans, with their free and easy ways – Japanese going abroad experience the same thing. Besides this, the Japanese way of behaviour suited my temperament, and my training at Charterhouse had prepared me for the hierarchical structure of Japanese society, with its various levels of seniority.) So the people in London contacted the MRA people in Japan, and a former missionary teacher in Aoyama Gakuin, Rowland Harker, who had also taught at Gakushuin, found me some part-time work at both places. At Aoyama I taught English in the university, and at Gakushuin I had classes in the university and also in the Girls’ High School, where I had in my first class Princess Suga, the younger sister of the present Emperor, now Mrs. Takako Shimazu, and Hanako Tsugaru, who later became Princess Hitachi. I also taught Prince Hitachi privately once a week for a year at his residence in the Palace (the former infirmary). A Daimler would come to pick me up, and then enter the Palace by the Otemon gate and follow the wall in the Hibiya direction. His residence was at the far end, opposite the Daiichi Seimei Building, MacArthur’s headquarters.

To get to Japan, I travelled by a Japanese Mitsui Line Freighter, taking all my luggage with me (of the two other passengers, one was a Japanese artist who had been in Paris); it stopped at every port on the way, and each time I was able to go ashore and meet MRA friends (but at Bangkok and Saigon I only did sightseeing). On the way from Saigon to Manila the whole deck was covered by a consignment of cattle!

In Tokyo I was found accommodation by my MRA friends in a compound of three houses, originally built by the Anglican church to house missionaries, all now dead. The innermost one of these was occupied by an MRA couple, David and Grace Takahara – Grace was American. I had a bedroom in the middle house which was home of an elderly German lady, always known as “Tante (Aunt) Hanna (for Johanna)”, who used to teach German to private students, and her Japanese husband, who was seriously ill and died shortly afterwards (to communicate with her, I had to use my sketchy German). I also had the exclusive use of a room downstairs, which I used for entertaining my Japanese students. Then in the last house was the Wada family, also connected with MRA, composed of the husband Soichi, who was a dentist, his wife Adrienne, and their three children, Robby, Johnny and Marianne. Adrienne, known to her family as Adrie but to friends in Japan as Rienne and to her husband as Rie, was originally Austrian by nationality but had lived most of her life in what is now Indonesia, then a Dutch colony, as her father was in business there. It was there that she met Soichi, as he had been sent to be head of a hospital there when the country was taken over by Japan. Her mother had died early and her father had then married her mother’s sister; then when he also died Adrienne was brought up by Dutch foster parents, and this family and her younger half-brother went and lived in Holland after the war. After the war she herself was also forcibly “repatriated” to Holland by the victorious allies (although she had never lived there), together with the newborn Robby. Meanwhile Soichi was sent back to Japan, and it required two years of strenuous efforts before they were eventually able to re-establish contact and be reunited. This is all very complicated, but where do I come into the picture? Well, Rienne, as I always call her, cooked supper for me every night together with her family, and this continued until I went back to England in 1961, a move in which I was guided by the fact that my job in Japan offered no security.

As regards my teaching, in Aoyama Gakuin I taught one day a week; two language classes in the English Department, and one class called Advanced Speech, which had been started by a Prof. Haruki, who was away at the time; I had no idea what I was supposed to teach, but I taught my own ideas about pronunciation and sentence intonation, and the students seemed quite pleased with it. At Gakushuin I taught English one day a week at the University in the School of Politics and Economics, and two days at the Girls’ high school, teaching the first- and second-year students. At both universities I formed friendships with many students. Aoyama-dori, which runs in front of Aoyama Gakuin, was then much narrower than it now is, and trams ran down the middle of it. In those days I did most of my travelling by tram, as the subway system was not very much developed; the trams had a big number on the front so that you could see from a distance whether the one that was coming was the one you wanted or not. As there were still not so many cars, the trams did not block the traffic. Later, when they widened the street (and removed the trams, as they did everywhere when the expressways were built), Aoyama Gakuin lost some of its land.

Apart from teaching, I took part in MRA activities as much as I could. This was a time when international MRA teams visited Japan several times with theatrical productions which dramatised the message, and Frank Buchman himself also came once. The Japanese government at that time, with the support of certain top businessmen, was well disposed towards MRA, and the MRA teams hoped that this would help create a new way of thinking in Japan, but this was not to be; it takes a lot to change Japanese traditional ways!

Back in England I did not know what job I should work at, but a call came from a man in the C. Itoh (Itochu) office in London, Mr. Koichi Katsura, whose cousin, one of the Gakushuin teachers, had told him about me. He was working in the machinery department, and at that time they were having many visitors, some of whom were not coming on business but only wanted to do sightseeing. So he invited me to work there and look after the visitors, and I became quite an expert at explaining the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey in Japanese! At Westminster Abbey I could show them the Coronation Chair with the Stone of Scone, the tombs of the kings and queens, and the Poets’ Corner, though it is questionable how many poets they knew apart from Shakespeare. In the Tower of London they could see the Beefeaters (the Yeoman Warders, the custodians of the Tower) in their somewhat modernised traditional uniforms; they are commonly confused with the Yeomen of the Guard, who were the historical bodyguards of the sovereign in the tower and figure in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera of that name. Then there are the ravens, kept with their wings clipped because of the legend that said that when the ravens left the Tower, England would fall. In the central White Tower visitors could see the Crown Jewels and a collection of armour, among which was an outsize suit made for Henry VIII when he was very fat, and two suits of Japanese armour given by the shogun to James I. Whether Japanese would know of the Two Little Princes in the Tower and their fate is doubtful. Apart from all this, I also occasionally accompanied visitors on business; for example, I once took a man to the Rolls-Royce aero-engine department in Derby, as the Japanese were buying their engines there for the YS11 plane. But after a while there were no more business visitors of this sort, and I had no real duties any more.

One of the Japanese I made friends with in London was a man who had come to set up the office of the Nihon Kogyo Ginko (The Industrial Bank of Japan), and one summer we went on a trip together to Italy and Spain. He was the son-in-law of Prof. Kinjiro Ohki, who had been the Dean of the Economics Department in Aoyama Gakuin when I was there, and was now the Chancellor of the University. One summer Mr. Ohki came to London and I met him, and he said that if I was interested in coming back to Japan he would offer me a tenured position. So this was my chance to get finally settled.

8. I finally settle in Japan

In 1967 I came out here again, once more travelling by sea and calling in on friends on the way. In the final leg of the journey I met Kathy Rowlands, an American missionary teacher at Aoyama Gakuin, who was returning from a trip to Hong Kong with a Japanese colleague. We both went to the same church in Tokyo, Tokyo Union Church (an international ecumenical church), and she met her future Japanese husband, Akira Matsushima, there. Later, she was ordained in America, and came back to Tokyo Union Church for a spell as associate pastor.

When I arrived in Yokohama, Rienne was there to meet me and drive me to Tokyo. The university had arranged a room for me in International House while I looked for somewhere to live, with the help of one of my former students, now an office worker in the university. We found a place in Daikan-yama, on the top floor of a wooden building with four apartments, and this was within walking distance of the university. This served my purpose very well, but unfortunately that November a fire broke out about 6.00 in the morning in one of the downstairs units, and I had to rush out of the house in my pyjamas and dressing-gown, darting through the flames. A neighbour took pity on me and took me in and gave me some clothes to wear. Rienne also came, expecting only to need to do some mopping up, and was not prepared for the scene of devastation; my whole apartment was soaked by the fire hoses, and was unusable. I retrieved my books and some of the clothes, but abandoned the furniture; luckily I was covered by insurance (by Tokio Fire and Marine, whose agent in London I had made friends with), and was given ¥1m., which was more than enough for me to set myself up in a new place. While I was house-hunting, the younger brother of Yasutane Sohma, Toyotane, offered me the use of a place in Komazawa that they were not using, so I was able to dry my books out there (you can tell which books came through the fire because they are a bit buckled; my refrigerator, which I still use, also carries the traces of exposure to heat!).

I found myself a rented place in Minami Aoyama very close to what was then Minami Aoyama Kaikan, and was later the Floracion Hotel (recently closed). It also happened to be next door to Mr. Katsura’s mother-in-law, Mrs. Nozaki! I had the ground floor of a wooden building, and the landlady lived upstairs. There was a nice garden behind with a little tree, probably grown from a seed brought by a bird, and later when I moved I put it in a pot and I still have it now, and it has grown up to the level of the floor above. The main rooms had *tatami*, and one had a *tokonoma*; I put carpets in both (they are now in my present place). There was quite a big kitchen, and a large area surrounding the bathroom. There was also ample storage in the *oshiire*. Also, the house was closer to the campus than I had been before. Minami Aoyama was, and still is, a very convenient place for shopping, and I was close to the Ginza line on the subway.

In Aoyama Gakuin I was attached to the Keiei Gakubu (School of Business Administration), which had been newly formed just the year before, so was in need of a new teacher. I taught three days a week, partly to freshmen and partly to second-year students, and also sometimes had to go to the campus on another day for a *kyōjukai* (faculty meeting – very boring!). Then I went one day a week to Gakushuin University for old times’ sake, where one year I was given a class in which one of the students was the Crown Prince; it was meant to be a “conversation class”, but part of the time I used the book “Goodbye, Mr. Chips”, as I considered myself a sort of Mr. Chips. This pattern continued basically unchanged until I retired, except that latterly at some point I was given a class on the History of English in the English Department of Aoyama Gakuin, and to this were later added a class on the Bible in English, and another class called *Igirisu Jijō* (The Current State of Affairs in Britain), which had been created for a visiting professor, and I suppose they thought it would be good to continue it after he left. I had no knowledge about current affairs as I had lived out of the country for so long, so I taught them about all the aspects of British culture, which I think was of much more use to them. This class because very popular, as I think the students felt it was an easy way to get units (!), and in the last year there were 360 students in the class, of whom I think only those in the front row paid attention to what I said! At Gakushuin too I was later given a lecture class on the History of English Literature down to 1800, and to that was later added the same Bible class. I was no expert on the history of English literature but I knew more than the students, and I think I knew how to make the class interesting! (When I dealt with the subject of “ballads”, I sang them to the students!)

Outside class, Aoyama Gakuin had an institution called an Adviser Group. Any teacher could start up a group if he wished, and any student could join any group. I seized on this as a chance to get to know a certain number of students more intimately than I would have done in class. There was a special holiday, Adviser Group Day, when groups could spend a whole day together, and Adviser Groups could organise an event of their own at the school festival on Culture Day in November when there were three days of exhibitions held by the various cultural clubs, and other kinds of events which tended principally to take the form of food stalls, where the clubs could make money by selling lunches to visitors. In my group I had an “open house” on Saturday afternoon, when students could drop in, and I would serve tea and biscuits, and this became a popular event. I left all other arrangements to the *kanji*, the organisers, selected from among the second-year students, and they would plan things like the trips we always took on Adviser Group Day, generally staying somewhere overnight, and the preparation of a stall at the festival on Culture Day; the first time we did it, they served *shiruko*, but after that they always served *rahmen*, and the Wilkinson Ado Guru rahmen became quite well-known. Unfortunately, not all the teachers formed an Adviser Group; I suppose they were already overloaded with various extracurricular duties, and felt this would just be another burden, so the Adviser Group is no longer a significant feature. In the end, my Adviser Group became a sort of marriage agency, as quite a number of students married other students in the Group, and for a time I used to be invited to one wedding after another. One of the couples is a man who is now a professor and his wife, and they have continued the Adviser Group on a small scale, and have also organised reunions on occasions such as my retirement and my 80th birthday, and more recently (2014) my 88th birthday, which is a special occasion in Japan.

Aoyama Gakuin was a Methodist foundation – hence the missionary teachers I have spoken of – and it now has a vast statue of John Wesley by the front gate. It was well supplied with chapels, of which there have been several in my time. The oldest one is the one in the main building (Honkan), which is a very pleasant small room with an old organ. The place which is now used as the university chapel is a vast hall on the ground floor of a high-rise building with a massive organ. There is an equally big organ in the chapel of the Women’s Junior College, which is in fact an auditorium, though there is now also a small chapel there with a suitably-sized organ. The university chapel has a chapel choir, and there are also other choral groups as well as a symphony orchestra, and once a year they all gather together at Christmas time to perform Handel’s “Messiah” in the auditorium, and I always make a point of attending it. There are other musical groups too, such as the brass band and various pop groups. The orchestra gives concerts twice a year, and I have been to very many of them, with an invitation ticket; the standard of performance is extremely high.

I hadn’t been there long before Aoyama became infected by the student riots; as it was centrally placed, the rioters from other universities hoped to secure it as a base. I think it was in 1968 that two rioters came into my classroom to make trouble. I didn’t know how to handle the situation, but my students shouted “Get out! We like this class!” In 1970 the authorities took drastic action and closed the campus for a short period. This was just the time when my parents had decided to visit Japan, as my father had now retired. They arrived in March, and for about two months I was free to be with them and take them around the country. There happened to be two post office employees in Tokyo on a course, a Mr. Yoshio and a Mr. Kishimoto, and they came to my church and joined the choir where I was singing, and where my mother also sang while she was there. Mr. Yoshio took us all round Kyushu, staying at post office hostels; I can’t remember all the places, but we took in Kagoshima and Kumamoto and Mt. Aso, and then Nagasaki, and I think we must have gone via Hiroshima and the nearby shrine in Itsukushima by the sea, where the *torii* is in the water (or I may have visited it myself later). After that, Mr. and Mrs. Kishimoto invited us to stay with them in their home in Takatsuki, near Osaka; this was the time of the Expo in Osaka, and we went there at least three times. Some of my Adviser Group students were working as “Companions” (was it?), to escort visitors, and they took us to various of the pavilions, including the British one, of course. And another student from Gakushuin was working at the Russian pavilion, and took us all round there. We used to have our lunch at the New Zealand pavilion, as it had roast lamb and roast potatoes; it showed a film, the background music of which was the opening theme of Sibelius’ “Karelia Suite”, which I love. While we were in Kansai we must also have visited Nara, but I don’t remember the details.

By this time, classes had begun again, and my parents had to amuse themselves when I was in class. They used to take themselves for walks around the neighbourhood, and if they got lost they somehow contrived to make people understand where they lived. Then in June came Adviser Group Day, and they joined us to go on a trip to Nikko and Chuzenji-ko. We must have gone round all the temples, but I don’t remember the details. To go up to Chuzenji-ko we took the funicular (called a “cable car” in Japan, where our cable car is called a “ropeway”), but it didn’t go the whole of the way up, and we had to climb part of the way, with my students pushing my parents to help them climb up.

In the summer the three of us made a trip to Hokkaido, and I think we must have flown there, as I don’t remember any long train journey. Their tickets must have been part of their round-the-world tickets. They had travelled first to Egypt, where my father had been stationed at the end of WWI, and I suppose they stayed at Shepheard’s Hotel and did some sightseeing in Gizeh, but I don’t remember. They then went on to Kenya, where they were invited to stay by one of the medical students they had given a home to when these students were studying in Hove (we had moved to Hove at the beginning of the war, when my father was transferred to another branch of his garage). From there they went to the recently built MRA training centre in Panchgani in India (near Pune – Poona), which had been established largely through the initiative of my Cambridge friend David Young. They then went to Bangkok and Hong Kong, where they had contacts, before finally coming to Japan.

I had some idea of the places to visit in Hokkaido, as I had been there before with a group of medical interns from Juntendo Hospital, whom I had been tutoring in English. I can’t remember all the details, but we certainly stayed at Hakodate, and then Sapporo. We also went up to the lakes in the north, and the burning sulphur gorge, where we could boil eggs. After this trip we just had to sweat it out in Tokyo until the time came for them to sail to Vancouver to visit Dad’s sister-in-law there (his brother had died). I remember taking them to Yokohama to board their ship, and while they were waiting for it to sail Dad noticed that he had left his hat on the train. I went back to the station and told them which train we had been on, and we still had time to wait while they kindly found it and put it on a train from Yokohama. There’s Japanese kindness for you! From Vancouver they took a train across Canada to make their way home.

After that there were no big interruptions to my routine, though there were still trips and visits. I regularly travelled with my Adviser Group, and in the summer, from 1972 on, I went to England for as long a stay as my duties allowed me. This was around five weeks until I retired, and after that I stayed for two months. That first year we went to the Lake District, all four of us, and after a week there Mum and Dad went home, and Joan and I went on to Hadrian’s Wall, and walked several sections of it. In subsequent years we often rented a canal barge and travelled along many canals, as I will describe later.

In 1974 I made on special trip to America, to accompany the Aoyama orchestra on a concert tour of Portland, Stockton and Los Angeles. The orchestra’s adviser, Prof. Masahiro Sakai, a colleague of mine in the Business School, was in charge, and arranged for me to come with him, and I made myself useful by introducing the programmes each evening. In Stockton I was especially useful, as we had wired ahead to our contact man in America that we would need to borrow six double basses locally; he didn’t understand and wondered what we could do with six bass drums, so he did nothing. When the time came for the performance we only had one double bass for the first half of the concert, the one belonging to the school where we were playing. So I explained the situation to my host, and he went round all the other schools with his station wagon, picking up basses, so we had the full complement for the symphony in the second half! (This was not my first trip to the States. In 1968 I had gone as a chaperon with an international MRA “Sing-Out” group, travelling right across the country; in Detroit, when we were on the return journey, I left them and went to Fresno in California to stay with my Canadian cousin, the daughter of Dad’s brother in Vancouver, now married to an American. She was ten years older than me, and died many years ago, but I still keep in touch with her son, who is in charge of a botanical garden in Hawaii.)

In 1980 I moved house to a flat that I had bought. My landlady had been saying that she wanted to rebuild, and by now I had saved up just enough money to buy a unit in a “refit” building, which had been converted from rental apartments to a condominium by redesigning the units. In the one I wanted, just inside the entrance, I stopped them from putting in *tatami* and dividing the place into six-mat rooms, and asked them to put in wooden floors, so that I had one big space apart from a small bedroom and a bathroom. Between buying it and moving in, I did things like putting up pelmets and putting in curtains (including lace curtains) for two sets of French windows (quite a feat for me!), and moving my smaller belongings bit by bit from my old place, which was only about 500 yards away. When the time came for the big move, my Adviser Group students helped me, and also one of the American teachers, who took things in his station wagon. So I was now settled for life, all being well, though my new place was more cramped than the old one, and had very limited storage space; and as I have accumulated furniture and various other belongings (such as presents from people) it has become even more cramped, so that many things are now stored under the furniture, including the bed. One big item is a piano, and I have gradually bought more bookcases to accommodate my books, and also the music tapes which I gradually made from radio broadcasts of classical music; I have so many that one visitor said she thought that if I opened my fridge, tapes would fall out! I even have tapes under chairs because one day a flimsy wooden cabinet full of trays of tapes was toppled by an earthquake, and the cabinet was shattered. (Aoyama is a very posh part of Tokyo, with all the latest fashions, which has been changed out of all recognition architecturally while I have been here; even in my little back street nearly all the houses are new.)

The next year, Mum and Joan came to visit me in the summer – Dad didn’t want to travel again. When they were ready to travel, Mum wasn’t feeling well, so Joan came alone, as I had already made all the arrangements for them, and we did certain things, just the two of us, like going to Karuizawa, where we’d been invited by Prof. Sakai to stay in his summer villa. Mum came later, travelling by herself by Aeroflot; at one point the aircraft put down unexpectedly in East Berlin, and Mum was very worried, but in the end it completed the journey. We put Mum in my bed, while Joan and I slept on improvised garden beds. The first night, a little voice came from the bed, “I’ve seen Hugh’s new place; now I’m ready to go home.” (Mum was always like that. If we were ever invited out to tea, after tea Mum was liable to whisper to Joan, “I’ve had my tea; can we go home now?”)

I can’t remember all the things we did in Tokyo, but I think we also went west, and once again met the Kishimotos and Mr. Yoshio. Then we were later taken to Hokkaido again by a Korean I had got to know in the church choir, a Mr. Kang Song-an. I think we went there by train and ferry, where we lay with all the other passengers on the *tatami* in one big room. We went to Hakodate and then Sapporo, where he took us to a restaurant outside the city where we ate Genghis Khan *nabe*, a dish of slices of lamb cooked on a rounded iron grill which is supposed to look like his helmet. After this I certainly remember going up north to a place where there was an Ainu reservation; the Ainu are the original inhabitants, of quite a different stock (facially they seem to me to resemble Australian aboriginals), who have mostly assimilated to the Japanese and lost their identity and their culture, though scholars still try to preserve the language. We then went back to Tokyo by a ferry from a port in the north, which was a long journey, and we spent a night on the boat. We had bought third-class tickets, but when I saw that it once more meant sleeping in a big *tatami* area, I changed to second-class, only to find that this also meant sleeping on the *tatami*, but in a small room. I should have splurged on first class, when we would have had beds! The only food they had which Mum liked (and we too) was “curry rice”, so we had that for three meals!

Then Joan and Mum came once again a few years later, this time bringing with them a teacher friend of Joan’s, Iris Dawes. Joan and I once again slept on garden beds, Joan in an area which is now full of other furniture and I between the table and the fridge, and Iris slept on my sofa. I can only remember one thing we did in Tokyo, and that was to visit the outer garden of the Imperial Palace, which was open to the public on certain days. By this time Mum was suffering from incontinence, and we had to find a quiet corner in the garden! (They had already had to deal with one mishap in Hong Kong airport on their way over.) The distinctive thing about this visit was that we toured the country in a van, which Joan drove (luckily you drive on the left in Japan), while I tried to read the Japanese road signs, often hardly giving Joan time to change direction. They didn’t have sleeper caravans so the idea was that Mum would sleep in the back of the van, Iris on the seats, and Joan and I under a tarpaulin outside. In the event, Joan found it too damp outside with the dew, and moved into the van, while I stuck it out. Our plan was to go west first, and then cut across to the north coast to go to places that were new to me. Mr. Kang was now married, with children, and had become a pastor of a Korean church in the Osaka/Kobe area, and we spent one night with him, and then went on to Kyoto (via a temple pictured on the ten-yen coin) to stay with yet another former student (not at Aoyama) that I knew. When we crossed over to the other coast, we went first to Izumo, where there is an old shrine dedicated to a special god, and once a year all the gods are said to leave their regular shrines and assemble there. From there we went to Matsue, further east, where there is a genuine old castle; nearly all the castles in other places are concrete reproductions (as is the one in Odawara, a city on the coast, to the west of Tokyo), as the Meiji government which came in in 1868 ordered all the castles to be pulled down, to break the power of the samurai lords who were the previous rulers. We gradually made our way further east, and eventually arrived in Karuizawa, where we stayed with the Wadas in a villa placed at their disposal. This brought the family visit to an end, and after this there were no more such visits.

Meanwhile, I had been continuing my regular teaching of three days at Aoyama (plus an extra day where there was a faculty meeting) and one at Gakushuin. For a time, around 1970, I also taught once a week at the MRA conference centre at Odawara, where Rowland Harker had started a series of intensive English courses to provide some income when the centre was not otherwise in use. I used to go there on Monday evenings after my day’s teaching at Aoyama, and teach there on Tuesday mornings, and I continued this until the depression hit Japan, when they economised by not requiring my services.

Then in 1982 came a big change. Chancellor Ohki wanted to expand the university, but the law said that the number of students was limited by the area of the campus, and this meant acquiring more land elsewhere (a situation faced by many universities). The new site was at Atsugi, about an hour’s run down the line to Odawara, but it was not ideal, as it entailed a bus ride from the station, and after I retired it was abandoned in favour of a much nicer site at Fuchinobe, also close to Atsugi. My days for teaching there were Thursdays and Fridays, and so I switched my teaching at Gakushuin to Tuesdays. One Thursday, when I was on the train, a Dr. Hiroyuki Ito, who was an ear, nose and throat specialist at the rehabilitation centre in Atsugi, spoke to me, and as we found we were on the same train every week we arranged to meet on the platform where I changed trains, and this continued for as long as I taught at Atsugi, which was until my retirement. Today we still keep in contact, and occasionally meet for lunch on a day when he can easily come over to my area. I retired from my full-time position at Aoyama in 1995, after I had turned 68, but continued to teach my class on the Aoyama campus for two more years; of these, the one on British culture was so popular that in the last year I had that famous class with 360 students, which presented a great problem when exam time came! I also stayed on at Gakushuin for the same two years. (It so happened that in one of my classes at Gakushuin I had three girls with different names, but all written with the same Chinese characters: Kanno, Sugeno and Sugano (菅野). The ingenious way in which the Japanese have managed to adapt a totally alien system of writing to their own needs is a whole other story in itself.)

Around that time I had been suffering for some time from enlargement of the prostate, and in June, 1993, I had an operation; this was performed at Jikei University Hospital, where I was introduced to the surgeon by Dr. Ito, whose father had been director of the hospital. This was just the time of the Crown Prince’s wedding on the 9th, and I was able to watch it on the television, which I wouldn’t have done if I’d been at home, as I’ve never had television, preferring to read and listen to music. After I’d left hospital I was invited to a reception at his palace to meet his new wife, and every year on his birthday I’ve been invited to a reception for his old teachers. A few years after that I was in Jikei Hospital again, this time with an abdominal hernia, and very recently there was a recurrence on one side, so again I had an operation, this time using the modern “keyhole surgery”. It was performed a by a surgeon at Kitasato Institute Hospital, which I had been attending for some time because of thrombo-phlebitis. I had been introduced to a cardiologist there, Dr. Makoto Akaishi, by a member of the church choir (the one I’d met in 1946) whose sister he had treated, and I visited him regularly for check-ups and a fresh supply of pills, including warfarin, (to deal with my high blood pressure). Eventually he decided he no longer needed to see me, and placed a permanent prescription for warfarin, to which was later added a medicine to control my cholesterol, and I still take both of these.

Outside the campus I also had many educational activities, which consisted mainly of publishing textbooks and dictionaries. One of my colleagues, Prof. Kazushi Kuzumi, asked me to collaborate with him in editing and annotating literary works, such as short stories, for use as readers, and we also compiled a few books ourselves to illustrate styles of English and the differences between Japanese and English. Of these, there is one, actually titled *Japanese and English* (Bunri, 1977), that I am particularly proud of. For this book, Mr. Kuzumi selected passages in different styles from Japanese literary works, and I supplied English translations, guided by Mr. Kuzumi. I flatter myself that these are highly readable, though there is one flaw; for the chapter on “dialect” I put together a hotchpotch of dialects – decidedly bogus! Still the Japanese say it is unlucky if a work is too perfect! I also worked with Mr. Kuzumi on editing the English proficiency tests issued by the local United Nations Association; I can’t remember how often this occurred, but we used to go to their office near the Bank of Japan. Then some textbook companies also started issuing tape recordings with their books, and I was called upon to make many of these. If they were books of short stories, they were easy to read, but some of the books were academic, not designed for reading out loud, and these presented a problem. I was careful to make my sentence intonation natural, because I knew from my teaching that this was important in English, and could not be acquired from reading books, but only by hearing spoken English and getting the feel of the intonation. For example, in “What is this? – It is a pencil.” the voice goes down after “pencil”, whereas in “Which of these is a pencil? – This is a pencil.” the voice goes down after “This” and up after “pencil”. (The distinction is made in Japanese by the choice between *wa* and *ga*.)

When it came to dictionary work, the leading publisher, Kenkyusha, and other publishers also, initially approached me when they needed a native speaker’s opinion on certain points in their English-Japanese and Japanese-English dictionaries, but eventually Kenkyusha asked me to update their *New Collegiate Dictionary of the English Language* (*Shin Ei-Ei Jiten*). This was a dictionary in which all the definitions were written in English, with copious illustrative examples. I worked on this for thirteen years with the Kenkyusha editor, Mr. Toshihide Onuma (小沼利英). He would send me a batch of pages, and I would work on them and send them back, and then he would send me another batch. In working on this I incorporated all that I had learnt from my teaching about what things Japanese students needed to know, and I concentrated particularly on the “little words”, the ones which turned up frequently in the language and had so many idiomatic uses. By the time I finished I had increased the size of the dictionary by 50%, and it was published in 1999. Unfortunately, this was just the time when computerised dictionaries were coming into use, and the new dictionary, styled *The Kenkyusha College English Dictionary* (*Karejji Ei-Ei Jiten*), never sold well, and became rather a white elephant. Another contributing factor was the fact that the new dictionary was more expensive than the old one, and Kenkyusha preferred to concentrate on selling the old one. Since then, I have encouraged Kenkyusha to raid the dictionary for definitions and examples when compiling new dictionaries, as I feel there’s a lot of good stuff in it.

Apart from dictionary work, Kenkyusha also published a book I had been encouraged to write by another colleague, Prof. Tsuyoshi Amemiya, who told me he could get Kenkyusha to publish it. This was a book on the history of the English language, which I called *The How and Why of English*, but Kenkyusha added the Japanese title *Eigoshi Nyūmon*, and this came out in 1977. I used this book in my classes for several years, and other teachers must also have used it, as there were reprints, about 500 copies at a time, for a number of years (my most recent reprint is dated 1990). I wrote it very systematically, with different chapters on aspects like changes in pronunciation, changes in grammar, changes in meaning, changes in vocabulary and so on, and for this reason I pride myself that it is more useful than some of the older books, whose writers had tended to concentrate on the points they themselves were interested in.

Getting tenure at Aoyama Gakuin gave me the chance to publish papers in the university’s journals. I was entitled to submit a limited number of pages each year to three of these: the *Ippan Kyōiku Ronshū*, the journal for teachers of non-specialist subjects; the *Keiei Ronshū*, the journal of my own faculty, the School of Business Administration; and *Eibungaku Shichō*, the journal of the English Department. In the event, I published something nearly every year, and I sometimes published two papers in one year. In the main I contributed to the two *Ronshū*’s, writing on my own pet subject, originally suggested by Prof. Jopson, the various aspects of the development from Latin to the Romance languages, a subject about which there was a puzzle which fascinated me, because there is a gap of some 500 years in our knowledge. After the break-up of the Roman Empire, the forms of the language spoken in the various areas gradually diverged, and developed into Italian, French, Spanish and so on, while the only written language they had was classical Latin (which had become fossilised, though the Christian church introduced some slight changes in the style of writing), until the emergence of documents written in the modern languages about five hundred years later. The only way we can speculate on how the modern languages developed is by taking note of the “mistakes” made in writing Latin because the writer has used the form employed in his daily speech in place of the “correct” Latin. When pieced together, they give a fairly good impression of how the modern languages have developed. Most of the work on this subject was done in the 19th century, the last of the great writers on general Romance philology being Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke (1861-1936). He had covered most of the points I was interested in, but there were still some that needed further clearing up, and those were the ones I concentrated on, so I consider myself to be continuing his work. In the case of the *Eibungaku Shichō*, I contributed on two occasions, writing first about the history of English spelling, and later about the historical development in the use of *shall* and *will*, a paper which ran to eleven instalments.

When I retired in 1995 and could no longer publish, I considered putting together a volume of all my papers, including a long one on the use of the subjunctive in Latin and the Romance languages, which I had had no chance to publish in the university journals. But a former student of mine, Mr. Masao Takeshita, told me that the thing to do these days was to create a website for my papers, and he did this for me, as I know nothing about computers and the Internet. In creating this he scanned my printed articles one after another, and I then proofread them, as there were many mistakes owing to the special symbols I was using, and I also took the chance to edit the texts slightly when I felt they needed improving. Unfortunately this website is no longer in operation, but at the time, apart from the papers already mentioned I published some shorter ones in the *Eibungaku Shichō* on subjects relating to English. I have my own printed copies of all of these, and they are all to be found in the archives of Aoyama Gakuin, except for one final paper which I only finished writing after retirement. This is a 229-page paper on “The Subjunctive in the Romance Languages”, which only exists in two copies in my own possession.

Another work which had originally been on my website, was a short book “A Modern Look at the Bible”, which originated as a course of lectures I gave in an “adult education” class at my church, in which one of the participants offered to computerise my written notes, and I then added some more information I had gleaned from further reading. He made a few printed copies for my own use, and I still have two of these. After this I set about writing “My Life Story”, of which I have two copies. But the Asiatic Society of Japan, which published excerpts from this in Series 5, Vol. 8, 2016, of its *Transactions*, has now kindly undertaken to publish the whole work on its website.

Apart from all this writing work, there is one more activity which gives me a stake in society, as it were. In 1972 I joined the Asiatic Society of Japan, which was founded by expatriates in Yokohama in 1872 as a learned society patterned on the Royal Asiatic Society, and this latter venerable society has a particular interest for me. It was founded in Calcutta in 1784 by Sir William Jones (1746-94), when he was there from 1783 to 1794 as a judge with the Supreme Court of the East India Company. While there, he became acquainted with Sanskrit, the parent language of many Indian languages and also of Pali, the language of the Buddhist scriptures, and noticed that it was closely akin to Latin and Greek, thus paving the way for the science of comparative philology, my own special field. Among the founders of the Asiatic Society of Japan, the British would have liked it to become a branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, which had become established in London, in the same way as the sister societies in Korea and Hong Kong, but the Americans were not happy with this, and so it became an independent society, with an illustrious history which you can read about on its website <www.asjapan.org>. For my part, two years after joining the Society, I found myself on the Council in various capacities, and then in 1975 I was asked if I could undertake to provide a summary of what the speakers said at the meetings for inclusion in the monthly Bulletin, and after careful consideration I agree, and have been continuing to do this (and later editing the whole of the Bulletin) for 40 years now until the present day. For a long time I carried on without missing a single meeting, even when it meant attending one meeting within a few hours of leaving hospital, but of late I have twice been prevented by illness; however, this didn’t mean that I couldn’t write the summary, as the speaker’s text was sent to me to work from! In the early days I could trust my memory and scribbled notes, but I gradually became more and more dependent on getting a text from the speaker, and, being extremely deaf, I have a hard time of it if a speaker speaks off the cuff, usually when describing slides shown on the screen, though these at least give me some help. How much longer I can continue this work I don’t know, but at least I am able to get myself to meetings, and my head is clear, which is a great blessing. For a long time I typed my summaries, first on my old manual typewriter and later of an electric one, and the Bulletins reproduced my typescript. But then computers came into use, and someone else had to copy my typescript onto a computer. To save this duplication of labour, I was persuaded to buy a computer myself, but I still only use it as a typewriter; however, another person can retrieve what I have written using a u.s.b., and I also carry my computer to the office, where I go two or three times a month to help our office secretary, Miss Haru Taniguchi (who is a real treasure), put together all the various contributions to the Bulletin, and make sure it is in good shape to be sent to the printers. This is the kind of work for which my experience with the MRA periodicals was valuable preparation. I am also well equipped for the job by having an orderly, methodical mind. But in the end I became so deaf that I had to hand the job over to someone else.

As an adjunct to this, I am also called upon to write the annual report to be presented at the annual general meeting. And then I am further required for one other operation. The Society publishes an annual *Transactions* containing the best lectures of the year and other contributions, and I am one of many people asked to proofread it, as one single proofreader can miss several points, and even I with my eagle eyes am not immune to this. In my proofreading I make a point of checking the spellings of foreign words, and also of ensuring a consistency of style, for example in the formation of the footnotes. I do all this work at home, while either listening to classical music on the radio or playing my tapes. (If I have no work to do, I read a book, generally history or biography.)

I find there are also two other activities I have omitted to mention. When I arrived in 1967, I became a member of Tokyo Union Church, which is not far from my house. I sang in the choir there, as a pillar of the basses, until I became deaf and lost my sense of pitch. The other is the Cambridge and Oxford Society, which was started by Cambridge and has just celebrated its 110th anniversary. It is an association of graduates of the two universities, and also includes many Japanese who have spent a short time there doing research. The usual activity is a dinner roughly every other month, and these are quite often attended by important visitors from the universities, such as the heads of colleges.

From 1972 onwards, in most of the summer holidays I was going “home” to England (except when they visited me). I stayed first with my parents in Hove (which has now become combined with Brighton). They lived there until they were too old to look after themselves, and then they moved in with Joan in her cottage in Ditchling, a beautiful and very lively little village six or seven miles inland; she had bought this house some forty years ago now, while she was still teaching in Hove. So I went there in the summers. There was no bedroom for me, so I slept on a garden bed in the summer house (a bit chilly! – later I could moved into the house, after the bedroom was no longer needed for my parents). I used to spend three days in Cambridge, doing research in the Library for material to include in my linguistic papers. For this I took advantage of the privilege of being able to spend two nights in a guest room in King’s College. One of these summers I also tried to see if I could obtain a doctorate by submitting all my linguistic papers, but I was not successful. After my interview, one of the interviewers told me later that they had been impressed with my work, but I think they felt my field was too limited. So I have to be content with the American-style title “Professor”!

We also went on two-week trips as a family until my father was not well enough to do so – he died in 1986. For this purpose we mostly used to hire a barge on a canal. In origin the canals were built for commercial purposes, but they gradually fell into disuse. Then in recent times they have been revived for recreational purposes. These canals (and the river Thames in places) have locks to accommodate the change in the level of the land, as a canal must always remain level. These locks are a stretch of water enclosed by two gates, one at the upper and one at the lower level. The lock has to be filled or emptied, depending on which way you are travelling. My job was to jump off the barge and catch the rope Joan threw to me (not easy for me!) for mooring the barge. Then I had to turn a handle in the lock gate to open it or shut it for letting the water in or out, and when the required level was reached I had to unmoor the barge and jump in. Quite an exercise, and some canals had locks at very frequent intervals (Dad did the driving, and Mum just sat and enjoyed the ride). There were bridges crossing the canals at various places, and this generally meant we could find a pub nearby where we could have our meals. After Dad had died, Joan took Mum and me for trips into distant parts of the country in her Volkswagen camper van. This mean that when we got to a place we wanted to see we had first to look for a bed-and-breakfast where we could spend the night, before we looked for a place for supper – usually a simple meal if we’d had a pub lunch. This was not a great problem in a popular area, but in some places it was quite difficult. We continued these trips with Mum until she became too old for Joan to look after her any more, and she spent her last five years until 1996, when she died, in a home, with her memory gradually failing.

During my long summer stays in England after my retirement in 1995, Joan and I used to travel around the country, sleeping in her camper van. Many of the places we went to were ones she wanted to take a group to the following year, especially Yorkshire, and she went there with me in advance to scout out the ground and find places for the group to stay at, so that by the next year she had her itinerary all planned out. We also went once to the north of Scotland, going up one side of the country and down the other, but avoiding the big towns, where parking would have been a problem. And I also remember walking with Joan along the side of an old disused canal which was being restored for recreational purposes; part of it was still filled with earth which needed to be dredged out. After walking a little way, we had to go back to the car, move on to the place where we had stopped, and repeat the process. (Whether we did such walks while Mum was still with us I am not sure. I rather think she was, at least for some of the trips.) Eventually we settled into a pattern of going to stay with a cousin in Cornwall, Tina Matthews, for a few days, and breaking our journey on the way. She is the daughter of Mum’s younger brother, and we also used to go and stay with her elder brother Tony and his wife Caroline when they used to live in a big old house, but now they have moved to a very small house. In the year 2000 we went to Canada, I from Japan and Joan from England, to visit our cousin Helen Garnett in Victoria (the daughter of Mum’s elder brother, the cousin whom I remember as riding on Grandpa’s shoulders as a small child) and her son Michael and his wife Maureen (they recently came to Japan for a two-week stay, and it was a very nostalgic reunion), and also make the round of tourist sites in Alberta. And it was about four years later, I think, that we went to stay with our so-called foster-brother, Michael (Mike) Bolt, an orphan who came to live with us when he was thirteen – I was no longer living at home so there was room for him. He had bought himself an old farmhouse in France, in the Dordogne area, which had a big garden/orchard attached, and a barn. He is very good with his hands (which I am not!) and was busy all the time working on extensive conversions, a thing he loved to do. He turned the place into a high-class residence, resplendent with fittings in oak – nothing but the best! (Most recently he has added shutters to all the windows, which give the house an authentic French look, and also keep it cool in summer.) That year the summer was especially hot, but we managed to do all the sightseeing that could be done from that base, including the Lascaux caves.

As the years passed, our trips became shorter and shorter. Joan gave up her camper van, as she found it difficult to control, with her arthritic hands, and bought a little Suzuki car. In the end we were only visiting places in our local area, going as far as a cousin, David Edwards (my godson! – his late father was my actual cousin), who lives on the southern edge of London and is good at keeping in touch, and I myself was becoming less and less mobile, no longer able to walk for pleasure, but only for the necessary chores, supporting myself either on a four-pronged stick or on a shopping trolley (and even simple actions like sitting down and standing up require an effort, and I can’t remain standing for a long time; also, when I’m walking around the room, I cling to pieces of furniture to support myself.) so I decided to make 2012 the last year of my visits to England, as the effort of travelling was getting too much for me, and Joan was equally having trouble looking after me. So England is now only a fond – but still very fond – memory.

After this I don’t remember any special happenings until two years ago. In February 2016 my right leg swelled up terrifically, and I was sent to hospital and between then and October I stayed in two hospitals and a rehabilitation centre. I was able to move about because I had a “walker”. Then in October I moved into my present residence, which is a high-class care home for old people, near the German Embassy and Arisugawa Park, and my address had now become: 509 Minami-to, Arisu no Mori, 4-5-1 Minami Azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0047. I am in a large double room, with the sun coming in from two sides, so I am very comfortable and I also had room to bring in the most important of my books, with bookcases. With the help of my walker I get my exercise by walking up and down the corridors near my room, but I am no longer able to move around outdoors as I used to do, so my life is very limited.

As I am no longer able to look after myself, in April last year, 2017, the pastor of Tokyo Union Church and the Japanese finance officer of the church, Ms. Noriko Sakoh, became my joint legal guardians. Then in September I sold my apartment, so I have no financial worries, and I can just enjoy life at an easy pace, with occasional visits from people like my old students, who always remember to celebrate my birthdays (92 in 2018).