

The Flora and Asher Wertheimer Family

Asher and Flora Wertheimer were my maternal grandmother's grandparents. They had 12 children: eight daughters and four sons. In spite of this large family, only two of their children have living descendants. Two of their daughters died as toddlers; none of their four sons had children. Of the six daughters who lived to adulthood, only three had children. They have a number of great great-grandchildren, of which I am the eldest. So I feel the need to tell this story.

Asher and Flora Wertheimer were German Jews whose families had lived in London for two generations.

Asher Wertheimer (b. Aug 9 1843, St Anne Westminster, Middlesex, d.1918, age 75, son of Samson Wertheimer and Helena Cohen,) was a prominent art dealer and collector.

Flora Joseph Wertheimer (b. Mar 22 1846, d. Dec 1922, age 76 daughter of Abraham Joseph and Sarah Falcke) daughter of an art dealer.

1. Sarah (b. Feb 9 1872, d. Jul 22 1873, age 1)
2. Edward (b. Jul 22 1873, d. Jan 2 1903, age 29). He was born the same day his sister Sarah died. Edward was groomed to become an art dealer and take over the family business. In 1903, he married May George Levy (b. 1882/3, daughter of Benn Wolfe Levy and Zara Cohen.) Unfortunately he died of eating a bad oyster while on his honeymoon in Paris. He is said to be the chief character in W. Somerset Maugham's 1931 short story, "Alien Corn" but I think that the character was based on his younger brother Alfred.
3. Helena, nicknamed Ena, (b. Sep 27 1874, d. Mar 24 1936, age 61) My grandmother, Diana, was one of Ena's 5 children. Ena married Robert Moritz Mathias (b. 1874, d. 1961, age 87, son of Mathisson Mathias and Matilda Mond) on Oct 25 1905. The year 1874 was filled with births for my family: Ena and Robert as well as Robert Soyer, the father-in-law of their daughter Diana. Ena and Robert Mathias had five children, three sons and two daughters: John (b. 1906), Diana (b. 1908, my grandmother), Antony (b.1910), Elisabeth (b.1912), David (b. 1913). Ena and both her daughters were trained artists. Ena and her younger daughter, Betty both trained at the Slade whereas my grandmother, Diana, was not allowed to go or to join a studio in Paris much to her frustration. Diana did study part-time at another art school in London. There was a mural painted on the wall at Bury (the family country home) started by my grandmother and then finished by Ena. I have a small painting said to be painted by Ena. The painting is a small copy of "Venus with Cupid, Folly and Time" by Angela Bronzino." Ena died of stomach cancer.

4. Alfred (b. Aug 8 1876, d. Sep 1902, age 26) was a chemist educated at Harrow and Cambridge. He died in Johannesburg, South Africa, during the Boer War. It is unclear if he committed suicide or died in service to his country.
5. Elizabeth, nicknamed Betty, (b. Aug 16 1877, d. Jul 15 1953, age 75) Betty and Ena were very close by all accounts and looked so much alike that they were sometimes confused with each other. Betty's first husband was Euston Abraham Salaman (b.1871, d. Feb 18 1916 during WWI of Typhoid fever). Her second husband was Dr Arthur Rickets (b. Aug 7 1874, d. May 14 1968). I was born on Betty's birthday. My grandfather, Pierre de Bosmelet, said that I reminded him of Betty. I've heard from family that Betty was quite a character.
6. Hylda (b. Nov 4 1878, d. Apr 1938, age 59) Hylda was married to Henry Wilson-Young (b.1867, d. Oct 1940, age 73). They had one son, Ian Wilson-Young (b. 1908, d.1948, age 41) Said to be very handsome, Ian was a diplomat in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he died "suddenly." The family believes his death resulted from diabetes and a heart attack while swimming in the sea in Argentina. Ian married an American, Charlotte B. Brown. They had three children. David Warren Wilson-Young (b.1941 in Rio de Janeiro), Hylda Wilson-Young (b.1941 in Rio de Janeiro) and Conway Wilson-Young (b. 1945 Cooperstown, New York, d. 1975). David has two children; Hylda has two daughters; Conway had no children. In 1942, Ian Wilson-Young, helped Diana de Bosmelet (his cousin, my grandmother) and her children travel to Africa using his diplomatic connections.
7. Essie (b. Jun 10 1880, d. May 6 1933, age 52) Essie married Eustace Henry Wilding (b. Mar 6 1873, d. Mar 12 1939, age 66, son of Rev Charles James Wilding and Eliza Rickards) Essie and Eustace were married on Jan 17, 1905, by special license. According to Hugh Wilding, distant relation to Eustace Henry Wilding, "The reason for the special license is to get around the need to have details of an impending marriage (banns) announced beginning three weeks before the proposed ceremony. In 1905, this would have involved the banns being read at Essie's synagogue and at Eustace's church. Eustace's father was the (Anglican) Rector of Upper Arley, Worcestershire, and Eustace may have wanted to spare his father any embarrassment. I don't know if Essie was particularly attached to her Jewish faith; she and her first child are buried in the churchyard of St James's' Church, Fulmer." Essie and Eustace had 3 children: Morinda Wilding (b. Oct 19 1905, d. Sep 2 1916, age 10), Peter Wilding (b. Dec 3 1907, d. Jul 3 1969, age 61) no children; and Ann Wilding Hay (b. 1916 died Nov 2009, age 93), married 1939 to James Foulis Hay (b. Mar 12 1912, d.1972, age 60). They had one daughter, Susan Foulis Hay (b. 1944) who is still alive. Lucinda Stevens says this about Susan:

"I have to say she (Susan) is quite extraordinary, strangely old-fashioned and in a sense quite untouched by life as it is today. I really do not think you would ever get anything from her [ed: about the family] because she does not really wish to engage in our [endeavor]. She seems to have devoted her life entirely to her

mother and to taking care of her in her later years. All very laudable but very selfish of the mother, I think, not to have encouraged her to have a life of her own."

8. Conway Joseph (b. Sep 22 1881, d. Nov 2 1953, age 72) Barrister at Law. Because there was lots of anti-German feeling during WWI, he changed his name to Conway Joseph Conway when announcing his engagement in 1916 to Joan Cicely Young (b. Sep 13 1898, d. Nov 10 1995, age 97) David Mathias, son of Ena, was a page at their wedding, age 3. They had no children, but after Conway's death, Joan adopted her niece Lucinda Stevens.

Lucinda wrote:

"Aunt Joan and Uncle Conway were married in 1916, right in the middle of World War I. She was 18 and he was twice her age, 36. She knew him as Conway Joseph Wertheimer. He changed his name when he announced his engagement to her. According to her it was because of acute anti-German feeling in England together with the fact that a more English name was probably more of a help in his pursuit of a legal career. His brother Ferdinand was apparently very scathing about him taking his Christian name as his surname but in fact Ferdinand followed his example and from being Ferdinand Wertheimer he became Bob Conway. Extraordinary."

9. Lizzie (b. Dec 26 1884, d. Apr 12 1886, age 1)
10. Almina (b. Jun 10 1886, d. Jul 31 1928, age 42) On Dec 8, 1915, in London, she married an Italian, Antonio Pandrelli Fachiri (b. 1870/1 d. Oct 13 1940, age about 70). They lived at 3 Devonshire Terrace, Marylebone, Middlesex.
11. Ferdinand Joseph (b. Jan 19, 1888, d. Apr 1, 1950, age 62) died suddenly. After his older brother Conway changed his last name to Conway, Ferdinand also changed his own name to Bob Conway. He was an artist and writer who earned double first [ed: Top honors in 2 subjects. Very impressive] at Oxford.
12. Ruby (b. Mar 8 1889, d. Dec 3 1941, age 52) Ruby had a beautiful singing voice. She died in San Severino Marche Macerata, a Italian WWII internment camp. She had diabetes and had no medicine with her.