

my life



Part 5

Ivan George Elder

P r i v a t e l y P u b l i s h e d

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Acknowledgements

The original objective behind the start of this life story was to give a picture of my life here in New Zealand to my Grandchildren who were born and lived in United States of America. Since my early years go back almost to pioneer days in New Zealand history and indeed early years in the growing modern world I felt it was worth painting a picture of what life was like then for their benefit. The project grew and the availability of a diary kept during most of my war years and of other overseas trips gave me a unique opportunity to relive those days and record them for my family and descendants. It has been a very nostalgic and intriguing journey to take and I have found it very interesting myself.

This venture was started after Millie's death but much was written after my unanticipated marriage to Elizabeth. I was grateful to her for allowing me to take over her sunporch/sewing-room for my computer and basic records. There was just enough room for my morning coffee cup on days when the sun called.

I am also very much indebted to my daughter Dawn for intensive editing work on the earlier chapters. In the later stages I acknowledge the painstaking work Ron has done in further editing and preparation towards publishing the work. In this process all of the other members of my family - David, Susan and Dawn - have been helpful in checking facts and layout.

Devon Street, Gore

We had purchased the house in Gore some seven months or so earlier and we moved into it about the end of November 1993. It had been built some thirty years or so earlier by Mr Hugh McGibbon and his wife. Yes, he was the remaining McGibbon of the firm of McGibbon and Co Ltd, which had operated for many years on the corner of Main and Mersey Streets in Gore. In the earlier years they had Ladies and Mens wear and haberdashery in the premises on the corner, with a first floor salesroom where Ladies frocks and mantles were displayed. The first street entrance in Mersey Street led into the menswear section and next to that was a grocery store. It was from here that they used to phone the farm each week for the grocery order which would then be delivered 12 miles out of town a couple of days later. At the same time they would also collect any eggs or butter my mother might have to sell.

The Certificate of Title was issued to H C McGibbon on 21st May 1965 and was settled as a joint family home on 13th March 1968 after the house had been built. It was only two years later that the property was transferred to Mrs McGibbon after the death of her husband. I was given to understand that the house had been designed by Theo Smyth¹, who had come from Dunedin as manager of McGibbons, and it was built by my client Gore Construction Co Ltd owned by Bill Walker. I must give credit to the lovely way Theo designed the house. It was built to face the sun and not the street to the south, and the front hallway and the rooms were beautifully proportioned with lovely bay windows in the lounge and master bedroom.

¹ Theo was later a member of Gore Borough Council while I was Mayor, and has been mentioned earlier concerning the protest meeting of businessmen called about the proposed shopping complex. Theo was a regular golfer about my own standard of play, and we frequently played together in the Saturday competition. In spite of his indignation at the time of the protest, we were good friends and did not let the difference of opinion affect our private life. As may be recalled, his protest was hastily activated out of a misunderstanding of the actual facts and ended like a pricked balloon. Theo and his wife Betty had lived next to our house in Albany Street behind the thick high Macrocarpa hedge, and he offered me the use of his electric hedge cutter when I was cutting my side of the hedge.

The Title shows that the house was transferred to Henry Smith, Farmer of Riversdale another seven years later, on the death of Mrs McGibbon. He and his wife lived at Devon St until about 1988 when Mrs Smith died. Five years later, after Harry's death, it was placed on the market by his daughter, Helen Miller. It is interesting in a small district how families interact, as Harry Smith had lived at East Chatton and sold his property to my brother Wilfred when he moved to Riversdale. His children had gone to East Chatton School. Harry was one of three Scottish brothers who had emigrated to New Zealand many years before and had farmed in different parts of Eastern Southland. The other two brothers had been clients of mine.

Back in 1965 the section was one of about seven sections taken off the original large property containing an old villa in the centre. One of the first sections subdivided was that on the corner of Johnston Street on which George and Margaret Stark built their home when they retired to Gore from Waikoikoi. Then about three or four sections fronting Brown Street followed and finally ours on Devon Street. Not quite finally, though, as the Starks built again next to their first house in Johnston Street and this was where Margaret was still living when we came to there. There was evidence of this history in the form of parts of concrete paths which had served the big house, both on our property and next door at number 7. We were a bit sad that the old high-gabled villa was so close to our boundary, as it deprived us of winter sun during the two months around the shortest day. The old house had been allowed to get into disrepair and the neglected south wall facing our bay windows was not an attractive sight. There was also a tall silver birch which shaded us in the winter months. One owner started to remove it but sold the house before finishing the job - at the time of writing it has at last been taken down.

When Susan phoned Millie about the house, an Open Home had just taken place and it was scheduled for auction in about two weeks time. Millie had had a conversation with Susan about an earlier house which Millie had also liked but which had been sold. They had talked in a casual way about the possibility of our moving to Gore. The other house appealed to Millie for its style but if it had come under consideration I think there would have been drawbacks.

When the Devon Street property became available, and in view of Millie's love for the house, we very quickly set about looking into it. A phone call was made to the Agents and a private viewing was arranged. It seemed to work out that I walked round with the Agent with Millie walking behind, taking everything in but, as well, falling in love with the place all over again. She told me afterwards that she had followed us from room to room, saying to herself again and again, 'I like it, I like it, I like it'. We very soon decided it would suit us very well and the big question of moving back to Gore did not seem a problem. We were not very keen to go into an auction so we entered into negotiations through the Agents. The valuation was \$66,000 and we offered \$81,000. This was not accepted and we had to go to \$90,000 to settle the deal. This was actually a bit through the nose, I feel, but at the time we had no regrets and Millie in particular was delighted. We were fortunate that she had a large investment from the sale of the crib falling due and this enabled us to settle without having sold at Kelvin Heights. Looking back with hindsight, I think we panicked

rather about going to auction. I believe now we would very likely have got it cheaper and would still have had the opportunity of bidding till we got it. But hindsight is not available when foresight is in action and at the time we had no regrets. Susan recalls hearing that someone was very disappointed that the auction had been pre-empted so maybe we did do the right thing.

The Devon Street house was about twenty five years old and all the decoration, floor coverings and furnishings were original. We set about a radical programme of renovation. We installed a new kitchen. The old kitchen cupboards were very old fashioned and inconvenient, the terrazzo bench very pitted and unsanitary and the sink was old fashioned. We employed a kitchen firm from Invercargill. The new fittings were made in the factory and installed in one day, the old kitchen having been dismantled earlier. The bathroom had a toilet and bath but no shower. We puzzled for some time how to put in a shower, other than one over the bath, until Len Carroll the plumber suggested shifting the bath to a new position to make room for a shower box. We went the whole hog with a new toilet, new bath and new washstand basin. We had always disliked having the only toilet in the bathroom so we got the old toilet bowl put into the laundry to make the house a two-toilet home. We laid new carpets, hung new curtains and got the whole interior re-papered and painted. We also got the exterior painted and the tile roof spray painted. All this added up to about \$35,000 and in effect put the total cost to quite a high figure, especially as it was in reality deferred maintenance and did not enhance the value of the house - even the new kitchen and new bathroom were largely maintenance items. We lived in the house together for only about three and a half years but the enjoyment was complete - Millie loved it and I was very happy about the situation and still enjoyed the property when I was living there on my own.

During all those seven months we were commuting up and down from Queenstown, looking after lawns and garden, spending a night or two with Susan and Roger at Mitre Street and moving items from one house to the other - we seldom came down without the trailer. The delay in selling at Kelvin Heights, meant that we were able to accommodate tradesmen to do the work in Gore at a relatively leisurely pace. At the same time KH was still on the market and we had to keep things tidy and shipshape up there so that the house was available for viewing at any time. Those who have been through the experience of selling a house will know that this becomes quite a bind.

Many couples looked at No 468. Some were deterred by the amount of work required in the garden, some by the lack of parking space or needed another bedroom. At the time there was a bit of a lull in the property market so it was almost a surprise when Mrs Ellis came and fell in love with it. She sent her husband to see it with their sceptical daughter - 'I don't want to live away over there.' The night after seeing the house the daughter said to her Mum, 'You have got to make Dad buy that house!!' Then the miracle occurred when they sold their house at Sunshine Bay within two days. The agents explained this by saying that their house was under the \$200,000 barrier with a much wider range of possible buyers and its closeness to town was an advantage for working couples.

We left Kelvin Heights at the end of November 1993, almost ten years to the day after we had taken over the new house there in 1983 and eight years after we had gone to live there full time. We left with few regrets but with a great sense of gratitude for the lovely years we had spent there together. There was the visit from the three sisters, the visit from Eric and Margaret Culpin, the family get-together when the Americans were over and we were all together with the overflow sleeping in the cottage behind and Ken doing his daring act on the rocking horse. I recall the challenge of the landscaping, the building of walls and paths, making the steps up from the drive and the painting of the rough concrete blocks, all with a lot of pleasure.

We were in Gore. It was almost as if we had moved into a new house again, after all the radical renovations and decorating. We missed some features. The garage was very much a single car garage, with space taken for a coal bin in the corner, and we needed to be able to store coal. There was no room for the trailer so we stored it at Susan and Roger's, with Roger free to use it any time. When Roger and Susan sold their Mitre Street house and we no longer had a storage place, and really no longer any need for the trailer, I just transferred it to Roger. Our heating system, in addition to the attractive fireplace, included a NiteStore in each of the lounge and the hallway, and these helped to keep a fairly stable temperature in the whole house. The bay windows in the bedroom and the lounge provided good solar heating in clear weather, apart from the period of shade each day from the house behind. Even then, one bay window would be in sunshine while the other was in shadow. The fire was required for evening comfort in cool weather and on cold winter days, and we used quite a bit of wood for this purpose. At the time we were able to collect offcut firewood from Ngahere Sawmill at Mataura by the trailer load and this was good firing. Once the fibreboard plant was established just beyond Mataura, the sawmill supplied its waste timber to the board plant for processing there and these firewood blocks were not available to the public. There was a nice workshop and toolshed but it soon got filled. Storage and wardrobe space in the house was fairly good. I had brought my patent washing line back from Queenstown, and installed it in the corner behind the garage. I built a woodshed on the east side of the bench and wall dividing off the lawn from the drying green. This shed consisted of wooden framing with two sheets of second hand corrugated iron as a roof. It was open sided to the east. We concealed this wall with a Banksia Rose which eventually flowered profusely. [After about three years I asked Bert Newman why it was not flowering. "Oh, it won't be flowering yet, it takes about 3-4 years to establish.] The garden was smaller to look after, but there was more grass to cut.

Millie was enjoying putting the house in order, working out the best position for furniture pieces and hanging up or placing her treasures. For this purpose we had bookshelves installed each side of the fireplace. When we went to Kelvin Heights we attended and joined the Presbyterian Church at Frankton. We had been attending there on holiday for about twenty years and already knew many people. We had friends like the Gardiners, Frank Smiths and others in the congregation, found Dorothy and Alex Taylor whose daughter Alison flatted with Dawn in Dunedin, and had entered into a warm fellowship. Back in Gore we found ourselves very close to St Andrews Presbyterian Church and we just transferred our membership from Queenstown to Gore. I don't think we seriously con-

sidered going back to the Baptist Church - it had grown very charismatic, was lukewarm in its loyalty to the Baptist Union, and there were aspects of worship there that we would not have enjoyed. Many changes in personnel had also taken place there, and we found a much wider circle of friends and close acquaintances at St Andrews, than along the street. Millie and I soon joined the choir and enjoyed the closer fellowship with that very friendly group. While this had no bearing on our decision, we found at St Andrews, Owen and Laura Hymen, Alex and Hazel Johnston, and Lyall and Doreen Varlow, who had all migrated along the street to St Andrews. I am aware that the charismatic atmosphere today is much better structured and sophisticated than it was when we went to Queenstown, and I very much admire the spread of ages they have in their congregation.

We also branched out into the community. We joined the Travel Club and continued there to enjoy the stories told of journeys overseas. As time went on I was elected to the committee, being one of only two men on the committee. The other was Jim Wright of Wendonside, who was the same year as me at High School. At that time he had lived in Devon Street and when he and his wife Lol came to retire, they were able to buy a newly built free standing unit on the front portion of the very site on which he had lived as a child. Jim was developing serious heart problems and I visited him and Lol from time to time and I hope added interest to his days when he was very limited in movement. Apart from us the Club consisted predominately of women, and we were welcomed warmly. Attendance at club meetings was normally about 90% female.

Millie associated herself with the A P W morning group which met monthly, and enjoyed very much the fellowship there. She also rejoined the Women's Club, and found much enjoyment in the Play Reading Circle of that club. There were some out going and personalities in the group and they had some fun times with a bit of play acting from these capable ladies. She did opt to rejoin the Embroiderers Guild, but was welcome to pop in for a while any meeting day and did so from time to time. The Guild had continued very actively.

We joined up with Probus on transfer from the Queenstown club. The Gore Club was also a mixed club and had a very large membership of around 230. Ladies were accepted in their own right as Business or Professional women, or as spouses of male members. At the time of writing membership is about 30% Male and 70% female. We found it a very friendly organisation successful in attracting very fine speakers on a great variety of subjects. For instance, I recall such speakers as Pat Mulqueen chief mechanic for Sir Tim Wallis, helicopter deer recovery pioneer and prime mover in establishing Wanaka Warbirds, and Penny Simmonds, CEO of Southland Institute of Technology, and architect of the Fee Free Scheme established with the aid of Southland Local Bodies, industry, and provincial charities. These two illustrate the wide ranging subjects presented. The Club is very active in organising coach trips to various events. These are mostly to stage shows of various kinds, but also visits to interesting provincial places, e g Mount Linton Station, the historic town of Lawrence, the aluminium smelter at Awarua, to name but three. Members wear name badges and it becomes a meeting place to catch up with friends and lesser known district folk. We enjoyed it immensely.

We carried out a number of changes to the property at No 9. Outside the street wall [of brick, painted white] we developed a narrow flower bed and grew *Nemesia* successfully. *Nemesia* has a long flowering period but the bed was left bare over the winter months. We later switched to *Polyanthus* which flowered nicely at the end of winter and well into spring and summer. Even after flowering the plants remained and their greenery was good. Inside the wall were a number of shrubs planted when the house was built and at some time severely pruned with subsequent regrowth. The resulting shapes were not good and the shrubs were not very attractive.. I eventually, after Millie's death, dug them all out, deeply dug and trenched the bed and replanted it. We had brought some pink *Dahlia* tubers from Queenstown and in the depleted soil between the shrubs, they had not produced many flowers. I split them up during this rejuvenation and replanted them in four different positions and they flourished luxuriantly. They had just been waiting for space and a good diet. For some years they provided a massive show with the flower heads up to about four feet high. They needed regular dead heading to keep them looking attractive. Between these were some new shrubs including at least two small *Rhododendrons* and these provided new interest. A flowering cherry just beside the driveway was very pest ridden, aged and not very attractive. We pruned it at ground level and planted a fresh one which did well and provided some lovely blossom in the spring. On the west side of the house anything planted was battered by the westerly winds, both Nor'west and Sou'west. These would hit the house and accelerate through the gap between house and hedge. We erected a trellis across this gap half way along this west wall, and this broke the force of the wind and minimised the battering. A red *Dublin Bay* climbing rose was planted on the north side of this trellis, and flowered very well. There were three climbing roses on trellis attached to the wall of the house and these gave interest to that west wall. The northern one of these was *First Love*, and it regularly gave a mass of pink roses. We created a corner bed in the northwest corner of the section, and planted a *Rhodo* which in due course flowered in July with bright red flowers. I think it was *Cornucopia*. A trellis against the wall beside the front steps [away from the street] gave support to a *Clematis* which bravely climbed all the way up each year after being cut down to ground level in the autumn. A narrow piece of trellis supported a climbing red *Dublin Bay* rose on the east side of the steps. The drying green originally included a strip of lawn. We dispensed with the grass, and laid the area as a full concrete square which was very much better for hanging out the clothes.

We found the house extremely convenient. As I mentioned earlier, it had been very nicely planned in very good proportions. This planning extended to the placing and arrangement of light switches and power points. These were quite generously supplied considering the custom at the time of building. The outside light on the corner of the house between garage and front door was controllable from both the garage and inside the front door. This was very good when coming home after dark. There was one slight awkwardness arising from the orientation to the sun. The back door to the street was the common point for visitors to call. The passageway inside this door was fairly narrow, and visitors either had to be conducted to the lounge round two corners, or through the corner of the kitchen. They also immediately passed by the laundry and the door of this was not always kept closed. Matty Hamilton had been a friend of Mrs McGibbon, so the house was familiar to her. She always came through the little gate between house and garage to the Front Door, when she came to visit. On the other hand, Jean Smith, who also had known

Mrs McGibbon, always came to the back door facing the street. These were small matters in respect of the overall delight of the house. I said earlier that Susan had phoned to say that the 'house Millie liked was on the market'. Millie in fact loved the house and had thought, many years before, that she would love to live in it if it came on the market when we were sizing down. It was not on the market when we were down sizing shortly before I retired, or we might never have gone to Kelvin Heights. But the chance came later rather than earlier and she enjoyed it very much at this late stage.

The property was scheduled for auction some two weeks or so later. I think we were a bit nervous about competing at auction, so we decided to put in an offer. The Quotable Value was about \$69000 but the agents indicated it would take quite a bit more to buy it. We therefore made an offer of \$81000 but this was turned down by Helen Miller. We therefore upped the figure to \$90000 and this was accepted. With hindsight, I suspect that we would have got it for less if we had gone to the auction, but that is conjecture and we shall never know - the fact of the matter was that it was a compact house on a small section, and it suited our down sizing needs at the time. The very big factor, however, was that Millie loved the house and it was available at just the right time. We were selling in a higher level market in Queenstown and could afford to be a little reckless. In the event, Kelvin Heights did not sell as readily as we expected, though we virtually doubled our money there in a period of ten years. At the price we paid in Gore we were unlikely to do so again.

The house was about twenty seven years old and had been built for Hugh McGibbon and his wife. Mr McGibbon was the senior member of the firm of McGibbon & Co Ltd and had been a prominent person in educational circles. He did not have very long to enjoy the house as he died just five years after the section had been surveyed from the original larger block. The old villa immediately behind No 9 was the original home set in an area of around three acres. Sections had been subdivided from this block at several times and included houses on Johnston Street, ours on Devon Street and houses on Brown Street. I think there had been about seven lots off the original, including No 7 Devon Street which will come into my story later. There were remnants of concrete paths on No 9, which had served this old villa in earlier days. Mrs McGibbon had died about 1976/7 and the house was transferred to Henry Smith at that time, and was settled as a Joint Family Home with his wife at that time. Mrs Smith died in 1988, and the sale arose in 1993 as a result of Henry's death. The vendor, Helen Miller, was his daughter. Henry was one of three Scotsmen who emigrated to new Zealand many years previously, and farmed in Eastern Southland. The other two brothers were clients of mine and I knew them well. The house came to us in 1993.

The property was considerably run down. The carpets, draw curtains, and wallpapers were all original, with the exception of the second bedroom. We heard that latterly the Smiths had used different rooms, and that, from Mrs Smith's death, her bedroom had not been used. The kitchen was very dated with awkward cupboards and the Terrazzo sink bench was badly pitted and worn. There was no shower, and other bathroom fittings were very dated. We set out on a renovation programme.

We arranged for the kitchen to be dismantled and a complete new kitchen installed. This revolutionised the kitchen. The bathroom puzzled as to how could we instal a shower and retain the bath until Len Carroll took measurements that showed that if the bath was rotated 90 degrees along the south wall, there would be room for a shower box. We installed the shower, replaced the bath, handbasin and toilet, and again this completely changed the room. We installed some new shelving to the left and right of the fireplace in the lounge. We then replaced all the carpets, which were quite faded and worn, re-papered every room and painted all the paintwork. We also got the exterior painted, and a spray coat put on the aluminium roof tiles. We continued to live at Kelvin Heights until that was sold so our tradesmen had about six months to complete all this work. We came down very frequently to supervise this work and authorise developments and changes as they arose. This became an expensive programme which eventually added up to about \$45000. I think we were well aware that we would not be able to recoup all this expenditure, but we expected to be in the house for a number of years , and wanted it to be to our liking. Much of what was spent was only deferred and neglected maintenance and contributed very little to the basic value of the property. As stated in a previous chapter, we eventually came to moving day, said farewell to Kelvin Heights, and shifted to 9 Devon St. Susan and Roger were in Mitre Street and we were able to sleep there until we got things organised enough to move in to our own home again. We were back in Gore again and I think it felt right.

We decided very quickly and simply that we would just transfer our church membership from St Andrews, Queenstown, to St Andrews, Gore. The church was within very close walking distance. The Baptist Church had changed very much over the ten years, both in personnel and in style of worship, and we found many more former acquaintances and friends in St Andrews than in the Baptist Church. We very soon joined the choir and found this a very friendly and congenial group of people. Our extra voices were very much welcomed in the bass and contralto and we both enjoyed being part of the choir. We transferred our membership from Wakatipu Probus Club to the Gore club, and very much enjoyed the fellowship and the speakers which the club provided. It introduced us again to a wider range of people we had known previously and the club was very successful in obtaining very good speakers. We could walk along the street and meet up with people whose faces we knew and it felt very good. In those first years back, Susan were still in Mitre Street and I found scope for my energy in spending occasional time helping in tidying up their garden. They had done a very good job of landscaping, but their busy lives seemed to leave little time for maintenance. They were still finishing off their house so there was opportunity for ,me to lend a hand with some of the finishing work and varnishing and painting. I found that very rewarding. I rejoined the Gore Golf Club and very much enjoyed the less strenuous course, and renewing old golf friendships. It was interesting as, before I went to Queenstown, I would sometimes make the eighth green in three shots, but I never did it after I came back. I could get close, but never made it again. Millie and I again re-explored the Eastern Southland area and enjoyed some of its attractive areas.

Having moved into the house and put everything in order, there were areas of the section that needed attention and improvement.

Troubled Days

Life had settled into a routine. Millie attended the APW at St Andrews. She also was a member of the Womens Club and attended the Garden Circle, the Play Reading Circle and the Travel Circle. There was one afternoon in the Travel Circle entitled 'War Brides over Gore' in which Millie was one of the speakers. I heard many positive comments on her talk but there were others as well who told engaging stories. Millie also attended meetings of the Arthritis Society and found some of the demonstrations and talks given there very interesting and helpful. It was probably through this source that she obtained a video of exercises recommended for arthritis sufferers which she used regularly. We were both involved in the Probus Club and the Travel Club and enjoyed their speakers and the social interchange. Both of these organisations were having good attendances, especially the Probus Club. We were both members of the choir at St Andrews and found this a very friendly bunch of folk. We met on a Thursday night to practice and again on Sunday morning for a run-through before presenting the choir number in the service. I had been invited to join the Victim Support Committee and found this of considerable interest for a few years. I was very much enjoying my golf on Wednesday afternoons and on Saturdays. I think my handicap was hovering around the twenty mark. I also went to District Veterans Golf once a month if it was convenient.

It was about this time that we made contact with Mary Elder through Susan and we engaged her to come in for two hours each week to clean and dust. Mary was separated from her husband Brian Elder of the Riversdale Elder Clan. She was a very cheerful girl and helped to put the shine on the inside of the house. In February we had Mary in for five days in a row doing a real spring-clean job which we followed up with a visit by Jae's Carpet Cleaners.

Jean and John Springett paid a visit to New Zealand during which they spent time

exploring some of our scenic wonders. Jean was very interested in the environment and loved to explore nature areas. She and John later visited Australia and made a special trip to Tasmania to see the Tasmanian Devil which is native to the island state. They came to Gore at the beginning of March. We took them to the Croydon Aircraft factory where they both had flights in a Tiger Moth. We also took them on a country tour to see my home area and the surrounding district. They went on to Queenstown and while they were there we also went up and hosted them to dinner at the Skyline Lodge complete with the Magic Kiwi show. We had coffee together at Lomond Lodge before we departed on our separate ways.

In June 1996 Dawn invited us to come to Wellington to 'babysit' her house while she was overseas for a couple of weeks. We flew up from Dunedin on the 18th of June. We were to have the use of her car so that we could take the opportunity to explore round the region during this time. Dawn left on the 23rd of June for her conference in Washington DC after which she was to pay a visit to David and Peggy in Philadelphia. Millie's health was a bit uncertain but not so much as to cause alarm. Dawn had taken the precaution of giving us the name of a friend who was a GP, Dr Tony Crutchley. All was going well until the Tuesday of the second week. We were washing up after dinner. I was at the sink and Millie was drying and putting away. She was left-handed and was in the act of putting a mug into the corner cupboard at the left-hand end of the bench. The action was awkward as she had to stretch over the benchtop. The strain came on her left side and she experienced a sudden stab of pain so sharp that it caused her almost to collapse into my arms. I was just able to ease her onto a chair which happened to be close by. She was very much in pain and it took a few moments for it to subside a little. She was very much shocked by the intensity of the pain and it seemed urgent for her to be able to relax. Our bed was upstairs. We started up the stairs to get her into bed. It was a difficult thing to achieve. I supported her as much as I could and lifted her gradually from step to step until after quite some time she was comfortably settled. We phoned Dr Tony Crutchley. I had suggested dialling 111 and getting her to hospital but Millie was adamant she did not want to do so. Dr Tony was leaving after his surgery that evening to go out to their holiday house on the Kapiti Coast but very kindly came to see Millie. He was puzzled by her pain but felt it was probably a side muscle strain caused by the stretching and really suggested nothing more than painkillers and bed rest. He was then away till the Monday morning. During the weekend the pain flared up again and I phoned the Adelaide Rd Emergency Medical Centre in the local suburb. I asked for someone to come to the house. The Doctor, Rosemary Smith, suggested I bring the patient in. I replied that this was just not physically possible and was completely out of the question. She came to the house and once again felt it was probably a side muscle strain - she really did not add much to the diagnosis or treatment.

By the time Dawn came home about eleven days after the initial incident Millie was rather more comfortable and we decided that we would fly home to Dunedin as originally planned. We secured a wheelchair at Wellington airport. There was a stopover at Christchurch but we stayed on board the aircraft. We requested a wheelchair at Dunedin. The head flight attendant kept getting wheelchair requests until there were eleven people needing chairs at Dunedin. She remarked that she had never experienced anything like it. They had to borrow chairs from Ansett and even then some chairs had to return to the aircraft for a

second passenger.

During our time away Otago and Southland had been in the grip of an exceedingly cold spell. There had been a snowfall followed by a temperature inversion with clear skies and hard frosts. We came home on a Tuesday. The day before had seen a rise in temperature with a rapid thaw - the frost and ice and snow had disappeared overnight making it so much more pleasant and comfortable for us. Life was more convenient back home in our compact house in Devon Street.

During this time my cousin Ernie Gardyne died up in Frankton Hospital. Ernie had been deteriorating for some time. His funeral took place from the Centennial Hall at Wai-kaka on the 18th of September. Ernie had been a dedicated farmer and most family activities had been fitted round the seasonal demands of the farm. It was said at the funeral that a typical remark of his during lambing was, 'The last thing we want this month is a funeral.' Here he was providing one right at the peak of the lambing season. This saying of his drew some amusement from those present. In spite of it being the lambing season the attendance was one of the largest they had seen in the district.

Over the next few weeks the local doctor Dr Peter Coxhead tried to get to the bottom of Millie's problem. Thursday the 19th of September was Matty's birthday party and Millie was able to attend this for a while. However, little progress was being made in getting some certainty about Millie's illness. Dawn rang the Professor of Medicine at Dunedin Hospital who said to her that it was 'time it got sorted.' A few days later on 21st October she went into Dunedin Hospital to undergo a series of tests and explorations. The chief medical officer on the medical ward was Dr Lubke, a very pleasant man who seemed determined to leave no stone unturned to get at the root of the problem. I secured a room at Sahara Lodge in George Street and spent the days in the hospital. The Lodge had warned me that my room was only available until Labour Weekend when they were booked out. I had chosen them from a list of guest-houses posted at the hospital. There was another B&B address on the list up in Maori Hill at only \$25 per person per night. It was so cheap that I wondered if it was of very poor standard. Never mind, I thought, I did not need to stay if it was no good. It turned out to be a near-new house in Brownlow Tce with a lovely view across Leith Valley to Pinehill and the motorway and Mount Cargill. The hosts Mr and Mrs Dippie were very hospitable and were concerned to hear the news about Millie each day without intruding too much. They had a master bedroom above the ground floor and there was a suite of four bedrooms in the basement. At one stage David, Dawn and Ron and Jamie were all accommodated in this area. Millie also spent three or four days there before her operation.

I spent most of each day in the hospital and frequently took Millie by wheelchair to her X-rays, scans, blood tests and the other aspects of the investigation. The climax was reached on Thursday the 24th when I took her down for an ultrasound scan in the mid-afternoon. I was able to sit with her and could see the screen on which the operator was viewing the scan. I noticed that the operator was returning again and again to a particular area where the picture had a darker shadow. She was a trainee and eventually called the senior operator who also looked long and hard at this area. The session had gone on for over

an hour and Millie was getting very tired and was sore by the time it was finally finished and I was able to take her back to the ward. The next day she was given a CAT scan. This requires the patient to lie as still as possible while the machine slowly moves the patient through the scan. To assist her concentration she repeated to herself the whole of 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin', an epic poem she had recited in public many times. This scan and the ultrasound enabled Dr Lubke to diagnose a tumour in the left kidney. It had grown considerably and had blocked the veins running from the kidney back to the vena cava and to the heart. Dr Lubke felt very strongly that the tumour had grown too far to be removed and considered that her case was terminal. He believed that an operation would be a waste of medical resources. Back in Philadelphia David gathered from his medical associates that it was possible to remove such tumours. However, he did not have accurate information about the extent of the tumour penetration. A Urologist was called in and, while he feared Dr Lubke was right, said he was willing to operate and find out for sure. The op was scheduled for a few days hence. Millie was temporarily discharged and came to stay with me at the B&B in Maori Hill. Ron had debated whether he would bring Jamie down and finally did so. This was a great success as we have some lovely memories of Grandma and Granddaughter together in the basement lounge at Brownlow Terrace.

The urologist, Mr K P Samalia operated a few days later and confirmed Dr Lubke's opinion that the tumour could not be successfully removed. The tumour had grown along the veins from the kidney and had penetrated and rooted into the Vena Cava. If it had been diagnosed some months earlier it might have been removed along with the kidney. It was now too late. Dawn and I had planned to hear the result of the op from Mr Samalia before Millie was told but a misunderstanding about the appointment time we meant that he told Millie first and then informed us that he had done so. I recall going to Millie a little while later and talking about the verdict on the assumption that she already knew. She seemed a little surprised but when I said Mr Samalia had spoken to her she recalled it rather vaguely. The after-effects of the anaesthetic had dulled her reception of the news and I felt that this was a mercifully gradual realisation of the result. We had given her total choice as to whether she would have the operation in spite of Dr Lubke's advice and the fact that Mr Samalia was giving no expectation of a good result. She had chosen to take the chance but I think she was aware that the die had really been cast.

I recall this day as the lowest point for me of the whole experience. There had been a lot to discourage over the three months or so from the beginning of July but recovery had still always been an open possibility until this moment. Those first few nights back at the B&B in Maori Hill were very sad ones for me. It was just over fifty-one years since we had been married and just fifty-two years from the time we were getting to know each other and falling in love. Family members were very supportive and understanding but they were also mourning the impending loss of a mother somewhat earlier than might have been expected. In spite of mutual support each one eventually has to face the stark fact for themselves and what it means to them personally. I found that immediate period a very sad time.

Life had to go on. Millie had about ten days recovery time in Dunedin Hospital and

was then transferred to Gore Hospital for further recuperation and care. Susan was with us on the trip back to Gore and I recall parking round the corner of the Black Swan in Waihola for a comfort stop for the one and only time when I wasn't a customer. Millie stood the journey quite well and we delivered her to the hospital in Gore. Dawn came down for that first weekend. I was able to catch up with the business matters which had cropped up but went regularly to the hospital. Millie also started to get local visitors to help pass the days. She came home to Devon Street on the 5th of November and regular visits by the District Nurse began. She was given a bath every morning and I took that opportunity to change and make up the bed. She also had a clean nightie each day so there was a regular laundry system on the go. We started getting 'meals on wheels' when we were on our own and this was a considerable help to me. Unfortunately Millie's appetite was not very good and she was only picking at the food. I tried to encourage her to try and eat more as I knew that she would not otherwise maintain her strength but her appetite remained poor.

The District Health Board came up with assistance. Our regular District Nursing help was Jacqui Johnston from Waimumu. Jacqui was lovely and Millie looked forward to her coming in each morning for the five days of the week. Her husband was the son of a former client from Otamita Gorge. We would have a relief lady at the weekend one of whom was the lady from the crib next door at Frankton, Helen Robertson. We called Janine from Fountain hairdressers and for those months she came up every Thursday to do Millie's hair. She too was a bright interlude in the week and the hair-do did much to keep up the spirits. Millie was able to go out but needed a wheelchair to get to the car and from it wherever we went. So the health services provided a wheelchair ramp extending from the front door almost to the garage. It was great for its purpose but was a big nuisance afterwards and I finally dismantled it. It was built by Trevor Brumby and cost the Government just under \$2000.

The family all congregated for Christmas. David and Peggy and their children stayed in Jenny and Stuart Grieve's house in Martin Street. Ron and Lesley and the girls were with Susan and Roger in Mitre Street. Dawn was at Devon Street with us.

Christmas Day started at 11.30 am with the sharing of presents. Dinner followed and then more presents and we got to dessert about half past two. The day was sunny and the occasion has been preserved in group photographs. Millie looks drawn and a bit gaunt but she was able to enjoy the activities of the children. At one stage she asked Ken to draw her something. 'What will I draw?' he asked. Her eyes roamed round the garden and spotted the wheelbarrow so she asked him to draw that. He did a very nice job and she was very chuffed with it. Jamie and Hannah wanted to draw also so Susan fixed them up with two invalid trays and they sat on the path with their feet in the gutter and also did their drawings.

The days over Christmas and New Year sped by in a lovely atmosphere with all of us together. Ron and Lesley and the girls left just before New Year and David and Peggy and their children left on the 2nd of January. Dawn also went off the same day. Millie had managed to cope with the crowd of family very well by taking opportunities to rest up. The calm after all the activity was quite welcome but it was good to have the memory of this

family time. People came to be with Millie so I could get some time off to join in the golf of the day. Susan came one day when I was playing golf and took Millie out to The Moth for afternoon tea. On a few occasions I arranged for Matty to come in and sit with Millie. It was rather an uneasy arrangement as far as Millie was concerned - she was a bit anxious that it was asking too much of Matty. However, Matty actually loved it though I think she made the mistake of spending too much time in the bedroom instead of giving Millie time to rest up and relax. I also engaged a lady from Cancer Support but she was too talkative and this was not very successful. The load was primarily on me. My commitment was a very heavy one and I did seek these breaks when I could. I was on call each day from getting up in the morning until about eleven at night. I was very grateful for Dawn coming down on several weekends - she was a very acceptable substitute for me in keeping Millie company. Susan freed me up to attend the Maitland and East Chatton Schools Reunion at Maitland on the 11th of January and the dinner at Croydon Lodge in the evening.

We had a crisis on the 21st of January. There was a very fierce wind from about midday which resulted in a power failure from about six o'clock. Power was restored to the hill suburbs and to the house on the east side quite later in the night but not to the rest of Devon Street. By morning power seemed to be restored everywhere else so I phoned 'Faults' at least three times. They kept assuring me it was being corrected till finally I rang and said that while most seemed to have power we and the house next door were still out. Finally a crew came and discovered a branch over the line just the other side of Johnston Street. Mrs Millar next door had a baby and I had an invalid in the house. I had been insulating the freezer with blankets and rugs to keep it from thawing out. We were fortunate we had a fireplace as the power was off for about 19 hours.

Mary came for two hours on the 23rd while I went to Invercargill to meet Ron who came back down from Gisborne for a week. Millie and I had a lovely outing a few days later when we went to Le Potager for afternoon tea. It was a glorious afternoon and we were able to sit outside in the shade of a tree for our afternoon tea. The cafe owner saw the situation with Millie and was very helpful - the occasion stands out in my memory as a very special day. The following week we went to Maple Glen and I wheeled her around the more accessible parts of the garden which was looking very lovely.

During all this time Millie had one or another of her women friends calling in to see her - they were almost all very understanding. They included Dorothy Marshall, Mollie McKenzie, Kitty Bredin, Isabel Sharp, Matty Hamilton, May Gerken and Dawn Gardyne. There was a phone call from David and visits from Russel Elder, Lloyd and Janet Humphries and many others who do not come to mind. We greatly missed Rev Martin Stewart when he left St Andrews to go to Ashburton but very much appreciated Rev Ken Baker when he came for a temporary ministry. He was a very regular visitor and was a blessing each time he came. Dr Coxhead was also very attentive, calling every week and always available if required.

A sadness occurred in February when Alex Jones died. I regretted being unable to attend his funeral as Millie had to go to Invercargill to meet Dr North from Dunedin that very

day. During all of this time Millie was having adjustments to her medication, some of which did not agree with her at all. It was very good to have Dawn popping down frequently and keeping an eagle eye on the effects of the various prescriptions.

So the weeks went on and we were heading into April. On the 9th of April Margaret Stark celebrated her 90th birthday in the Senior Citizens rooms and I took Millie along in her wheelchair. Margaret lived just round the corner and I helped her occasionally with odd business matters and we were very friendly with her. At this function Owen Hymen came up to greet Millie and said, 'You've made my day.' Millie responded very quickly, 'And you've made my day.'

Two weeks later I took her to Invercargill where she was lovingly received and soon settled into a fairly large room in a quiet portion of the hospice. Our intention was to have her medication reviewed and adjusted by people who were vastly experienced in palliative care. I naturally expected to go home each night and said farewell to her fairly late that first night. I was phoned at nearly midnight to say that Millie had not settled. I talked to her for a quarter of an hour or more, trying to assure her that she would be fine and that I would be down first thing in the morning. They had given her a sedative and eventually the medication settled her and she gradually accepted I would not be there overnight. The nurse reassured me that I could get some sleep - I had offered to come back and sleep with her in an extra bed in her room but they thought it would not be necessary. I was back fairly early next morning and arrived just as she was waking up. From then on I slept in a second bed right beside her. The nurses were checking her morphine pump every half-hour through the night and reckoned I was a poor watcher as I was sound asleep most times they came in. Not much wonder as this was at the end of five months of full-time care relieved only when members of the family were able to free me up for a time.

Late the next day the Medical Superintendent informed me that she was entering the final stages and it would be just a matter of days. The next day was Dawn's 40th birthday party in Wellington and this news cast a bit of a shadow over the end of the party. Susan had received the message earlier and arranged flights for her and Ron to come down the following day. For once Dawn had to allow her guests to help with the clean up after the party so she had time to pack some clothes. Ron had to leave Lesley and the girls to drive back to Gisborne on their own. Dawn and Ron arrived in Invercargill early on the Saturday afternoon and David flew in from America on the Sunday. Ron decided to sleep on a mattress on the floor of the lounge at the Hospice while the others commuted from Gore during the following week.

A Different Life

Millie died about 6 pm on Friday the 2nd of May 1997.

Ron and Dawn and I had been keeping a very close watch with Millie that day. Her life was ebbing away and her breathing was getting more difficult. We did not expect her to see the evening out but could not tell just when the end would come. We agreed that Ron and I would go to the cafe for some dinner while Dawn kept watch. We were catching the six o'clock TV headlines when Jayne Ladbroke came looking for us to say that Millie had gone. We went straight back to the ward. Her body was at peace, breathing had ceased and we knew that her spirit had left its earthly home. Dawn told me she had said to her Mum that it was time to let go and that 'we will look after Dad.'

The hospice had a small room across the hallway set aside as a private chapel. After the first few minutes I spent a little while there just thanking God silently for all the years we had enjoyed together and offered a prayer of thanks that her struggle was over. Then Dawn joined me for a while. I was reminded that she was mourning also. We were coming to grips with the loss of a very dear wife and mother and extending our love to each other. Ron was also a tower of strength and support in negotiating the final details. It was really good for me to have them there.

There were some formalities to complete with the hospice staff. The undertaker had to be informed. There were a few things to be cleared from the room and packed up. I'm afraid that at this stage these matters were dealt with in a kind of daze. The next thing I recall was walking down the ramp to the car and being driven from the hospice on the last journey back home. I had spent nine days there full-time. I have no doubt I could have driven home quite safely that night but it was just so nice to be able to relax and have my family take charge.

As we travelled the familiar road home I had a very great sense of thankfulness for almost fifty-two years that we had spent together. Deep down we know that life does not go on for ever and that separation would have to come at some stage. That event is generally in the future and we do not dwell on it too much. We'd had months of warning that Millie's illness was terminal so her death had not been unexpected. Nevertheless, for me the reality was finally here and now. I also had a deep sense of thankfulness that I was the survivor as I felt that I was the better fitted to carry on alone. In thinking this I was aware that Millie was not in her native land, that her sisters were in their eighties and she would be bereft when they died and that she would physically have difficulty maintaining a home on her own. On my part I had a wide network of family members, although of course they had become her family too. I was in the country and district of my birth and still had a considerable measure of health and strength. I also had a very strong awareness that never again would she be with me in the car or in our home or joining me in some outing however mundane. We would never walk into church together again. Many of these thoughts were following each other through my mind.

I recall there being a strange feeling of finality about that trip home. It was strange that I had no feeling of leaving Millie behind. We had, in fact, left her body to be brought up later, but I knew that she was no longer there. That lively spirit and personality that so many were to speak of in their sympathy cards was no longer a part of the earthly body we were leaving at the hospice. I also felt a great satisfaction that the task of caring for her over nearly a year had been completed - the sense of a job carried out to the best of my ability. Those months had been quite special and I think of them today in the same way. I cannot speak too highly of the care and love given by the staff at the hospice. They were working out of rooms that had been adapted for the purpose but they gave very loving and careful care. I have been happy since to have continued to support them - I gave them a substantial donation at the time and I know that David left them a cheque also.

There was a funeral to arrange and next morning we met with Rev Ken Baker and Kevin Hammond of Southern Funeral Services to make the necessary arrangements. We planned it to take place in St Andrews church the following Tuesday afternoon. Family in England, Peggy in America and other friends were notified as soon as we could manage.

We arranged for Millie to be brought home to the house for the day before the funeral and this was announced in the paper. Many people came. I recall that Matty came to see us but would not go in to view Millie. Dear soul, she preferred to remember Millie as she had known her in life and I understood that perfectly. Matty sat in the living room by the fire for quite a time and met many of those who came in. I recall that Mary Elder come and quietly kept order in the kitchen and a supply of cups of tea and eats for the visitors. On the day of the funeral my girls prepared a collage of photos which were placed on an easel at the back of the church. We arranged for the casket to wait there with us till the beginning of the service as we greeted many of the people coming into the church. The pallbearers were our four children with Roger and our nephew John Elder. Lesley had come down with Jamie and Hannah for the service and there was an unhappy incident when Hannah accidentally burnt her hand on one of the tubular heaters under the footrest of a pew. She

was only about two and a half and it was just so unfortunate. It is sad that she will have little recollection of her Grandma.

We all contributed our different recollections about Millie. As I was the only person there who had personal knowledge of her before she came to New Zealand, I spoke of her family background and of meeting her in wartime England. I said that in 1944 the Royal Air Force had posted what Millie herself had described as a 'handsome New Zealand airman' to Squiresgate RAF Station on the outskirts of Blackpool. As was usual I had found the nearest Baptist Church and turned up at the service on the next Sunday. South Shore Baptist Church was a lovely stone church which had been founded about 1910 with Millie's parents as two of the foundation members. During the war years the church ran a social evening every Sunday after the service for visitors to the town, both civilian and servicemen¹. I remarked that I found two Blackpools - one the glitzy Promenade with its amusement galleries and three entertainment piers jutting out from the Prom - the other the normal residential city or town two or three blocks back from the shoreline. I had received an early invitation to tea at the Haigh home but only daughter Marjorie was home as Winnie and Millie were away on holiday. I first met Millie the next week. I outlined details of Millie's family and how I became integrated into the life of the church through the badminton club, evening walks with the young people and invitations to the various homes. About four months later I took Millie and her two sisters to a performance of The Messiah in town as a thanks for their hospitality - I had enjoyed the fact that Millie was in the group. Eventually our attraction developed till one night I told her Dad that we wanted to get married. 'I was afraid of this, Ivan', he said. I said that Millie's Mum was very upset at the thought of her daughter going so far away. I told of the Gypsy who had come to the door and told Emma Haigh she would live to be ninety nine - which suited her very well as she had a real zest for life - and that there was going to be a wedding in the house. The next day she went into town and bought her dress for the wedding and arrangements were full on. I spoke of Millie's elocution training and performance skills, of her sense of humour, her organising and entertainment skills and her eye for colour and arrangement in homemaking. I said that we had decided that our marriage was for keeps and that our loyalty and commitment to each other were absolute.

Ron followed and cheekily suggested that the five quid I had slipped to the Gypsy was 'well worth it.' He spoke very warmly of her Christian faith and commitment and of her participation in many aspects of church life. He said that if she took on something she would do it well. He talked of Millie's Bible Class leadership, of cone gathering and potato growing schemes to raise funds for missionary work, of the scrap metal drive when an elderly lady offered an engagement ring. 'But your husband might not like it,' said Millie. 'Oh, he didn't give it to me. It was from a boy friend he knew nothing about.' He talked of her work with the Bible Society, with the Ladies Fellowship, in choir work and on the Deacons Court. She was an ideas person, had wise judgment and people respected her but also loved her. She was a woman of faith and her wisdom came through a reliance on prayer

¹ Blackpool was a seaside resort and catered for thousands of visitors every year and I had arrived at the height of the holiday season. Blackpool also was a recruitment centre for the Royal Air Force, and entrants received their initial training and fitting out with uniforms in the town, spending some six or eight weeks in initial training. There were also Air Force Schools in Blackpool for the training of Fitters and Riggers to become part of the ground crews to service combat planes, and these men spent a much longer period on their courses.

in all important decisions. He said that she told the church on one occasion that she had prayed that she would find a husband she could respect as well as love. 'We honour her today and we honour our Dad.'

Susan dwelt on Millie's response to the challenge of becoming Mayoress from 1972-1980 when I had become Mayor. Susan remarked that one of her worries was the matter of dress, particularly for important functions such as a Vice-Regal visit or the visit of the Queen and Prince Philip to Invercargill or of Norman Kirk as Prime Minister and other such occasions. People had made comments like 'your mother was a lovely speaker and always had something worth while to say.' Susan remarked on her somewhat awed impression of the amount of voluntary work Millie had done for the community through the organisations she was invited to address or attend. She told how Millie had been chuffed on meeting Lady Blundell the morning after an evening she had organised when her first remark was 'Didn't we have fun last night?'

Dawn touched on Millie's sense of humour and fun. Being somewhat younger than her siblings she thought the family reference to a particular kind of joke was a 'Curby' joke. She later learned that they referred to the maiden name of Millie's mother. Grandma Haigh's four brothers used to enjoy jokes with a toilet theme, so within Millie's family any joke on this line was known as a 'Kirby' joke. Dawn was only about nine when Millie's oldest sister Jessie came out for a visit and recalled feeling a bit out of things as the two sisters laughed and joked over past stories that Dawn knew nothing about. Dawn also spoke of Millie's humorous recitations. She had been asked to recite at the annual Christmas Party of the Hard of Hearing Association which had seemed a bit funny at the time.² Dawn recalled her reciting for her grandchildren Kate and Ken at our Family Christmas just four months back, finishing her piece with a neat little bow. She concluded, 'If we, her children, end up a bit like her we will be doing all right.'

I had long felt that the presence of a wide range of people at the interment in the cemetery was an intrusion on a very personal family moment. We arranged therefore to move off from the church after only a few moments and lay her to rest with just the close family present. Personally I found this very good. Roger, Ron, David and Dawn carried her from the hearse to the grave with Susan and me following. She was lowered to her resting place after Ken Baker had read the 'Poem for the Living' from the service programme and led in a short prayer. We all laid a rose bud on the casket. She lies in the lovely Charlton Park Cemetery which was bought and developed during my time on Council. It is planted out with many flowering cherries and is a very lovely sight in September and October. We had a stone erected recording that she was born at Blackpool in England with the quotation from Stainer's Crucifixion '...bidding me look up, and trust, and live.' There was a nice moment at the cemetery when Susan read out the cards attached to the bouquets from Jessie and Marjorie, Jean & John & family, Margaret & Geoff, and the Culpin family - all members of her close family in England.

We returned fairly quickly to the church hall where afternoon tea was being served

² I would add that most of the Hard of Hearing folk had hearing aids of various kinds. In addition Millie had very clear diction which meant that the group members were able to follow her stories quite well.

by the ladies of the APW and found a hall full of people waiting to pass on their sympathy. There had been a full church for the service and there were many names in the Book of Remembrance, all a testimony to the regard and respect with which she was held in the hearts of very many people. Millie had made a great impression on her friends - Ron was right to say that her friends not only respected her but also loved her. Many of my nieces and nephews were present and said what a favourite Auntie she had been. It was a tribute that they came to the service in such numbers, even Grace and Nigel Wood all the way from Blenheim. Susan said later that on returning from the cemetery she became caught up with friends and could not seem to get free to meet with the group of her cousins who were making good use of the opportunity of being together. It was quite a long time before we had spoken to those who had waited till the last and we were free to go home. We were quite exhausted but very heart-warmed by the expressions of love and friendship and sympathy.

The family soon scattered. David had been virtually ordered by his associates in Philadelphia to stay over for the funeral but left immediately for home. Dawn had been down for nearly two weeks as had Ron and Lesley had her practice to go back to. Susan and Roger lived in Gore and remained close by.

I received over 250 messages of sympathy and we quickly organised a thank you card from Necklens printers with which to acknowledge the messages. This was a major task for me in the next two or three weeks but I found it enabled me to work through the feeling of loss to a very great degree. It was very heartwarming to know that all these people were sharing it with me and the family. In addition, members of the family received sympathy cards from their personal friends.

In reflection, what can one say? It took a great deal of love and courage for Millie to marry someone from the far side of the earth, to leave family and all her youth associations, to come to an unknown land and an unknown family of 'in-laws.' She came to a church which was different but which she came to love over the years and to which she contributed a great deal. She gave a great deal to my life and rewarded me handsomely for my temerity in inviting her to come to New Zealand. As I said at her funeral, we were totally committed to each other but that did not prevent many times of homesickness in those early years. I am very glad that she was able to visit her homeland a number of times for good periods and that members of her family were able to visit New Zealand. I consider myself a very fortunate man.

Millie's birthday was just a month after her death and Dawn came down from Wellington to share it with me. I met her at Momona and we headed to Queenstown through Ranfurly. We had sent flowers to her sisters with the message 'Celebrating Millie's Birthday, Much Love. Ivan and the Kids.' On the Saturday we had lunch at Dorothy and Alex Taylor's and met up with many friends at the Frankton church next morning. Susan and Roger came up from Gore and we all had dinner at the Skyline. We called on Alan and Dulcie Duncan at Kelvin Heights, Don and Margaret Smith and Rua Rout. On the Monday we had lunch at the Wind in the Willows at Arrowtown and Dawn flew out to Wellington late in the

afternoon. I drove back to Gore. It was lovely to be together and do things over a weekend in which Millie was very much in our hearts and thoughts.

In the back of my mind over this period was the question of how and where I was to spend the immediate future. I was obviously quite well settled in a compact home handy to town and church and had Susan and Roger close by up the hill in Mitre Street. I was very well placed for the present but what about the longer term? About two months after Millie's death I went up to Gisborne for a longish stay in response to a warm invitation from Ron and Lesley. I travelled up by car through Kurow and the Hakataramea Valley and saw my Auntie Win Botting and Graeme in Christchurch. Auntie Win was very frail and conversation with her was very difficult. On my way further north I spent a night at Maruia Springs where I had a lovely time in the hot springs pool. The next day I found the little chapel at St Arnaud with its lovely view over Lake Rotoiti. I spent quite a time there just surrendering my spirit to the atmosphere and journeyed on calmed and strengthened by the experience. David had been to a conference in Australia and we met up in Wellington when I arrived off the evening ferry. We drove together to Gisborne, spending a night in Havelock North and enjoying a round of golf at Flaxmere. David soon flew out again on his way home and I was left with Ron and Lesley in Gisborne.

My thoughts came back to my future and where it should be spent. Taking a long view I was aware that my only New Zealand grandchildren were in Gisborne and it seemed that Ron and Lesley were settled there for the long haul. Susan and Roger lived in Gore but Susan was completing a Community Based Ministerial Training course on completion of which her ministry could take her and Roger almost anywhere. Roger would be able to take his trade along with him. I pondered whether I would be wise to 'bite the bullet' now and make a move for the longer term. I talked with some Real Estate agents in Gisborne and roamed around looking at some of the properties on the market at the time. I enquired about a cottage at the Presbyterian Home without coming to any definite decision - availability was a very uncertain matter. During this period I went out to Whangara village and beach³. The bay is very wide and I took a long walk to one end of the beach. It was so lovely and peaceful with the sound of the moderate breakers coming in over the sand. Gisborne is blessed with many such beaches. That walk has stayed in my mind over the years though I can't say I made any significant decision during that time.

On my way back from Gisborne I had a weekend with Dawn in Wellington where I called on Marjorie Duncan and my old Wellington room mate Jim Lambert in Martinborough. This latter visit was rather disappointing as Jim did not seem very responsive although his wife, Pauline, was very nice. In Wellington we dined with Neela and Vaughan Richardson and Dawn had Annie, Mary Ann, Amy and Alison to dinner on the Sunday night. After crossing the strait the next morning I travelled through to Ashburton and completed the homeward journey next day, calling on Vic and Winnie in Timaru, Ray and Ruth Melhop in Moeraki and Stewart and Joyce Rose in Palmerston.

In the event I did not feel any immediate compulsion to move north. I recognised

3 The beach and bay were to be much later the site of the film 'Whale Rider'

that for the present I had in Gore my circle of friends, many ex-clients with whom I had a good relationship, my golfing associates and a very pleasant attractive home. I began to adapt to the situation but found there were many drawbacks. I was unused to walking into church alone. I even began to feel that I needed to take care about who I sat beside. The same problem of choosing a seat applied to Travel Club and Probus Club. Rotary became a safe place as I had always gone alone to the weekly meeting. Ladies Night brought its little problem and I found myself at a men-only table instead of in a mixed party. Susan completed her training and she and Roger were moving to Balclutha. However, an accident while gardening at the Manse injured her back badly and she had to withdraw from that appointment. Susan was available to come with me to functions if she was free and did so on more than one occasion.

It was strange becoming one person alone instead of being one of a pair. In simple things like the garden - many plants had been Millie's choice. It was some time before I realised that I could exercise my own choices. It was at this stage that I cleared out all the old misshapen shrubs from inside the front fence and completely replanted that bed - the result was very good. I also bought a tree peony called Molly Bayley. It was to a considerable extent a sentimental purchase - and an expensive one at \$100 - as it had been developed from a plant in the garden of Jack and Molly Bayley in Edendale. Jack was a brother of Millie's close friend Judy Bayley in England with whom she had kept in touch ever since she came to New Zealand. I moved this plant with me next-door to 7 Devon Street and finally to 32A Eccles Street where it has settled very well. It is a very special specimen.

On the other hand I was freer to indulge my hobby of golf and I regularly played in the weekly Saturday competition and the local veterans informal competition on Wednesdays. I also played when I could in the monthly Eastern Northern Veterans at five or six different local courses. I was still involved in the St Andrews choir and enjoyed the fellowship and friendship of the members. For quite a time I was one of three who took on a week-long duty of keeping the church heating furnace cleared of ashes each day. For some years I was on the lawn roster. I eventually withdrew from both of these as I wanted to be free to spend time on the road visiting family and exploring. This breaks the aloneness of living on one's own. It was about this time that I conceived the idea of writing this story. I thought this would not only be interesting for my family but more especially to my grandchildren. I was very aware that half of my grandchildren were resident in America and would not grow up amid the stories of their New Zealand forbears. So often we hear it said that it was a pity we did not ask more questions of our parents and grandparents before they had died and the opportunity was lost for good. I had bought a computer for the benefit of email and found it was eminently suitable for composition of articles or correspondence - or writing a book! It has become a fairly long drawn-out process.

I was very conscious that Millie's death was a further loss to the Haigh family, made all the more so because her two sisters and other close relations had been unable to share in the months of her illness and the final celebration of her life. We had recorded a video of the funeral service and this had been sent to them and I knew it had been shown at informal family gatherings. The Haigh family had entrusted Millie to me when we were

married and now she had gone. I felt it would be good to go over to see them while her passing was fresh in our minds and in some measure help them to have a share in her departure. Ron remarked to me later that he felt that in a way I was taking her spirit back to her homeland. I certainly had the intention of sharing her with the rest of her family. At one stage I expressed my thanks to them all for the love and fellowship they had all extended to me - this arose out of the fact of Millie's death.

I left from Momona in the middle of August after a birthday dinner at Susan's. I hired a car in Auckland and visited Doreen Broadbent in the afternoon and had an evening and stayed the night with Carolyn Burns. Carolyn was away to work before I was up. While I was getting ready to leave her little dog Taz got onto the toilet, found the spare roll of paper and had unrolled about half of it in the lounge before I found her. I took a quick trip out to Orewa to see Alison Paterson before flying out in the evening. Immigration in Los Angeles was the worst I have encountered. At least four jumbo jets had arrived together and it took about two and a half hours to get through. I stayed overnight at the Sheraton Gateway before flying on to Boston where I was to meet David and Peggy on their way to vacation. The outside temperature was 98° F and the air-conditioned car was very welcome. David and Peggy were on their own as Kate and Ken were in summer camps. We headed up the Maine coast to High Island just south of Pemaquid Point. David and Peggy had an invitation to call in on an colleague from the University. I am not sure if they knew about the extra body as they put David and Peggy in their own room for the night while I had the day bed in the living room. Our hosts, Jamie and Jeannette, went across the island to sleep in the home of his parents. In the morning we visited Jamie's father, Dr John Wheeler, retired physics professor from Princeton University who was very highly respected in his field. He and his wife were a lovely couple and had built their retirement home to take in a lovely view seawards through a gap in the very heavily wooded islands along the shore. At their home Jamie loaded their ancient cannon with a blank charge - it made a very impressive bang. Mid-afternoon we headed north to Acadia. This island was a very popular summer resort for Boston high-society back in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Visitors travelled by rail although a good many came by sea in their private yachts which was no doubt cooler and more pleasant. There were some very large hotels to cater for this influx, one having about fifty rooms for staff alone. It was the southern port for the Nova Scotia ferry. In the morning we explored the island and located Jordan Pond where D & P cycled. The tracks had been restored from the original carriage roads which were built to moderate gradients for horse and carriage traffic. I took a walk while they were away. We then drove to the top of Mount Cadillac (1530 ft) which is the highest mountain on the eastern seaboard of the United States. It was named after the man who established the Cadillac motor company and seems to be just a great pile of granite. We headed west about mid-afternoon and found a motel at Ninec on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. The children's summer camps were situated on the lake - Ken's on the shore and Kate's on an island. We explored round Sugarloaf Hill with its 9-hole golf course and Franconia Notch which was a very spectacular deep valley between two sheer rock faces several hundred feet high. David and Peggy cycled down The Flume while I drove the Taurus to meet them. We stayed at the magnificent nineteenth century Mt Washington Hotel at the foot of the mountain, serviced by railroads built around the beginning of the century. A very steep special-purpose train track took people to the top at 6300 ft where there must be a magnificent view in all direc-

tions. I was intrigued to find that this railway was built back about the 1880's within five years of the rail link from East to West being completed. The hotel was the venue for an international monetary conference near the end of the Second World War when the Bretton Woods Agreement was signed. It set the pattern for the immediate post-war financial relationships between the member countries. The war had greatly affected the balance of finance between the allied powers. Britain and Russia had been bled financially while the United States had profited in the earlier years through the Lease-Lend arrangement with Britain. David and I played golf on the hotel course - I was only three strokes over handicap and David four strokes less. Ken was with us and did most of the driving of the golf buggy. We played with a couple from across the state border in Maine and one of them put his Ping nine iron into my bag by mistake. I found it next day and left it in the Pro shop - I hope it was returned to him.

We had a wet day so David and I went down to Concord to visit the New Hampshire Historical Society Library where we found references to Samuel Murray Carr, my Great-Grandfather. They had even recorded the fact that Lizzie Florence Carr, my Grandma, had been married to George Robinson (sic) Elder and that they had six children - they had three more children later, presumably after the information had been supplied to the family history project. It was recorded that from 1882 he had lived in San Francisco. We know now that this was after he had spent 17 years in New Zealand. We went on to New London which was my Grandma's birthplace. We found a history of the Eleventh New Hampshire Volunteer Regiment which had fought at Fredericksburg on the 13th of December 1862. Samuel Carr fought in this battle with his regiment and was recorded as discharged disabled on 29th Jan 1863. However, we have discovered subsequently that he had applied for a discharge on account of 'Very Important Business.'⁴ He came to New Zealand in 1967. This event has been mentioned in the earlier chapter on My Paternal Grandparents.

New Hampshire is a very heavily wooded state with small open areas which appear to be farmed. There are many cornfields and we saw very few animals. The timber is mostly second growth as the early settlers used most of the mature timber for building. It was a 'wood' society in the early days. The end result today is a beautiful state which is known along with the other north-eastern states for their autumn colours. In New Zealand we think of gold as the autumn colour but in these states the Fall colours are predominantly red from the many maples, rowans and mountain ash trees. The whole countryside becomes a sea of mottled reds with some yellow amongst it. Unfortunately I was there in late August long before the Fall colours would appear. We picked up Kate and Ken from their camps and travelled the nine and a half hours home to Philadelphia where I spent the next few days with them. One day Ruth rang and invited us for lunch and a visit to Longwood Gardens. She mistook her way and we returned to Cloverley Corners for a pleasant time round the pool.

On a Friday at the end of August David came from work early and we left for my flight to UK from Newark Airport just over the river from New York City. It was a pleasant journey and David parked in the short-term park so we could have a coffee together. Once

4 A quotation from Samuel Murray Carr's resignation letter found in his military record.

our plane had left the gate I counted at least 25 flights taking off before our turn came. We took off after 9 pm and were served dinner. At about 10.30 pm I put my watch forward five hours to UK time - it made for a very short night. Jean and John met me at the airport and took me to their London flat in Geraldine Road. Judy and Christopher came over from North London and we had dinner at French's Cafe - I had lamb chops. The next morning I was sleeping in when John came into my room shortly after 9 am to say that Princess Diana and Dodi El Fayed had both been killed in Paris. We watched the replays of the news for some time feeling rather overwhelmed by the sudden and awful tragedy. Later we left on the first stage of our journey north, calling in for me to see Judy Bayley and her brother Brian at Little Chalfont. We stayed at a rather nice B&B called Cross Lanes Cottage at Bledlow. From there we went to Emma's in Sotwell where Carolyn joined us for dinner. The next day we called at Sally Turnbull's in Chinoor where Frank and Dot were staying. I showed them the Remembrance Book for Millie and the photo albums I had prepared for my trip. We left after noon, lunched at Stafford Services on the M6 and reached Margaret Bonney's late in the afternoon. Jean and John set off for home after dinner and I stayed on at Cabus.

The next morning Margaret dropped me into Garstang for a hair trim and to buy some aerogrammes. She went on to Blackpool to collect Jessie and Marjorie to bring them to Mari Vale for the day. This was a bit emotional as it was our first contact since Millie's death. However, we were all old enough to know that death and separation from loved ones is eventually inevitable and that we just had to accept it. It was good though to meet them and to include them a little more in their sister's passing with the Remembrance Book and the albums I had brought. My observation was that both were getting quite frail. The next day Geoff and I tackled the local golf course but got caught in quite a heavy shower right at the far point of the course. We just finished out the round by which time the shower was over. It was not far to go home and get dried and changed. I note that I scored 97-20-77 against a par of 68 - I blamed jet lag!

The next day Geoff went into Lancaster Hospital to have a graft to the artery in his thigh and I went into Blackpool to visit Jessie. I soon gathered that she was expecting to be taken out and I was happy to oblige. She wanted to shout me lunch and we went to the Beach Side Cafe at St Annes. After the meal Jessie produced money to pay but it was not enough so I offered her a £20 note. The waiter brought the change back on a little tray and I was just working out how Jessie could pay me back when she picked up the change as if it was hers. I just smiled to myself - so much for being 'shouted'. After taking her home I visited Marjorie who entertained me to tea. On my way back to Cabus I called briefly on Eric and Margaret and after tea went into Lancaster with Margaret Bonney to see Geoff who was doing very well.

In my diary I have labelled Sunday as 'a busy day'. Margaret and I both drove into Blackpool where and she picked up Jessie while I collected Marjorie and her electric buggy. We all went to Whitegate Drive Baptist Church where I was welcomed by some familiar friends such as Gladys Hunt, Gwennie Bateman, Laurence Jones (the former minister) and Mrs Jones and Mrs JT Jones (wife of another former minister). Mr Jones took some lessons from Diana's life as he talked on the story of the ten lepers. He made the two points of

Touching and Giving. We then called in on Geoff at Lancaster on our way to Isel. Once again I shared the Remembrance Book and albums and gave Jean the white cape of Millie's that I had brought for her from New Zealand. Jean was so touched that she could not thank me for it until later. I had brought the other cape for Margaret and had given it to her earlier. They were both very moved. I had decided in discussion with my girls that Marjorie and Jean would be much more likely to use them occasionally than Susan and Dawn would. We all spent three days together at Isel. We walked the block. Ruth Haigh came visiting for a day from Ambleside where she was managing a hotel. We had lunch at Pooley Bridge followed by a boat trip to Glenridding on Ullswater - we had some fun getting Marjorie on and off the boat in her wheelchair. We generally enjoyed being all together and from time to time sharing memories of Millie. All the time we were relaxing in the pleasant atmosphere of Isel with the clear pure air coming in off the Irish Sea.

Finally John took Marjorie back to Margaret's place to keep an appointment at the hospital in Blackpool and I followed Jean and Jessie into Carlisle where we visited the exhibition 'Head of Steam' which marked one hundred years of the Carlisle Citadel Station. It was a great display of engineering triumphs during the heyday of the railway systems. I had experienced railway travel quite extensively during the war years and had pictured something of what they would be like in peace time. Jean and Jessie returned to Isel and I went on to Glasgow to share the memory of Millie with Renee Mackenzie. I arrived in the late afternoon and we talked over a chicken dinner followed by a rhubarb pie and then on into the evening as I shared the Book of Remembrance and photo albums with her. We ended the evening by finishing off the daily crossword puzzle. Renee took me out next day into the countryside north of the city to a cafe called The Wishing Well where I shouted her lunch. We had a leisurely meal and then did the crossword puzzle in a copy of the Glasgow Herald we had found in the cafe. After dropping Renee back home I set out for Isel, over the high Erskine Bridge, onto the M8 over Glasgow. I was alarmed to notice that my fuel tank was low so I took an exit into central Glasgow. It took me a while to find a service station but it was just as well I did as it was quite a long way down the motoways before there were services. I was back at Isel a little after six o'clock. In the morning Jessie and I set off for Blackpool, detouring along the north side of Bassenthwaite Lake under Skiddaw and on to Grassmere where we found a cafe that Jean had recommended. My diary note says that I had a sandwich and apple pie!

Next day I was picked up by Eric and Margaret for a week's trip to Wales. Our destination was Llandudno, one of a series of seaside resorts on the north coast. The streets near the beach contain row after row of private hotels built to cater for the Victorian and Edwardian crowds of holiday makers arriving by rail. Now most visitors come by car and as few hotels have off-street parking the streets are lined with visitors' cars. We booked into the Carmen Hotel where I was given a single room. It was very small with a mini en-suite but I found the bed very comfortable. On our first day we headed inland to Betws y Coed, a very lovely little town built at the junction of two pretty mountain streams. One of them was in spate, running almost bank to bank and rushing down under the bridge at considerable speed as the stream flowed sharply downhill. We went to view The Swallow Falls but they had been almost completely obliterated by the volume of flood water. We carried on

south to Porthmadog which features a miniature railway. We enjoyed lunch in a cafe on the main street and then I spotted an Edinburgh Woollen Mills outlet where I found a green v-neck jersey reduced from twenty pounds to eighteen. I bought it and found it very handy⁵. Then we visited the miniature Italian-styled village of Portmerion. This is very charming and incorporates a hotel with accommodation scattered through the village of miniature houses and buildings. The village overlooks a very wide sandy estuary which was at low water when we visited - there are warning signs about dangerous currents at the change of the tide.

In the morning we separated and I wandered around the old walled part of the city of Conwy which incorporates Conwy Castle. I went along the waterfront - really the estuary of the Conwy River - and came across the smallest house in England. It had one ground floor room and one upper bedroom accessed by a ladder. There was a trap door to let down over the ladder opening once the occupant was up. There is an old suspension bridge over the river, preserved as a historic structure but no longer in use. We explored Conwy Castle whose outer walls and main sections were in a pretty good state of repair. We were intrigued by a seagull which had nested on the top of one of the square towers of the castle. There was no way for the young gulls to leave the tower, except to fly - what a first flight! The castle was one of the series of fortified castles built by King Edward of England in which to house occupation forces to keep the Welsh under control. Nobody was occupying it at the time of our visit. On another day we headed down the Betws y Coed road again but this time only as far as the Bodnant Gardens. I recalled that Phyllis and Ian Gardiner had made a special trip up to Wales on one of their trips to England and Ian had said to me that I should see them if I ever had the chance. Here I was - suddenly, unexpectedly, even though they had not been on my current go-to list. The gardens are on a grand scale and cover many acres. They feature many large mature trees planted in the mid-1870s when the garden was first established. One old cedar had a large gash where a major limb had been broken off. Another large tree had a family of squirrels. The gardens span a deep valley with a pretty little stream at the bottom. There were very tall pines, sequoias and cedars there where they were well protected from the wind. Upon leaving the garden we headed on through Llanderis Pass with Snowden (3559 ft) rising very steeply on one side. We stopped at Llanberis Railway Station which is the starting point for the mountain railway. The trip up the mountain costs £14.50 but it takes about two and a half hours and we had to flag it away. I would love to have done it but there was not time.

We crossed the Menai Strait, the very narrow strip of water separating Anglesey from mainland England, and crossed the island to Rhosnegr⁶. There I called on Linley Houston (nee Daniel) from Gore days while Eric and Margaret went exploring round the town. Many years before in 1970 I had 'given her away' at her wedding at Huyton-with-Roby on behalf of her parents who were back in New Zealand. Her home was lovely, full of ornaments and souvenirs of her travels which have been considerable. Her husband John was a ship's master and she sometimes travelled with him or flew to destinations at which his ship was due

⁵ Strangely enough, after it had been hanging in my wardrobe for a long time, I had brought it out just a few days before the time of writing, and enjoyed wearing it again. It has worn well but is getting a bit more Mary Anne than Queen Anne.

⁶ This was not my first visit to Anglesey. On one occasion when I was flying from Squiresgate, we were diverted to land at an aerodrome in Anglesey because of fog over base - we were there only a short while before it was safe to go back to Blackpool. I had also passed through Anglesey after a ferry trip from Northern Ireland to the port of Holyhead on Anglesey Island.

to call. She apparently owned flats in Llandudno which required her attention on a regular basis. On the morning of our departure from Llandudno we went through town - I needed to get some petrol, Margaret wanted to buy a cardigan and we were all keen to go up Great Ormes Head, a rather odd rock hill some hundreds of feet high at the west end of the prom. It consists of solid rock and has a tramway system for riding to the top. At the east end of the prom is a smaller similar hill known as Little Orme. On our way home we explored separately in Llangollen, a lovely village on the River Dee with a weir in the river and a very rocky bed below it. There is also a canal. While exploring the town I discovered that I had my hotel room key in my pocket so I bought an envelope and posted it straight back to the hotel. Back in the car later I confessed to my error and Margaret said to Eric, 'What did you do with our key?' He felt in his pocket and said, 'The same.' So another posting had to be made. My diary sums it up: 'A very good trip which enabled me to satisfy a lot of curiosity about North Wales.'

I had three nights with Ron and Vera Haigh at Belmont just out of Bolton. Ron did his usual trick of taking me to interesting spots and I had two long walks with him. Vera's sister and her brother and his wife came for the evening and Bernard told a couple of rather weird stories. They had gone to Bolton-by-Bowland to look up their great uncle George Pickup's grave. The caretaker told them he knew the grave and would take them to it. He went on to say that he had helped carry the coffin and they had just lowered it into the grave when a lady called to them from the window of a house next door, 'You've put it in the wrong way - he's facing the wrong way.' She came across and insisted they haul the coffin out and replace it the other way round. It was the custom that bodies should be laid facing the east ready for the resurrection. The caretaker said they had a very difficult task to get the coffin back up out of the grave as the lowering tapes had been removed. Bernard had another story of going to see the widow of an employee who had died. 'Would you like to see him?' she said and led the way upstairs to where he was lying in his coffin. Suddenly she grabbed a hairpiece that was lying nearby and shoved it roughly on his head. 'He would not like you to see him without this,' she said. As it was not properly fitted it had looked rather bizarre. I returned home by a long detour round by Clitheroe with nostalgic memories of Millie's love for that area. Back at Cabus Geoff was itching to try out his mended leg on the golf course so we played nine holes at a new course at Ashton near Lancaster. We got round so early that we decided to play it again for the full eighteen. Geoff was delighted with the performance of his leg with its repaired artery. After golf at Longridge next day I broke all the rules by going into the dining room in shorts. The bar girl informed me that shorts were not allowed. Fortunately I had some longs in the car and went out to change - Geoff should really have warned me.

The next few days were spent taking Jessie and Marjorie out for a long drive, doing the same with Carmen Miller, and hosting a family dinner at Horn's Cottage near Goosnargh. Margaret's birthday was celebrated with a lovely outing to Malham in north-west Yorkshire, a fascinating barrier of granite across a deepish valley. The stream disappears at the top and reappears at the bottom. The walk up from the village to the top is very steep and thinking back I realise that it was there that I felt the breathlessness that eventually led me to get my pacemaker. I did not recognise it at the time - it just felt like a tough climb. It was a lovely

day out. One of the outings with Jessie and Margaret was a surprise destination and I kept Marjorie guessing about where we were going. I even detoured quite a bit before ending up at Copy Nook, a hotel near Bolton-by-Bowland which had been a favourite for years.

My time in England with the family was coming to a close and Jean and John picked me up to take me down to London. We stayed in a B&B establishment in a very old H house in Whitewell cum Sotwell and had dinner with Emma. An 'H house' is a pair of twin bedroom blocks side by side joined in the middle by the communal rooms - lounge, dining room and kitchen. I was in a single room which had been a maids quarters - it had a washbasin but I had a bathroom all to myself next door. Surprises were yet to come. We spent a couple of nights in Sarah and AR's house in Abingdon Street, Kensington. It had been very expensively done up. Guest bedrooms on the third floor were decorated in strong colours - crimson in one and dark blue in mine. The bathroom was completely mirrored - all four walls and the ceiling. One could see oneself multi-reflected each way one looked. Lying in the bath - there was your reflection in the ceiling - only once this time, thank you. Our stay covered a Sunday so I went to Bloomsbury Central to hear and see Barry Hibbert. I again had lunch at the church and then had a half-hour or more alone with Barry. We talked of Millie and I found the discussion very comforting and healing.

My return journey to Philadelphia through Washington was spoilt by a lady next to me who was out of her seat many times during the flight. I estimated I got up for her at least 10 times - 20 really as I had to get up to let her back in each time. I had a rush in Washington to catch the shuttle bus for my next flight only to find it was held up for an hour to load an invalid scooter and then to fix a faulty light. From Phila airport David took me straight to a house concert where the evening had proceeded to the dining stage. I felt pretty rough in my travelling clothes but all the men were in casuals so it was not important. The next day David had arranged for us to play golf at a Germantown Cricket Club golf day on the Ashbourne Golf course. David won the longest putt prize and was closest to the pin on the 10th hole. I recorded in my diary the following day that I was very tired after the overnight flight, the evening concert and a day's golf!

I spent the next two and a half weeks in Philadelphia. During that time Ruth took me out to see Longwood Gardens, Peggy and I went out to the Mercer Museum at Doylestown in New Jersey which features pioneer artefacts and agricultural machinery, we visited Kathi and Joe Sipe near Clinton, went to the farm B&B in Lancaster County, visited the chocolate factory in Lititz, attended the Landis Valley Farm Museum's a weekend show. Ken and I spent some time on a golf driving range; I had a round of golf with Ruth's friend Sid Greenwold at the Talamore Golf Club where he was a member; paid a couple of visits to the Curtis Institute to attend orchestra recitals; had dinner along the street at Notre Dame Cafe with Ruth, Sid and the family; attended Ken's music lesson where I was impressed with Ken's sensitivity to what the tutor said and demonstrated; enjoyed a service at Olivet Calvary Presbyterian; had lunch all together at the Cricket Club; visited Independence Hall again where we relived the setting up of the United States; played mini golf on the Matterhorn Course at the Somerton Golf Course; had lunch with Peggy at Ruth's and still had time for a few ventures into town.

I was intrigued with my transport for the game of golf with Sid at Talamore. Peggy delivered me to the course. After the game Sid left me at Ruth's who later ran me to Rydal rail station where I caught a train to 30th Street station in town and I got a taxi from there. The course was also interesting as only one hole could be seen at any one time as the fairways were separated by huge trees. The fairways were quite generous but it paid not to stray too far off them.

During this period in Phila, there was a phone call from Margaret Bonney to say that Ron Haigh had died. He had not felt too well. He had booked an appointment with his doctor and had died suddenly in the doctor's rooms. It was only about three weeks since I had stayed with them. I was glad of that contact but very sad for Vera and Ruth and the rest of the older cousins. I liked Ron very much and admired his and Vera's support of their Methodist Church. He was still taking a Bible Class of young boys when we were there on a previous visit.

It came time to head home. When we arrived at the airport to check in for my flight to Los Angeles and Auckland we were advised that the flight had been cancelled. There had been snow in Denver and our plane had been unable to take off and so was not available for our flight. One lady said, 'They never have snow in Denver in October.' Never say 'never' - I did read a report in the paper that there had been sixteen inches there and the airport was certainly closed. The check-in operator said she could put me on the next flight. 'Will it get me to LA in time for my Qantas connection to Auckland?' I asked. 'No,' she replied and then spent about half an hour finding a connection. Finally I was booked on a flight to San Francisco followed by a shuttle to LA in time for my homeward flight. Well ... we were late in San Francisco but they held the shuttle for about 15 minutes for the half dozen or so of us. The shuttle then arrived late in LA. Fortunately I had only a short walk from the shuttle to the Qantas gate where I was the last to board. I had barely put my hand baggage in the locker and settled into my seat when the Captain advised the cargo doors were shut and he was waiting for a slot to take off. I wondered about my bags, including my golf clubs. However, when we got to Auckland my bags appeared on the carousel and my golf clubs were among the oversize items in the baggage hall. United Airlines had done a very good job.

I had enjoyed an extensive tour and I think I had accomplished the task of connecting with Millie's family and close friends very well. It had been a pilgrimage also for myself back to the area which meant so much to her and which we had explored together on many visits.

Establishing a Life

I arrived home early in the evening of Labour Day. It was nice having Susan and Roger in Gore to give me a warm welcome. I was soon back in the swing of my regular weekly routine - Wednesday - golf, Thursday - Senior Citizens lunch and Mary to clean, Saturday afternoon - golf, Sunday morning - church.

An event out of the usual occurred on my first Saturday night home in the form of the Gore Rotary Club's 70th Anniversary. This was a chance to renew some old acquaintances. I had resigned when we moved to Queenstown and had neither joined up there nor rejoined on our return to Gore. I found also that I had new neighbours next door at No 7 - they were Jim and Elizabeth Young from Kaiwera. Jim was a long-standing former client whom I respected greatly and I thought it would be very pleasant having them next door. Although they had bought the property, they had not yet moved in and when I first saw them they were just doing lawns and garden to keep things in order. I think they also had builders in to do some alterations and erect a double garage. I called on Wilfred regularly and often took him for an outing. He was living at Parata and Clarice was in Resthaven. One visit that gave him a lot of pleasure was a visit to Clarence and Margaret Gardyne's at View Brae with an opportunity to have a look at Springdale from the end of the driveway on the way home. I continued these outings when he moved to Invercargill although not so frequently, sometimes with Vera coming along as well.

Late in November I went up to Timaru to see Vic and Winnie. Vic always impressed me with the meticulous way in which he looked after his garden and house. He was also doing an increasing amount of the housekeeping, as Winnie's arthritis was crippling her hands. After returning to my B&B in Fairlie I had a round of golf on the local course. It is very flat but challenging enough for an initial visit. I recall that I played quite well with one or two poor holes. I learned the next day that my brother Allan had died in the early hours

of that morning. He had been in the Rowena Jackson Home for a few weeks. His death was sad at that particular time as Wilfred and Clarice had just been transferred to the secure wing at the same Home. Allan and Wilfred only the chance for one visit with each other before Allan's death. I was asked by Allan's family to pay the main tribute at his funeral. I appreciated being included as part of the family group in the church vestry immediately before the service. I recall with pleasure the way Wallace just simply led in a prayer before we moved into the church. Vera also added a few comments later and I was interested that she said she could not recall ever living with Allen in the family home because of the difference in their ages. He had been sixteen when she was born and so had left home to go to work before she was of an age to have remembered him being there.

Shortly before Christmas, I was invited to the Diamond Wedding celebrations of Ozzie and Nell Dey who were members of the Senior Citizens Club. Ozzie was an accountant who had been employed for many years by the Matura Licensing Trust after some years in a public accountant's office. He was always an active participant in the club's AGM, pointing out the care that needed to be taken to preserve funds for future needs or to raise some query relating to the accounts. I admired him considerably. They were both nearing ninety years of age. He had long been coach of the famous Eastern Southland K Cup hockey team during its long run of national successes during the 1950's.

That December I was referred to Dr Reuben for chest X-rays and a treadmill test. As I progressed from slow walking to a faster pace he exclaimed over the sustained low heart-beat after the prescribed time. I am surprised now that he did not direct me or my doctor to proceed to further investigation. I am sure this indicated the existence of the Sick Sinus Syndrome which came to light some three years later. At the time it just seemed to me that I must be very fit to be able to be so active with relatively little effect on my heart rate - 'the bliss of the ignorant'!

On Christmas Eve Susan and Roger and I left in my car to have Christmas with Dawn in Wellington. We left early and I set out driving for a couple of hours or so till we were over the Lindis Pass. We chose this route to avoid the pre-Christmas traffic and it proved a good decision. I moved into the back seat and enjoyed just watching the scenery flow by till after Lake Tekapo. I do not remember Fairlie, the souvenir shop and cafe just out of the town or the winding gorge just after the shop - I awoke as we were approaching Geraldine. We continued up the Inland Route, bypassing Christchurch and eventually reaching Picton for the late ferry. It was a long trip and was only possible with a rotation of drivers. We celebrated Christmas with Dawn in Newtown. Roger was very interested in attending the national model aircraft meet over the Rimutakas in Carterton. He and Susan had arranged to take over Fred Bennett's motorhome after the event and do a tour of the North Island. They planned to visit Roger's Mum Val in Tauranga after passing through Gisborne on the way. The motorhome had been home-built by Fred on a Bedford truck chassis and was rather cumbersome and heavy. They had a very tiring journey from Carterton all the way up to Gisborne, finding the hills very slow and hard going. I flew up to Gisborne on the 4th of January. Ron and Lesley were still renting a home in Hexton well out into the country among some lifestyle blocks. However, they had just bought their own home in Gisborne

city at 197 Russell Street. Moving day came two days after I arrived and all hands were rostered to help. There were two young children to occupy and Susan and I were deputised to entertain - she because her back was still suspect and I in deference to my age. My job was Hannah who had just received a doll's tea-set for Christmas - she served me up countless 'cups of tea' in the tiny cups. I seem to recall it was lovely weather and we were out under the shade of a tree in the balmy weather¹. Susan and Jamie were in the motorhome and I think Susan was reading to Jamie most of the time.

The movers were rather nonplussed to find that they could not get their enormous removal van anywhere near the house and the furniture had to be laboriously carried up the drive item by item. Susan and Roger and I were very impressed with the property Ron and Lesley had chosen. It had a wonderful view out across the city to the bay and then across to Young Nick's Head. The northern face of the peninsula provided spectacular eroded cliff views in the morning sunlight and again in the afternoon cross-light which caused the ridged cliffs to stand out. Over the next day or two while Lesley and Ron were unpacking and settling in I was involved again with entertaining the children. One day I took them down to Ballance Street Village for ice creams - and to fill in a bit of time ! On the way home I realised that the children did not know their new home address and telephone number so I taught them both on the way home - they did very well in picking up this information. I also schooled them in what to do if they were ever lost - stop crying, say their name clearly, give their address or telephone number. Thankfully they never had to use this advice. In the midst of all the removal upheaval my nephew Russell and his wife Rachael and their four children arrived by van for a stopover. They had been visiting Rachael's parents in Whakatane and were adding a little touring to the trip. They were all able to sleep in the van with its extension awning but for that night they dosed down in the TV room downstairs with a mixture of their own and Ron and Lesley's bedding. I think they stayed a couple of nights. It made for rather a full house !

Shifting house must not rob you of a holiday so on the 10th of January we headed to the camp at Mahia Beach where they had booked a motel unit. Mahia Peninsula is a lovely spot, protruding out from the mainland to form the northern boundary of Hawkes Bay. The peninsula can be seen from their home on any reasonably clear day. It was nice to have some lazy days by the sea and the girls were just the right age for some fun on the beach. I tried some golf on the Mahia 9-hole course among the sand dunes. The course was somewhat rustic but provided some unique challenges. On our way back to Gisborne we lunched at Morere, a hot spring resort just north of Nuhaka on the main road. It was lovely to laze in the hot water which was about the temperature of a normal hot bath - depending on the individual's preference of what is 'hot' of course. The next day David's daughter Kate arrived for a few days and it was good to have her company and for her to get to know the little cousins and the New Zealand family generally. A week later I flew to Wellington where the city was on holiday for the Anniversary Day long weekend. Dawn met me and took me to lunch at Days Bay and for a drive down the coast road from Wainuiomata. It is a lovely valley and we ended up on the rather rocky and bleak south coast. Kate arrived from Gisborne the next day. We lunched at the Botanic Gardens, a very pleasant spot with the Lady Norwood Rose Garden adjacent. We called on Alex and Celia Gardyne at Waikanae in

¹ In fact it was scorchingly hot - the rest of the workers nearly had heatstroke. Ed

the afternoon. I flew home to Invercargill mid-week and called on Wilfred before coming on home.

Hallam Smith had passed away shortly before Christmas and the family had held a private service and interment. On the Monday after my arrival home a memorial service was held in St Andrews and I was asked to pay a tribute on behalf of the business community and in recognition of his participation in Gore Borough affairs. I had very great respect for Hallam's ability as a lawyer and regarded him as a highly intelligent man. Millie and I had been friendly with him and Jean on a personal basis but did not quite regard him as one of our close circle of friends. I was happy to pay tribute to him. I had quite a shock as I saw the family walk down the aisle for the start of the service - there was Hallam walking into his own memorial service ! It wasn't of course - it was his younger brother Ralph who had grown to look very much like his older brother.

My daily rounds continued. Some days got a bit crowded like the 12th of February: 12 Noon - Senior Citizens lunch, 12.45pm - Victim Support Committee, 1.30 pm - Mary in to clean, 2.00 pm - Merryn McKay, Hospice Grief Counsellor, 2.45 pm Flower Show. Frankly I don't remember if I did get to the flower show. I appreciated those visits from Merryn. She is a lovely person and was very sympathetic without being pushy. The opportunity of talking over the events of the past year and my present situation were most valuable. In total she called two or three times and phoned me on other occasions.

I went up to Dunedin for the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of Otago. There was to be a fireworks display after a parade terminating in Forbury Park. I went direct to the park and had some time to look around at the vintage machinery on display. One item caught my eye. It was a very old motorised crosscut saw driven by a kerosene engine. It was identical to one used by a contractor that my father had called to the farm to cut winter firewood from the thick trunks of some trees he had felled out of safety concerns. Then I saw a caravan advertising a multimedia CD on the history of Otago. I had heard of it and had intended to buy one - I thought this might be my opportunity. I went in and found that the CDs had been loaded onto three or four computers and could be viewed. I was installed at a workstation and shown how to shift the pointer with the mouse. It was the first time I had even seen a computer mouse. I focussed on one item and bumblingly clicked on another - suddenly I found myself looking into Millie's face on the screen. It was the picture taken from the Weekly News of Millie and me with Neville and Bette Selwood on the dock at Lyttleton as we came off the troop ship in 1946. Wow! I thought my children should each have one of these and I bought five. I don't even know where my copy is now. Susan and I watched the evening fireworks from up on the hill and they were very spectacular.

Bill Peters lived at Waipahi and was starting to deal in computers. My family were all on email and were wanting me to come into line. I felt it would be an interesting thing to take up. I ended up buying a computer from Bill and he was very helpful in setting me up. I enrolled for computer lessons at the Southland Institute of Technology's Gore campus and found them very helpful. I can recall how ignorant and bumble-fingered I was at the beginning and how difficult the mouse was to master.

My diary has a note that Dawn phoned on a Sunday night and that both Susan and Ron called the next day. This is an appropriate time to acknowledge the way in which my family maintained contact with me, particularly in this early period after Millie's death. It made me feel I was not alone.

Some other people deserve mention as helping me through this period. Dorothy Marshall asked me up for a meal on two or three occasions². David and Trish Patrick invited me to lunch. Joe and Margaret Preston also entertained me and I felt they were quite warm friends³. I also had an interesting visit from Shirley Bond. I had commented on a Christmas card that I had heard Neville's voice on an old tape I had played of the farewell to Millie's Mum at Georgetown manse when she was returning home. Shirley wanted to hear it as she said that she had found it difficult after a period of time to recall his voice. Shirley and I go back a long way to 1940-1 in Invercargill when she was the teenage sister of Ayson Clifford. She was a bit of an imp in those days.

In April I attended a 'mature driving course' for Senior Citizens conducted by former Transport Commissioner Henry Gore. He had a lot of good tips for older drivers one of which still stands out in my memory and I practise it today: 'When planning a trip to a busy area, organise it so that you turn left as much as possible - there will be less conflict with other traffic.'

Dawn came down for her birthday and the next day we lunched at Le Potager, a place which has a special memory for me. Over the following week we took a trip round Moa Flat and Piano Flat, and went up to Queenstown. We took a short trip to Glenorchy, had dinner with Margaret and Lin Turner and called on Phyllis and Ian Gardiner for morning coffee. We paid a visit to Charlton Park Cemetery before I dropped her at Momona for her return to Wellington. The following day I had a lovely visit from Linley Houston from Anglesey who was on a visit to her Dad.

Three days later I went down to Elsie Lepper's funeral. Elsie and Millie had a very special friendship although it was sad that distance prevented them from enjoying it as much as they might have. I recalled Elsie being amazed and non-plussed about Millie's death. Little did she know that only twelve months later almost to the day I would be attending her own funeral. Elsie was a very vibrant Christian who was Social Worker for the Crippled Childrens Society for a great many years. Her funeral brought forth many tributes. She had been one of the Invercargill Baptist young people in 1940-1 when I was in Invercargill so I also felt a sense of personal loss in her death. A few days later I attended another funeral - that of Isobel Donald. My family will remember the Donald family in the Baptist Church in the 1960s and 1970s. Another funeral in this period was that of Ian Begley at Frankton.

2 As I mention Dorothy I am reminded of one occasion when the Travel Club received an invitation to visit the Waimate Travel Club and I volunteered to go as I would be able to fit it into a visit to Vic and Win. At the meeting I sat opposite a lady from Christchurch who felt I should recognise her because of a likeness to her sister. I could not bring anyone to mind. She was Dorothy's sister and had that same very confident air about her.

3 One day I represented the Probus on a visit to the Invercargill Central club and Joe went with me. As we were heading down from Brydone to Edendale he commented. 'Ivan, you notice a lot of patch repairs to the tar seal on this side of the road and none on the west side. This is due to the milk tankers returning to Edendale with full loads of milk breaking up the seal. Going the other way they are empty and not so heavy.' I visited the Prestons in Christchurch in their new home in Rolleston New Town. Millie had made friends with Margaret's mother, Mrs Weir in one of the rest homes.

He and Gladys had lived across the road just below our cottage at Frankton. Gladys had been a Henderson from Wendon Valley before her marriage and at one time worked as a housemaid at Esselmont for the Gardynes.

In the middle of the year June I spent about a month in the North Island including a surprise appearance at Ron's 50th birthday party. Dawn and I travelled up from Wellington together. I recall her introducing me to the Brown Sugar Cafe in Taihape for a coffee stop. We spent a night in a motel in Taupo before going on to Auckland on the Saturday morning. Ron had organised a dinner party at a restaurant in the old tramway garages in Greenlane and had invited any friends who could make it to book themselves into the group. I was home again about the middle of June after nearly three weeks away, mostly with the Gisborne family. I returned to find that I was on church boiler duty for the week. The duty involved a daily visit to clear out the ash and clinker from the firebox of the hot water heating system in the hall complex. The feed was automatic but it required regular clearing and disposal of the ashes and the boiler house had to be swept of its film of fine ash dust. I had quite a bit of boiler duty that month to build up some 'credit' in view of my imminent departure for overseas.

Dear Auntie Win Botting died at the beginning of August. She was ninety-eight and a half years old, having been born on New Year's Day 1900, her father's sixty-third birthday. She and her father spanned 161 years. That morning we had snow on the ground in Eastern Southland. I was to travel up with Kathryn Smith and we took her four-wheel drive car because of the snow. Even so it was touch-and-go in places and a slow journey. We arrived just as the benediction was being pronounced. I had been invited to be a pall bearer but Graeme had wisely organised John to substitute for me if I did not make it - Graeme saw me come in and gave me a nod and I was able to take my place. Auntie Win was buried in Anderson Bay Cemetery beside her husband who had died some fifty-four years previously. She had been a widow for the greater part of her life. She was loved by all her nephews and nieces - a very gracious lady. I recall a story about Dr Herron, the well loved minister of Knox Church. He was visiting Scotland back in the 1930's and some guests had been invited by his hosts for the evening to meet him and his wife. One young lady reminded him so much of Win Elder as he had known her that he commented on the likeness. He discovered that this lady's maiden name had been Elder. I don't recall that any effort was made to find out if she had a family connection - genealogy was not so popular in those days. Auntie Win was the last of my father's generation in the original George Robertson Elder family.

The day before my birthday I 'shouted' afternoon tea at the Golf Club to mark my eightieth anniversary and the next night entertained family and a few close friends to dinner at The Moth in Mandeville. This was rather a nice evening and we were looked after well by the very capable staff. Dawn had arrived on the 12th bringing her brother Ron with her quite unexpectedly. Susan had completed a set of colour-coded place cards and organised changes of seating for everyone between courses. This worked very well. Fergus had brought Ian and Phyllis down from Queenstown and we had my golfing partner Mervin Matthews and Amy, Gil and Wynne Winwood and a few other friends. I felt a kind of anti-climax in this event as I had envisaged that Millie and I would both be celebrating this

decade together. My father had reached 82 and I had three brothers who had attained the magic four-score figure. What did strike me as fortuitous was that I was still so independent and could still play a good round of golf. In fact, I think I had developed the best swing of my career although I was not achieving the distance of former days.

As a brand-new octogenarian I was not settling down for a quiet life. Three days after the event I was on my way to America and England again. I went up through Gisborne, flying from there to Auckland for my flight to USA on Monday the 17th of August. I had a leisurely stroll to the international terminal to check in for my flight.

I had booked an exit row seat which has extra leg-room and also makes it easier to get in and out for visits to the toilet. My United Airlines flight arrived in Los Angeles in good time⁴ and although there were long queues in Immigration I got through in very good time. My flight to Philadelphia was scheduled two and a half hours after my arrival so I was able to make it comfortably. David and Peggy had builders putting in an extension to their kitchen area and they had been told in no uncertain terms, 'No hammers until the 80-year-old guest wakes up.' He woke at about 9.30 am after a slightly broken night. It was Kate's birthday but she was away at summer camp. The following day David took me for a round of golf at the Cobbs Creek course and I can still picture some of the holes. A ball in the creek on #17 and one in the bushes on another hole spoilt my card so a 93 was pretty good especially while still getting over jet lag. Peggy took me to Ruth's the next day where I managed to fall asleep on her lounge. David again took time out to play at Ashbourne where I had a 97 to his 105. He went back to work till midnight to clear urgent matters.

The next day we travelled all the way up to Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire, crossing through New York by the George Washington Bridge and the Bronx to a motel at Olmec on the lake. We picked up Kate from her summer camp and then headed into Maine where she was to visit some Colleges. There is a very heavy competition for places and students usually apply to three or four colleges in the hope of being accepted at their preferred choice but with others to fall back on if needed. At one of the colleges there were 6800 applications for about 1500 places - however, many of the applications would be withdrawn once another offer was accepted. The procedure at each college was the same. The applicants and their families were allocated to a current student for a conducted tour of the college. At various faculties there would be a staff member who would outline the facilities offered in that discipline. We first inspected Bowdoin College in Brunswick Me and formed quite a good impression. Overnight there had been a severe electrical storm and on our journey we noticed many tree limbs down and even some whole trees uprooted. The road was littered with debris which was being rapidly cleared. Our destination was Mt Washington Hotel where I had to borrow a jacket for dinner. We had two rounds of golf - on the first round I had 93 to David's 97 and on the second we had 92 each. Peggy was with us and Ken was a crucial support as the driver of the cart.

The next day we booked in for two nights at Kabeyun, the summer camp where Ken had spent the previous four weeks. These summer camps are quite a feature in American

⁴ I noted in my trip diary that I left Auckland at 6.30 pm on 17th Aug and arrived in Philadelphia about 9.30 pm on the same day A Short trip due to the mysteries of time zones!

life and are wonderful for the children of parents who can afford them. We had a cabin designed to hold a dozen or so boys all to ourselves. The toilet block was thirty or forty yards away down through some trees and I managed to keep it down to only one trip for the night. It was a bit spooky at three in the morning but there was no one about at all. The next day Ken showed us the activity facilities of the camp - archery, swimming, 'boarding' and water skiing and the climbing apparatus. Late in the afternoon we headed to Rockywold and Deephaven by another lake where we had two twin rooms sharing a toilet which made my nocturnal excursions simpler. The following morning was a Sunday and I took the boat out to Chocurua Island for the church service. This service has been happening on the island since about 1903 and was very well attended that day. I enjoyed the Episcopalian (Anglican) service with perhaps as many as a hundred and fifty people gathered in the open air.

The next couple of days were very notable and a very interesting experience. We reduced our baggage down to back-packs and headed up through Franconia Notch to the Zealand Hut Trail Park where we left the car, hoisted our packs and set off on foot. The track followed an old road and was well-formed with easy slopes for quite a distance. I then followed a narrower track through the forest and a final half-mile or so of steep scramble up a very rocky stretch. I recorded that 'my undercarriage held up fairly well and I just had to pace myself to control my breathing.' - obviously I was experiencing the early signs of the heart problems that would be diagnosed some time later. We reached the Zealand Hut at the top of the climb which was one of the chain of huts on the famous Appalachian Trail. The Trail stretches for 2300 miles along the ridges of the Appalachian Mountains and extends as far south as Georgia. There were some forty or so people overnighiting in the hut and in the evening we had a talk from a chap who had started in Georgia he had completed about 1900 miles and had about 350 to go. I was intrigued by the name Zealand. A staffer at the hut told me that there used to be a sawmill called New Zealand down in the valley but it got burnt out and abandoned - the name Zealand had been retained for the hut and for the waterfall careering down alongside it. So I had walked a piece of the 'Appalachian Trail.' On our way out the next morning we saw a cow moose grazing in a swampy area near the track. We were heading back to Philadelphia but decided to stop over in Sturbridge Old Town for the night. Wonderful. We booked into a very old hotel which had been built in 1771. The floorboards were all very broad and of differing widths - they would have been hand-sawn and each cut would have made as much use of the trunk as possible. The electric lights had candle-shaped bulbs and there were candles on the tables. The fireplace was huge with hooks hanging from the chimney on which to hang cooking pots. The antique atmosphere was well sustained throughout all the fixtures and tableware.

On our way further south we called at President Roosevelt's former home in Hyde Park. I had always thought that Hyde Park was the name of his estate but it is in fact the name of the small town in which it is situated. It is a splendid site overlooking the Hudson River upriver some distance from New York city. The house is a museum of Franklin and his wife Eleanor. There are many artefacts relating to the Second World War and highlighting the work of this great man. They recalled some of the significant events of WWII which I had seen unfolding at the time. The United States and the United Kingdom were fortunate this

man was there as a match for Winston Churchill in those dark years. It was a tragedy that he died just days before the surrender in Europe. Adjacent to the house is a garden area where there are two tombs marking the last resting place of Franklin and Eleanor. Later in the day we passed through a severe thunderstorm and the rain continued most of the way home. In my visits to the States I have noticed that most of their summer rain seems to come from thunderstorms. All too often in the southern states these intensify into Tornados which can cause tremendous damage.

Back at Green Street David and I had another round of golf at the Eagles Lodge Golf course. I recorded that it was a lovely course with good fairways, reasonable rough and very well-kept greens. David scored 91 and I had a 99. That night we watched David's video of their Christmas visit to New Zealand in 1996 when Millie was showing considerable signs of her illness. It included the slideshow I had put on together with my commentary. On my last day I wrote in my diary that David and Peggy went out on a cycle ride, Kate and Kenny went out for a run and I had some cornflakes and then started sorting and packing. Upon the return of the athletes we had a very liesurely brunch in the new extension. I had booked a ride to Newark for my flight with Transportation Services who were to call me back. I did not hear from them so I phoned and found I had transposed a figure in the phone number I had given them. All was well and I was picked up in the middle of the afternoon. It was Labour Day holiday and the roads were expected to be busy. We did indeed strike tailback on the New Jersey Parkway so our driver took a detour and came back to the Turnpike later where it was twelve lanes wide. I was in good time, checked in, secured an exit row again and had time for coffee before boarding. There was a half-hour delay on take-off due to thunderstorms but we reached London almost on schedule.

At London I picked up my car - a Proton 1.6 auto - and followed directions to the M25. It was about half past nine and there was a lot of traffic but most of it was going in the other direction. I found my way to the village of Downe for a visit with Frank and Dot. Frank and I took a lovely field walk while Dot was at her CWI meeting where she was Acting President. We all had a lovely time together at night, talking about our families and forbears. 'Mind your head' was the warning as I went up to bed in their 500-year-old cottage. In the morning they gave me a tea towel with Frank's etching of the Downe Church printed on it. In his retirement Frank had engaged his architectural skills in a series of etchings and paintings. He did one of Eltham College where he had got his education - he gave it to the school and it hangs in the foyer there. It was reprinted on the service folder for his funeral. The next day I visited Judy Bayley in the Lawn Nursing Home in Gerrards Cross. She knew me instantly and we had a lovely visit. It was over lunch and I could see how difficult she found swallowing and realised she would not have long in this world. On my return home I learned from Brian and Pauline that she had died about two months later. I then called on her brother Brian at Little Chalfont before going on to Emma's at Sotwell where I again had a very pleasant night. Sarah was also there and we talked about her plans for a visit to New Zealand later that year. Cliff's parents arrived during the morning - it was his mother's birthday - and I left about one o'clock for a visit to John and Dyls. I found their place very easily from the directions I had been given. They lived at 22 Farthingate - an intriguing name - in an old cottage that had been completely modernised in a very attractively way.

They had a long section facing the school sports ground with the Minster beyond. John was a former Director of Education and was very active on the Board of the Minster School. Dyls was a first cousin of Millie's, being the daughter of Millie's favourite Uncle David and Aunt Nellie and the sister of Ron Haigh. I had a lovely room upstairs and sole use of the upper floor bathroom. I had a good sleep and woke ten minutes late for breakfast which I had agreed for 8.30 am ! We walked to the Minster for a good look around, shared in Morning Prayer at 11 am and I had a quiet time in a little side chapel. It had been built in its present form about 1150 AD with choir and altar added about 200 years later. The Minster has a lovely air of peace and tranquillity with a beautiful Angel west window and 15th Century Flemish stained glass behind the altar. It was to be only a passing visit to them as I was still on my way north. I left after lunch for Mari Vale passing through some old familiar places en route - Otley, Ilkley, Skipton, Long Preston, Slaidburn, Newton, Dunsop Bridge, Trough of Bowland and Scorton. Those who know the district will recognise a back-door kind of approach to Cabus and Mari Vale. The next morning I delivered my rental car to the Avis people on the Preston circular road. Next day Margaret and I took a walk from Scorton over the M6 towards Caldervale and Barnacre with a brief turnoff towards Nicky Nook before returning to Scorton. I joined with Geoff in a four-ball-best-ball Seniors Tournament which we played fairly well. On the eighteenth hole I overhit my nine iron approach. It hit the clubhouse window and then ricocheted back across the road just back 'in bounds.' My chip shot down onto the green lipped the hole.

A couple of days later I set out with Eric and Margaret on one of their famous long weekend trips (which usually took five days or more). Margaret Bonney had collected Jessie from her new home, at Bowerswood just out of Garstang which was very handy for Margaret. She had brought Jessie to meet up with me before I went away for a few days - a very thoughtful lass is 'our Margaret.' Leaving Cabus we headed up to Carlisle and then went northeast into what is known as The Borders. We stopped at Langham for some refreshment - it was soup - and then carried on to Hawick which is pronounced 'Hoick'. I was intrigued by a gift shop called, 'Guess What' where I bought a cute set of candles for Dawn. The town featured factory outlets for Murray Bros Woollens and Edinburgh Woollen Mills but I wasn't tempted. We stopped for two nights in Torwood Lodge in Melrose and then made a stop in Coldstream, the original home of The Coldstream Guards. I walked along the riverside and found a lovely view of the Tweed Bridge from a commemorative garden. The bridge often features in calendars and was a model for other bridges throughout Great Britain. We stopped at Kelso⁵ which is so attractive with its lovely square surrounded by very fine buildings. One of the shopkeepers made my day. He was attending to someone with a problem and saw me waiting with a film in my hand. 'Would you mind waiting a moment, ' he said 'while I attend to this young man here?' I spotted a tombstone in the churchyard adjacent to the main street. It was the tomb of a mason who had died in the early 1800's and his fulsome memorial included the words 'unimpeachable integrity' - what a tribute!

Our destination was the seaside town of Eyemouth, situated on the mouth of the Eye River. It was a neat prosperous-looking village but a memorial records the 'Great fishing disaster' which occurred in 1881. A very bad storm in the North Sea had caused the death of 189 sailors including 129 from this village alone. What a catastrophe for a small village.

⁵ It is amazing how many places in Scotland are named after places in Southland and Otago in New Zealand ! (Ed)

There would have been both fathers and sons among the perished - family owned and operated boats would have been lost. Nearby was another small port of St Abbs, a little haven in a rocky bay on the North Sea coast. We walked about a mile to a rocky headland which had wonderful cliff views and from which we could look back to the harbour. We had coffee and scones in the National Trust cafe which were very nice and I bought a tea towel for someone - I can't recall who ! The following morning we looked round the ruins of Melrose Abbey and then went to the home of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford above the River Tweed. He had achieved fame during his lifetime and received many gifts from high society and from Royals. These are on display in the home along with thousands of books. We made a stop at Corbridge, one of the towns at the east end of Hadrian's Wall, and then came south over the moors. On this stretch of road we saw a grain barrow fall off a truck. We picked it up and returned it to the driver when we caught up with the truck in the next village. He was very off-hand in expressing his gratitude which was clearly not very heart-felt. The moors provided us with some lovely views and led through some very interesting country . We got back to Cabus in time for Eric and Margaret to entertain us to an 80th celebration meal at the Crofters - this was Margaret's 80th as Eric's birthday is in February.

The next day Geoff and I had golf at Ashton Golf Course near Lancaster where we scored well and then replayed the nine holes with much less success. I drove in to Blackpool to have tea with Marjorie and persuaded her of the value of an enduring Power of Attorney which she agreed to set up. On the Sunday I took Jessie to church from Bowersfield and then brought her back to Margaret's for lunch. In the afternoon I went on north to Jean and John at Isel. In the morning we went to Keswick and then did a boat trip round Derwentwater before coming home via St Bega's church which stands in a field on the north side of Bassenthwaite Lake. It is a darling little church which dates from about 950 AD. It is quite tiny but has a great sense of peace - I wrote the word 'Healing' in the visitors book. Jean and John had given me an 80th birthday gift of a painting of Lowes Water and after a visit to Cockermouth they took me to the site from which it was painted. We continued on from Lowes Water to Buttermere and Honister House and then down through Borrowdale and so back to Keswick and home. It was a lovely circuit of the Lake District which had been so special to Millie and to me. The next afternoon I headed back to Cabus through the central Lakeland district which we had not covered the day before and then down by Conistone to the main road.

The next day I joined Geoff's seniors at Longridge Golf Club. We were drawn in different fours and each of our pairs had wins. Geoff's was worth 45p and mine 35p - at that rate it was going to take us some time to make our fortune. I note that I contributed quite well to my pair's result. That evening I entertained the family at Bell's Farm - Jean and John, Jessie and Marjorie, Eric and Margaret, Geoff and Margaret. We had a hilarious evening and it gave me the opportunity of saying thank you to all of them for their kindnesses and generosity. I made a visit to Carmen Miller at Fleetwood and found her not very well. She had leukaemia and looked older and more drawn but she was in good spirits. I called on Margaret and Eric and Eric shouted us lunch at High Cross Inn at Hardhorn. As arranged I went to Marjorie's for tea and found she had not been very well in the morning. She was sad that she would not be able to host the party she had intended for the following Mon-

day. On Sunday I again took Jessie in to church and then back to her Home for lunch. In the afternoon I took a long walk through field paths and arrived home very happy but tired. Margaret had her family to tea - Richard and Sharon, Perry and Gail, Lisa and Giles. She had made a very nice dinner with pavlova topped with raspberries and cream for dessert. The next day we had a day out to Kirkby Lonsdale which was a favourite place with the family and dined at The Snooty Fox. On our way back Margaret took Marjorie to her solicitor in Garstang to sign up the power of attorney. I took her home afterwards and went on to Eric and Margaret's who had Tom and Mary Bateman visiting.

On Margaret Bonney's birthday I gave her a video tape called 'Villages of the Dales'. She had decided to celebrate her birthday with a trip down to Emma's at Sotwell because she wanted to see Emma's house. I was to over-night with Emma who would then take me to the airport the next day. I had quite a chat with Emma and Cliff and Emma surprised me by asking me how Millie and I had met. We often don't think of the how little the next generation know of the early years of their elders. The next morning Emma took me to Heathrow. We had agreed that she would just drop me at Departures and drive off to avoid the need for finding a parking space. She found a trolley for me and then drove off with a waving Nathanael's bright alert face at the rear window as the car moved off. He was excited about planes and had identified several on the way in. Then he saw the Concorde model at the entrance but was sad that he could not get near a plane.

My flight was routed through Washington and I had quite a long distance to cover from International arrivals to domestic departures. I wrote an account in my diary: 'So we were late at Washington Dulles - only 35 mins to go through Immigration and customs and get to my flight. I seemed to be a long time at immigration as I got behind a couple who seemed to be producing a lot of papers. My session was quick and the agent on parting said, 'A long way from home!' There was no delay at Agriculture but my bags seemed slow coming through. No delay at customs but then I was off again to re-check my baggage. Through security, find a monitor, flight leaves from Gate D14, locate D gates by which time it was 4.45pm with departure in 10 minutes time. I had to walk as fast as I dared past all the C gates and then to Gate D14. I was the last passenger aboard, quite out of breath and glad to settle into a seat.' My baggage made it to Phila.

After shopping in town for presents to take home, I returned to the house to read the story of the Battle Of Fredericksburg in which my Great-Grandfather Samuel Murray Carr fought on 13th December 1862. David was planning to come home early that Friday afternoon to take us down to Washington and Fredericksburg to learn about this crucial battle of the American Civil War. On our way south we stopped overnight in Baltimore in a B&B establishment on Fell Street, virtually on the harbour. The dock area was a very old part of Baltimore. The house we stayed in was built about 1790 but was in a very good state of preservation. It had some very interesting features with dormer windows, wooden slates on the roof which had a trapdoor to give access for fire fighting in the event of these slates being set alight, floor boards 12 inches wide, colonial-style windows and a basement below street level. David and I shared a room on the third floor which had sloping walls following the line of the roof. The landlady, Jean Hopner, was very proud of her house Because of its

distance from the plumbing lines our room had a chair with a padded cushion seat concealing a commode underneath. It was the eve of a festival weekend on the waterfront which attracted about 350,000 people but we were heading out of town on the first morning of the big event.

Talking with Jean Hopner in the morning we found that there was a vigorous debate going on between conservationists and the developers who want to completely modernise the Fells Point area. We went to Jimmys in the square for breakfast. There there was a real hustle and bustle but we were served quite expeditiously. All this talk and breakfast and the purchase of some barbells for Peggy delayed our take off but even so we arrived at the Battle Centre in Fredericksburg about one o'clock. The Ranger in the Centre was very helpful and informative and we soon got some details of the part which the 11th New Hampshire Volunteer Regiment had played in the battle. Before we explored we went into the city and had lunch in a charming restaurant called Santa Fe. Back at the Centre we joined a tour party.

We were told the story of the battle. The Federal Army was on the north side of the Rappahannock River and needed to cross over to confront the Confederates who had gone on a forced march through the night to secure the best defensive position. The Federals were nervous of crossing the river and were waiting for pontoons to arrive. This allowed the Confederates to deploy snipers to harass the engineers building the pontoon bridges and so further delay the crossing until their defences were in place. The Confederates took up a position along an old sunken road with a stone wall on the river side. It was a perfect defensive situation and they were able to rake the enemy with rifle fire as they attacked across the open ground to their front. They had cover and plenty of room for reloading. A ditch across their field of fire was a further hazard to the attacking regiments. The Centre showed us maps drawn at hourly intervals showing the positions of the advancing northern regiments including the 11th New Hampshire. The final position shown for the 11th was close to the rock wall. The Ranger excitedly pointed out to the car park and said, 'They were just out there, where the car park is!' They had advanced to within only thirty or forty yards of the stone wall defence. The Regiment must have been completely broken up by this stage as it was no longer cited on the maps. The battle was a humiliating defeat for the Federals and prevented a possible invasion of the south. However, it achieved little for the Confederates as they made no progress from it. The Federal Army of the Potomac had no recourse but to retreat across the river. The war was resolved some time later further north at the Battle of Gettysburg. Near the Fredericksburg Battle Centre is a National War Cemetery. This contains the graves and individual small headstones of 15,273 soldiers - only 2,243 have names on them with the remaining 13,030 completely unidentified. I reflected that in those times soldiers would not have worn identity discs and unless they were named by fellow soldiers at the time they would have to be buried unnamed. It was the custom for the section officer to write to the next of kin but if the officer had been killed there might have been no-one to do this. There must have been many cases where the only news the family got was the fact that their son or husband just did not return. I found it a very sobering moment. In spite of the 11th New Hampshire being decimated and broken up, Gt-Grandad Samuel came through the battle though wounded. He returned to New

Hampshire about six weeks later after requesting a discharge for urgent family reasons. What those reasons were we are left to speculate. A few years later he left for New Zealand with his three children and their nanny leaving his wife behind in the States. He was known in New Zealand as Henry Kurtain and gave new names to his three children. We understand that he returned to the United States about 1884 and resided in the San Francisco area until his death in 1909.

The next morning we left for Washington where David drove me round Pennsylvania Ave along Constitution Ave, past the Washington Monument, the Capitol and the Smithsonian Institute. We parked and viewed the Vietnam Memorial to 58,000 GIs who died in that war with over 1,000 of them still listed as 'Missing'. The average age of the casualties was just over 19 years. There were two sculptures nearby. One was of three young soldiers and the other was of young nurses offering help to the wounded. We inspected the magnificent Lincoln Memorial where Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and his acceptance speech for a second term as President were recorded in full on the walls. It was very moving to be there and to read these famous speeches.

We arrived home in the early evening. Kate, who was not with us on this trip, arrived in very late after being delayed because a plane had struck a deer on the runway in Philadelphia and this had disrupted the arrival of inward flights. The following Tuesday we went to a place which serves a turkey dinner including dessert for just \$4.50 - it was a lovely meal and I gather this was a favourite eating place for the family at various times. The next day I spent riding the Tourist Bus, firstly through Fairmount Park where it makes stops at various historic places and then later through the downtown area of Old Philadelphia near the Delaware River which separates Pennsylvania from New Jersey. The sights included a Holocaust Memorial, the Rodin Museum, the Cathedral, the Penitentiary Building, Independence Square, the old Reading Station which is now a Conference Centre with the Farmers Market across the street and many other interesting buildings, ancient and modern. I was able to alight just four blocks or so from home.

I left Philadelphia on the 9th of October and again had flight trouble. My flight was running 90 minutes late and would not connect in LA with my NZ flight. I was re-routed through Chicago but the extra passengers being put on this flight delayed its departure too. This left me only about 30 minutes in Chicago but fortunately I had only to go from Gate 13 to Gate 5 within the same terminal and so I made it in time. In LA I had once more only about half an hour between flights but again the gates were close and I made it OK. This time my golf clubs did not make it with the other oversize baggage but they arrived a day later. On the way south I stopped over in Wellington for a few hours to catch up with Dawn and then came on to Dunedin where Susan met me and brought me home to No 9 Devon Street, Gore.

Visitors and Visiting 1998-9

I had arrived home in the middle of 1998 with the expectation that this would in some ways see the start of the long solo road ahead. I am sure that I had a positive view of this, acting on the principal that I was still alive and therefore had the remainder of my life still to live. I was very well situated in a compact, pleasant and very comfortable home and had a range of continuing activities to make life reasonably interesting. There was the prospect of some very interesting visits from the UK family and these were things to look forward to. I was free to duck off at any time to visit family or friends or to explore a bit more of New Zealand.

I found that my neighbours had finally moved in to No 7 next door but the Monday morning paper carried the death notice of the husband, Jim Young. I felt quite a sadness as I had been looking forward to having the occasional chat over the fence as we were doing our chores around our houses. His death had been very sudden. Their youngest daughter Melissa had been married in a wedding ceremony at the farm on Sunday 4th October and Jim had taken pictures from the wedding up to show his brother Harvey just round the corner in Broughton Street. Elizabeth was expecting him home for tea and it was getting a bit late so she phoned Harvey to see if he was still there. He told her he had left over half an hour earlier. Elizabeth rang the hospital and was told that they had an unidentified man who had been brought in by ambulance. She turned from the phone to her Aunt Rose and Uncle Wally who were staying with them after being down for the wedding and said 'Come.' At the hospital it was confirmed that the patient was Jim. As he was walking home he had felt unwell and had rested on someone's garden wall. A St John officer passing by had noticed him and had gone to his assistance. His death was, of course, a big shock to the family and they had to track down Jono and Mel to interrupt their honeymoon. I went to Jim's funeral and listened while the girls shared some of their memories of growing up with their Dad.

I launched myself back into the usual round of events ; Probus, Vets golf, Senior Citizens, visits and outings with Wilfred, Golf, Travel Club, Choir Practice, Church. I went to Queenstown early for Labour Weekend arriving in time to play in the Wednesday Frankton Social Golf and played again on Thursday at Kelvin Heights and in the Arrowtown golf competition on Saturday. I stayed in a B&B run by Robin and Alwyn Rice perched up in the Hensman Subdivision and visited old friends like Ian and Phyllis Gardiner, Margaret and Lin Turner, Gladys Begley who had lost her husband, Shirley Botting and Ruth Melhop. I went down to Cromwell to call on Neville and Bette Sellwood and attended church at Frankton on Sunday where I met up with a number of old acquaintances. Roger and Susan were up for the long weekend and on Labour Day we ransacked the former Preston home in Gorge Road of plants and shrubs and small trees that Roger and Susan thought could be shifted to their home in Mitre Street. Roger's boss Colin Smith and his wife Maeva of Croydon Aircraft Co had purchased the attractive one-and-a-half story house for removal to Mandeville and had given Roger carte blanche to take what they wanted. They arrived home with a motley trailer-load of stuff.

Jean Smith invited me to lunch one day which made a very pleasant interlude, each of us very much in sympathy with the other. During this period I was attending a chiropractor in Medway Street hoping to help the chronic back problem I had been suffering from since I was in my late twenties. I had been encouraged to try this by Joyce Allan as the practitioner was a friend of her son Rob who was a practising chiropractor in Australia. I did get some temporary relief but the problem has continued to recur down through the years. I paid a visit to Vic and Win in Timaru and stayed overnight in a B&B with people named McAuley in Lower Hook Road near Waimate. Some years later, while waiting to see Mr Samalia in Maniopoto Clinic, I got talking to another patient and found he was my host on that occasion. We each got called into our relative appointments just at that stage and could not carry on the conversation.

In the middle of December 1998 I met Sarah Springett at the Dunedin's Momona airport and brought her to Gore. I was determined we would make the most of her stay. First was the Fiordland Travel trip by launch across Lake Manapouri and over the Wilmot Pass by coach for the boat trip down Doubtful Sound. We went on to Queenstown for the Dart River Safari. I had thought that this trip would introduce Sarah to a good sample of New Zealand native bush which comes right down to the water's edge without taking too much time out of her limited schedule. We came back to Gore where I had an appointment with Dr Coxhead and a practice for the Christmas choir. After the Christmas morning service we took off for the West Coast, stopping overnight in Wanaka where we dined at Edge Hill Resort not far from our B&B accommodation. In the morning I found it slightly embarrassing when the landlord came down to socialise while we were eating breakfast in our downstairs separate suite. At Franz Josef the next night I misjudged our accommodation, having booked a motel in a camping ground where I had to go through her bedroom during the night for the toilet. We did the dawn pilgrimage to Lake Matheson for the morning reflections and were just in time to get the view before the wind rippled the waters. Sarah shouted a helicopter flight up to the neve of the glacier and around the west side of Mt Cook as a thank you for my hospitality. We landed on the snowfield. I found the whole

experience exciting and very fascinating. We stayed a night in Hokitika in a good motel which served a full breakfast in our unit. Sarah womanfully tried to eat the bacon and eggs but had to cry enough - I think she was used to having very little for breakfast. We visited the Jade shop in Holitika and the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki. I sought out again the little chapel at St Arnaud and then we drove down the Wairau Valley to Blenheim to catch the late ferry from Picton. We spent Christmas with Dawn in Wellington and at this point my responsibility for Sarah ended as she spent time with Dawn and the Gisborne family. I had greatly enjoyed her company and I think I had shown her quite a lot of the wonders New Zealand could offer. Sarah left for Queensland to rendezvous with Andy King who became her husband only a year or so later.

While at Dawn's I did some work on installing a sprinkler system for her garden which I finished off on my return journey a couple of weeks later. I went up to Gisborne for New Year, spending a night with Len and Emma Gerken out from Taradale near Napier on the way north - it was nice to renew acquaintance with him. On the road north from Hawkes Bay I was tempted by the golf course sign at Wairoa and played a round with two balls on my own. I liked the course and was playing pretty well but the temperature was well into the high twenties Celsius. After two weeks in Gisborne I headed to Taupo via the inland route by Lake Tinoroto, Frasertown and Lake Waikaremoana. Waikaremoana had been a romantic name for me for a long time and I wanted to see the lake and its Urewera country setting. It was fascinating to see all the forestry on the western slopes of the ranges towards Taupo. On the way south to Dawn's I called briefly on Sheena and George Marshall at Turakina.

Early in 1999 I began to get some medical problems. The first of these was a hernia which developed in my right groin. I don't remember that it occurred as a result of a specific incident but it was there. I consulted Ian Thompson in Dunedin at the Marinoto Clinic and went in to Mercy on 11 Feb to have it repaired. The procedure was completed very expeditiously and I was discharged the next day into care and restricted activity. The restriction was to have applied for the next couple of weeks. However, I had an Important appointment to meet Margaret and Geoff Bonney a week later and that heralded a round of not so restricted activity for the next few weeks.

I was able to organise some golf for Geoff with Karima and also with Mervin Matthews on another day. We did a trip through the Catlins and a couple of days later went to Invercargill. We picked up Wilfred and went to Bluff for lunch and admired the view of Stewart Island from the lookout point on Bluff Hill.

A few days later we went to Queenstown for a short visit. We called on Phyllis and Ian and went on to Arrowtown for lunch. Then Geoff and I had nine holes at the Arrowtown Golf course while Margaret spent an hour or so exploring Arrowtown. On the Wednesday Geoff and I played in the Frankton Social Golf where I scored a birdie on our last hole to card a seventy-nine - one under my eighty years of age. We had dropped Margaret at the Queenstown end of the Frankton walkway and she walked on up to meet us at the Clubhouse. At the end of that week Margaret and Geoff went to stay with Susan and Roger up

at Mitre Street and I had a busy weekend with the Senior Citizens birthday lunch and party.

The following week Margaret and Geoff and I went through to Dunedin to take the Taieri Gorge Scenic Train trip to Middelmarsh. This is always a spectacular ride and a great day out. We were staying at the Deacon House B&B in High St. The following day just seemed to flow. We first joined a conducted tour of Olveston House which has been preserved in the style of the early 1900s. From there we went to Larnach Castle on the Peninsula where we had an enjoyable lunch and did the tour of the castle. The views on the approach to the castle and out towards Portobello were truly spectacular. At the Taiaroa Head albatross colony we took the full tour including the visit to the war-time 'disappearing gun' emplacement. This paid off handsomely as there were three fully-fledged juvenile albatrosses in a group only a few yards from the viewpoint and we got a first-hand sight of them. We followed that up with the Yellow-Eyed Penguin tour established and run by Howard McGrouther and finished up with dinner at 1906 Pub at Portobello. What a day. I had an appointment next day for a check up with Ian Thomson after which we returned to Gore for dinner at Susan and Roger's.

Next we were off again to Queenstown where Geoff and I joined the Saturday golf while Margaret walked up Queenstown Hill. We dined at the Skyline restaurant perched on a crag above the town. This is a treat I always like to give to my overseas visitors. I recall that we went up in daylight, watched the sunset come on and the daylight fade and then came down in the cable-car with the town lights all ablaze. We took a lunch-hour trip to Walter Peak Station on the 1912 lake steamer Earnslaw which included a brief farm tour. After we returned to Gore Margaret and Geoff took the trip to Doubtful Sound on their own. Towards the end of March we set off for Christchurch, booking in for the first night at Rhoborough Downs Station at Lake Pukaki. It was a secluded spot and we had a good dinner and a restful evening. The next day we spent at Mt Cook and the weather was brilliant - I think it was the clearest day I have spent there. We went to the site of the original Hermitage hotel and took the well-marked walking track up the valley to the lake at the foot of the Hooker Glacier. I think I rather pressed them to make it all the way to the end of the track as it was an opportunity for me to see this area with an escort. It was interesting to see the terminal with floating pieces of ice which had fallen from the face of the glacier. We stayed the night at Fairlie and visited Vic and Win in Timaru on our way to Christchurch next morning. We were booked in to a B&B in Woolston and had dinner at the Woolston Working Mens Club. On the Sunday we took a return excursion trip on Trans-Alpine Train up the Waimakariri Valley to Arthurs Pass, through the tunnel to Otira and down to Greymouth on the West Coast. Next day we spent time in town and then did the Summit Road over the Port Hills finishing up with a farewell dinner up by the gondola terminal on Mt Cavendish. Once again we were able to watch the sun setting over the mountains beyond the city with the day gradually fading and the city lights coming on below us. The following morning I saw them safely into the airport and confirmed that their return flight to England was operating and said goodbye. It had been a wonderful few weeks entertaining this couple who had been so kind to me on so many occasions in England.

I immediately headed south and stopped for lunch with Vic and Win in Timaru be-

fore carrying on to my B&B at Shag Valley Station up from Palmerston. This proved to be a fascinating stay. Alf and Louise Bell had in fact phoned to cancel all their bookings but had not been able to contact me as I was in transit. Louise had a recent knee replacement and a fall had dislodged the prosthesis from its socket. She was mostly confined to a wheelchair during the day-time and needed rests on the bed from time to time. As they had not been able to get in touch with me they had organised plans to cope. Alf had handed over management of the station to his son so was fairly free to look after his wife. When I arrived she was by the sink-bench preparing some vegetables and he soon appeared with a full bucket of mushrooms he had just gathered. He cooked the meal and served it with boysenberries and ice cream for dessert. I was placed in a twin-bedded room with my own private bathroom - quite spacious. The place had a fascinating story which unfolded during my stay.

The station had been taken over in the early settler days by an English immigrant called Bell who was highly educated and something of a gentleman farmer. He had built himself a laboratory in which he carried on his own chemistry experiments. For instance, one of his record books was open at a page where he had analysed the constituent elements in a sample of limestone from the farm. The lab was in a separate building just outside the back door of the home and still had specimens and bottles of chemicals lining the shelves. Bell was also an astronomer and had built an observatory onto a corner of the house in which he had installed an imported sky telescope. I commented to Louise that if I was laid up like she was I would like to be in the room in which I had slept as there were extensive bookshelves filled with relatively modern books. 'I will get Alf to show you into the library,' she said. He did so and I found that the Drawing Room / Library was lined with well-bound books dating from around the end of the 19th century. They were having a little problem with damp in this room but the books must have been worth a small fortune. Mr Bell dabbled in radio as well and claimed to have made the first hemisphere-to-hemisphere contact by radio with Morse Code. He had been in America about the time that Alexander Graham Bell -no relation - discovered how to communicate by telephone. Our Mr Bell obtained a copy of the specifications and came home to build a phone for himself. The old shearers' quarters had been turned into a museum and contained cabinets of shallow drawers containing hundreds of specimens on glass slides for microscopic examination. He must have been a man of many parts.

In the morning I had not quite understood that they were leaving early to go into Palmerston for Louise to have a session of physiotherapy and they drove off just as I was loading my car. They offered me a generous quantity of mushrooms from the bucket-full he had collected the night before. I drove over by Macraes to Middelmarsh, down to Lake Mahinerangi, through Lawrence and over by the ferry at Tuapeka West to Clydevale and home. The visit of Margaret and Geoff was over.

About this time my nephew Russell Elder became interested in genealogy and was making suggestions about having an Elder Family Gathering. He arranged a mini-gathering in the Pine Hill Presbyterian Church hall one Saturday and maybe a dozen or so of us met to mull over information that various people had and to discuss the possibility of a full

gathering¹.

A different family gathering of a much more informal nature was held at Clarence and Margaret Gardyne's place. It was a gathering of the Gardyne family sparked by the visit of David Bruce-Gardyne from near Stroud in England. His sister Jean had been out to Australia and New Zealand some years before and had discovered our numerous clan of Gardynes in New Zealand. Her branch of the Gardynes had failed to produce a male heir so when one of the daughters married Captain Bruce they adopted the hyphenated name. However, the genes of the Gardyne Clan seemed to be very strong and they had considerable interest in their Gardyne antecedents. Their sister Mamie up in Scotland near Kirriemuir [whom I was to visit later] had completed a very extensive family tree of the Gardynes and had quite a number of relics of former days. The sad fact is that these three were all single and would have no family to follow on. They do not trace any connection with the Gardynes of Carmyllie who are the origins of our New Zealand Gardyne family, although their ancestors came from areas close by. Millie and I had visited Gardyne Castle near Froickheim which has a Gardyne Street. We had also visited the former Gardyne home of Middleton nearby which is now now occupied by Bruce-Gardyne relations of Jean, David and Mamie. Our small local Gardyne gathering of some twenty-five or thirty was very interesting, especially when Les Gardyne came in late and we saw his close resemblance to David Bruce-Gardyne - they both wore similar greying beards which added to the likeness.

May saw me at the funeral of Tom Brydone, a former partner of Bannerman, Brydone and Folster Solicitors with whom I had a lot of contacts through our mutual clients. Tom was in his early 90s and had continued to work in the office regularly long after his retirement. He was like R. B. Bannerman in this respect in that they never quite made a break from their place of work. Tom and Stan Hargest once approached me to stand for Parliament in the local electorate. My reply was a firm 'No.' Sure, I had unintentionally reached a high point in local body politics but I had no desire or ambition to go further. However, as they say, it was nice to be asked.

The same week saw the opening of the new Gore Hospital. This was a limited facility designed to be an adjunct to Southland Hospital for the post-operative care of local patients and to cover the temporary requirements of care for asthmatics and broken limbs and such. It incorporated Emergency, Maternity, X-ray, Physiotherapy and similar services. David and Mary Ogg with others were strong advocates who fought to establish this facility after the Seddon Memorial Hospital was condemned and no longer able to be used. A week later Tom Bredin died and I went to his funeral. Tom was a staunch and outspoken Christian and a very faithful old stalwart of the Baptist Church. He took up golf when he retired and was known amongst his fellow players as 'Down the Middle Tom' - he seldom strayed into the rough and from time to time defeated players who could hit the ball very many yards further but got into a lot more trouble.

Looking back with the benefit of hind sight I had an interesting application of my Justice of the Peace qualifications when Elizabeth Young from next door brought her daughter

¹ The seed sown there did germinate and mature. Kathryn Smith took on the idea of writing a book on the family history and eventually the Gathering was held in 2000.

Melissa for me to witness copies of her educational qualifications to use in applying for jobs in England where she and Jonathon were going for some OE. That same week there was the funeral of Agnes Waite, a choir member friend of whom Millie's - I had frequently played golf with her husband Jim who has also since passed away.

At the end of May I was again on the overseas trail. The principal motivation factor was Kate's graduation from high school but I also planned a visit to England as Jessie was far from well and failing. Susan took me to Momona and I flew to Auckland where I caught the outward flight the same evening. My transition in Los Angeles was longer than usual but there was adequate time and I had no holdups. This time the US sector was routed through Chicago where the arrival and departure gates were adjacent to each other. I arrived in Phila just after midnight and found David waiting for me. The total journey had taken about thirty hours. Everyone was in bed when we got to the house and we soon found our way there too. I was wakeful through the early hours and then slept in until mid-morning. David announced the news of his recent promotion to Acting Director of his Pathology division. He had in effect been head-hunted from within the organisation but had insisted that the job be advertised in order to avoid criticism from outside. He was not looking forward to the extra load of administration as it left him less time for his first love which was clinical pathology. We were then into the Memorial Day public holiday so we spent the day at Ruth's place out at Rydal and at the home of her neighbours the Solis-Cohens. We learned that Kate had received an award from her school for 'services for the benefit of the school and the community.'

We spent an interesting weekend in New London, Conn at the 30-year reunion of Peggy's old college. The journey took us through the New York area and then on to the Merritt Parkway north of the Hudson River and then connecting to the I95 which runs from Florida right up to Maine. We were accommodated in very nice rooms in the dormitories of the college and they had excellent meal arrangements. The big item the first evening was a concert given by a group called The Capitol Steps. They entertained us with non-stop routines of songs, skits, repartee and take-offs of public figures such as Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Henry Hyde, Hilary Clinton. Near the end was a skit full of malapropisms about Sill Blinton, Lonica Mooinsky and Trinda Lipp. It finished with a piece about Monica's book - 'Thanks to Trinda Lipp, Lonica Mooinsky is fitch and ramous. Watch Lonica bite a rook. That rook is gonna make her bitch. What'll be the bame of the nook? What'll be the jitle on its racket? Its from Darles Chickens, A sale of Two Titties.' The morning included get-togethers of alumni which we left Peggy to enjoy on her own but we watched the parade of ex-students in their various year-groups. I found it interesting that they have these reunions every five years on a rolling basis so that those who wish can catch up with fellow graduates at regular intervals. David and I did a tour round New London which is an attractive town on the south coast of Connecticut. It attracts many people who are looking for a seaside life. Back home the next day was Sunday and I went up to Calvary Presbyterian Church on Olivet Hill where I enjoyed what I described as 'a vigorous service' led by Rev Linda Jayme. The next day or two brought high temperatures which made any effort very difficult - it was just short of being declared a 'heat wave' which is defined as 'three' days of ninety degrees (F) or more'. I spent some time in town and in the Art Galleries and shops in town which

are air-conditioned. David's house was also reasonably comfortable. I spent part of a day cutting back the growth on the empty part of their section at Cambridge Street which was threatening the electric cables. It was quite hot work but it would not have been done well had I not been there as they had just been trimming instead of cutting back sufficiently to last any length of time. They still owned this house which was being rented out. Over the last week or so we had been in touch with Margaret Bonney who said that Jessie was very low and refusing to eat and even reluctant to drink. We got later updates that she was eating porridge and soup and was also drinking a bit more.

Ken had not long recovered from an accident with his bicycle which could have been very serious. The family had all been out for a ride and Ken had a mate with him. The boys were jumping their front wheels up onto a kerb and a line of small rocks when Ken came to grief. He landed mostly on his head and also took severe cuts and abrasions to his chin and forehead. He was taken to hospital and there patched up by a very efficient neurosurgeon who apparently did a fine job. I was there when David took him back for a check-up and I got a glimpse of the very large hospital and medical school where David worked. The result of the check was very satisfactory but Ken was warned to keep applying sunscreen to the tender wound area where the surgeon had done some skin grafts.

We were approaching the end of the school year which was the final one for my granddaughter Kate. Thursday 17th June 1999 was the day of the final school assembly and parents and guests were welcome. In the car going to Germantown, Ken casually mentioned that he had got his school report. He only scored 460/500. The seventy-six graduands entered two by two and the Principal related the history of the class, relating some amusing incidents as well as recalling their successes. Eight staff members who were leaving the school were farewelled. The graduating class was invited onto the stage and then the succeeding class were invited to move forward to occupy the vacated seats, thus taking their place as the senior class in the school for the following year - they did this with alacrity and pleasure!

We then adjourned to the Friends Meeting House where a number of the pupils spoke voluntarily of the benefit they had received from the school. Some paid tribute to the atmosphere of the weekly gatherings in the Meeting House. Some parents also contributed and eventually I was moved to speak - it was something like this:

"I am the Grandad Peggy referred to a little while ago. When Kate invited me last year to attend her graduation my first thought was 'all that travel again'. I did make it and I am here - it took me 30 hours from door to door but I thought it was too good to miss. This is my first graduation of a grandchild and I am appreciating it very much. I enjoyed the Assembly this morning a great deal and this meeting also and I look forward to the graduation tomorrow.

We are naturally today thinking of the Class of '99 coming to a new point in their lives and thinking of their expectations for the future. But there is a sense in which all of us - Class '99, Class 2000, parents and even grandparents - are at the beginning of the future

of our lives. Someone has said, 'Today is today. Tomorrow is the first day of the rest of your life.' So we are all facing the rest of our lives.

I think of the quotation King George VI of Great Britain included in his Christmas message to the British people and the British Commonwealth in the dark days of World War 2 nearly sixty years ago as his people were facing the uncertain New Year. I offer it to the Class of '99 as they complete an academic year and, like us all, go into a new year of their lives:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year,
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.
And he said to me, 'Put your hand into the Hand of God
That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way'"²

Several people commended me afterwards including Kate and the Principal Dick Ward - Ken also said he liked it then repeated 'I liked it a lot.'

There was a non-stop concert in the evening - an hour and a half of comedy, farce and fun concluding with a photo show of all the Class of '99.

The next day we went to the graduation in the Friends Complex in the old part of the city. We arrived in good time and linked up with Ruth and Kathy and Joe Sipe. A time of worship was introduced by the graduate speaker Jennifer Joi Jones who outlined the features of Friends worship and stated that she had learned to value it and profit from it. The Valedictorian, a close friend of Kate's called Jessica Jane Blubond-Laugner, spoke very well with a good blend of humour and seriousness and this was followed by the presentation of diplomas by the Head of School.

The family party proceeded to the City Tavern restaurant where David had booked a celebration dinner party. The City Tavern has a long history, having been built in 1783, destroyed by fire in 1854 and rebuilt in 1975 in the same style and decor as the original with furnishings, stone water jugs and an old-fashioned menu completing the atmosphere. Our party included Joe and Kathy Sipe, Ruth and her twin sister Ros, Peggy's brother Tom with Ci, all four of David's family and me. It was a pretty happy evening.

We were all heading to England where we planned to meet up over the next two or three weeks. Our route was via Chicago from where we were booked on a twin-engined Boeing to London. The aircraft seemed to be taxiing for ages and eventually the Captain announced that he was going to the very end of the longest runway because of the heavy load of fuel he had on board for the long trip. The take-off run was certainly much longer than usual but lift-off was safely achieved and we made a good flight to Heathrow. David phoned his good friend Dr John Hawke and he and his wife then came into the airport to pick us up. They were in two Jaguars which were John's pride and joy but which had minimal boot and back-seat room. We piled in for the short trip to their home in Windsor. I

2 "God Knows" by Minnie Louise Haskins

was embarrassed to be landed on John and Lorna as I fear that David had not warned them I was in the party. I was shown into a small room with a cat asleep on a chair. I was very tired from the short night and the late arrival so I was not very happy when the cat announced about 3 am that she wanted to go out. I let her out and shut the door, relieved to be free of her. Not so. Ten minutes later she was back at the door meowing to get in. So I was out of bed again to let her in - this time she lasted till morning.

Lorna kindly took me back to Heathrow, where I found Avis and picked up my rental car. My first call was to Frank and Dot but I found no one at home even though I had advised them I would call that day. I learned later that they had not been very well and a friend had called and offered them an outing which they had gladly accepted. I carried on to Emma's place calling on Brian Bayley on the way. He was still living by himself at home at 97 years of age but reckoned he would be better off in a home. He was getting Meals on Wheels five days a week and family were helping out at weekends. I believe he did move into a Home later but did not make his century. I had a nice evening with Emma and Cliff and a good talk with Emma before leaving next day. I headed towards the Cotswolds, stopping in Burford where Millie and I had met up with Frank and Dot on a previous occasion. I passed through Seven Springs which is said to be the source of the River Thames which runs right across England to empty through London into the English Channel. I was heading for Sheepscombe which is the village of David and Jean Bruce-Gardyne. They took me for an interesting drive round the district - Painswick Churchyard, Birdlip with its glorious view of the Severn Valley and the peculiar cricket ground on the side of the hill where they have to call out to a boundary fielder on the downhill side who cannot see the pitch!

My next route was across country to the home of Carolyn Springett in the town of Melchor near Northampton. There was quite a group including John Springett who had been doing some decorating and Sarah and Andy. Carolyn's house had once been a pin making factory and then became a Methodist minister's residence - it was still called The Manse. We went along to The Plough, the very popular village pub. For some reason our meal was a very long time in coming and we were eventually served at the same time as Andy and Sarah who had arrived late - John was hungry after his day's work and kept complaining about the lack of food. I had a very good sleep in Carolyn's dressing room with Sarah and Andy in the loft above. In the morning we were all leaving - John for Isel, Carolyn for a birthday party, Andy and Sarah back to London and I was going across country to Dyls and John Allen at Southwell. I had planned my itinerary to spend Sunday with them and enjoyed going to their Methodist Chapel where it was the Sunday School anniversary and a very interesting time. In the afternoon John took me for a visit to a nearby Air Force Museum established on the corner of a wartime airfield. There were a number of retired wartime and post-war planes and a small museum of RAF memorabilia - I quite enjoyed it. Next morning I went on my way west towards Garstang following the main roads rather than the motorways system. At Hebden Bridge I stopped for refreshments consisting of apple pie and coffee. I had to ask directions for the exit from Hebden Bridge at the Information office adjacent to the cafe. The girl who attended me was very clear - she explained that you had to go on 150 yards to a roundabout as the turn onto the road was so acute. The road across the moors was fabulous. There had been heavy rain overnight so they had

a washed-clean look and in places there was water running down the road. Once over the moors I came down to the Clitheroe district and so on to Cabus.

I visited Jessie in the morning and she recognised me right away. She was in quite good form but looked very weak and had lost weight. Two days later I went to Isel and soon after I arrived David and his family arrived from London for a three night stay. We all went touring round the district next day, picnicking near Crummock Water and then going up over Honister Hause and through Keswick back to Isel. At Crummock Water Ken climbed up the alluvial fan above us so he could get a good position for a photo. The next day we lunched in the Dog and Gun in Keswick and David bought Kate a lovely leather jacket as a graduation present while Ken finally got a shirt to replace a too-large present from Dawn - justice finally served. July the 3rd was Jessie's birthday and I gave her a card which said 'Dear Sister' on the front and told her that I was one of only two people in the world who could call her that - Marjorie had also sent a card with the same words. (When Geoff looked over Jessie's cards he remarked that Marjorie must have sent two!) David and Peggy had arrived from Isel and had booked in at Bilsborrow. However, when they saw the Golf Course Hotel in Garstang they shifted to it. That evening we had a big family party at Bells Farm - Jean, Margaret, David and I shared the cost. The party was a pretty full muster - Jean and John, Margaret and Eric, Margaret and Geoff, Dylis and John, Vera and Ruth, Marjorie, me, David and Peggy, Kate and Ken, Carolyn, Emma and Giles. I arranged for places to be exchanged between courses so that David and Peggy could have time with most of the other guests. The young folk were having a whale of a time, very much enjoying each other's company. I was amused when they called me over and asked if I could tell them how they were related so we had a discussion about the distinctions between cousins, second cousins and cousins once-removed.

Next morning David went to see Marjorie with his video camera and filmed all of her pictures with her explanation of each one. Marjorie must have enjoyed the personal attention. David and Geoff and Ken and I had a round of golf at the Garstang Hotel course, and we all had dinner together on the hotel terrace on a very pleasant evening. The next morning we went down to the hotel for coffee only to find they were leaving so Peggy could show Kate something of London as 'she might not get such a good chance again.' I was very angry as I felt it was an insult to Margaret and Geoff, as if to say "OK, we have seen you - we are not interested to stay longer." I could hardly say this with Margaret in earshot but I did say how very sorry we were they had decided to leave. They went. Later that day I went in to Eric and Margaret's and then on to Marjorie's for tea - I'm afraid to my shame that I kept falling asleep in my chair as she was talking. The following day we picked up Marjorie and all went out to Nicky Nook for lunch, passing through many of our favourite villages in that area. Marjorie then visited Jessie and I took her home. Next day, having checked with Jessie and Jean, Margaret and I had a day out together. Geoff even hired an Astra for the day as their Toyota was in for a radiator repair. What a lovely day we had. We went through places like Scorton, Marham, Dolphinholme, Caton and Ingleton to Hawes in West Yorkshire. We visited the Museum and the Ropemakers and went on towards Settle and the Leeds Carlisle railway viaduct and then over the lovely moors to Dent. This was a quaint little village with a very narrow main street. In the churchyard we came upon a memorial erected by a sister

for her three brothers who had died in their thirties over a period of about five years, then for her parents who had died three or five years later - finally her own name was entered about thirty years on. She must have had a lonely life, bereaved of all her family. One does find some tragic stories in cemeteries and memorials.

My time was running out and I went to check up on my return tickets only to find that I did not have them. David had booked my flight to and from England and I had not been given the return ticket! I had also left my return tickets to New Zealand in Philadelphia rather than carry them with me. This mistake rebounded on me. To gain entry to the USA and be granted a visitor's visa, I would need to show that I had the means to exit the country. My evidence was in Philadelphia. The airline people suggested a way out. If I bought a return ticket from Heathrow to Chicago this would ensure me entry to the US. I could then go to the airline in Chicago and get a refund on the unused ticket. I followed their plan and it worked like a charm.

In the meantime Margaret and Geoff took me into Scotland for three days. Margaret had been heavily involved with Jessie for some time and was getting jaded and weary. We left in the middle of the afternoon for Callander north of Glasgow. The day had been quite hot and it was a lovely evening with a long twilight. We had dinner at Sherry's in town. The next day we headed west to Loch Katrine. The pleasure steamer was not running so we carried on, turning into a narrow road which eventually led us to the hotel at Inversaid on the east shore of Loch Lomond. We had coffee there but had to retrace our route as it was a no-exit road. We passed by many small lochs and the surroundings were untamed and moor-like and very beautiful. We turned south and drove up the west side of Loch Lomond to Glen Orchy, returning by a series of by-roads to Callander. Jean reported to Margaret by phone that Jessie had been very quiet all day and had only eaten a small quantity of ice cream. Margaret and I talked about the fact that her days were now very few but I told her that Jessie had lived her days positively and to the full. All credit to her as life had been unkind to her at a very early age in the loss of Harry when she had to face bringing up two little girls on her own. Margaret agreed but also commented how difficult it was for Jean and her when their mother was out at night classes getting her qualifications. The next morning we went in to call on Rene Mackenzie and had lunch with her. We then headed across to Linlithgow where we had arranged to meet Eric and Margaret who were picking me up so as to allow Geoff and Margaret to go on home. We went north over the Forth Bridge and called a halt at a B&B at the Dalmore Hotel on Perth Rd just out of Blairgowrie. It was an adequate but not very special night. The landlady was rather garrulous, skiting of her contacts with royalty and Balmoral and golfers and golf courses. We were given only a vegetable quiche for dinner. In Blairgowrie we visited the birthplace of J M Barrie and saw the statue of his famous character Peter Pan. We toiled in the hot morning up a hill to J M Barrie's grave and then to a Camera Obscura on the top of the hill with wonderful 360° views of the surrounding countryside. Back in the village we enjoyed a scone with jam and cream and a coffee near the Peter Pan statue.

From Blairgowrie we headed for Kirriemuir. We found a phone booth from which I phoned Mamie Bruce-Gardyne at Brae of Airlie Farmhouse. We were only a mile and a half

away and she had rooms free so we were soon enjoying a cup of tea in her lounge in front of a large picture window displaying the magnificent view over the Tayside Region. She loved it. Mamie proved to be a lively sort of person, rather short in stature but a bundle of energy. She was very welcoming. When I called her first question was, 'Have you found your tickets yet?' - she had obviously been speaking to her brother David and already knew about me. She offered to make dinner for us and we gratefully accepted. We talked about the Gardyne origins, of Gardyne Castle, Middleton, the Bruce-Gardyne home and about her decision to come north from Hampshire to her origins and open the B&B business. Being off the beaten track she does not get a lot of guests but seems to enjoy having those who find her. She had done a great deal of research into her family tree and had a lot of information³. She offered me a hot bath which was very comforting to my back which had not yet recovered. I told people that for those few days I was walking with a lean like the Tower of Pisa. On the phone Margaret said that Jessie had hardly spoken that day.

I had made enquiries in Brechin the previous day about cemetery records for Brechin cemetery hoping to trace the graves of the John Gardyne family who had lived there. I had been directed to the County Office so the next day we went to Montrose. In answer to my enquiry at the 'Recreation Department' - which included cemetery records (!) - I was given a big leather-bound volume named 'Record of Lairholders.' It was open at the Gardyne page which showed that John Gardyne had purchased a 'lair' for his daughter who had died in 1873 at the age of 4. The plot also held the remains of himself, his wife, three other daughters of considerable age and his son David. Wilfred and I had met David and Alice in 1943. I noted down all the details and photographed the headstone and then visited Brechin Cathedral, noted for its round tower as well as its steeple. It had many very fine stained glass windows. The next day we headed south to Cabus by the Forth Bridge.

On arrival at Mari Vale we found that Jessie had died about breakfast time that morning. During the day Jean and Margaret had been engaged in registering the death and organising the details of the funeral with the undertaker. They were tired and frazzled and nothing had been done towards a meal so we decided to go out to The Crofters just down the A6. There were seven of us in all. When the waitress took our orders she forgot to ask Eric how he liked his steak and came back with the question. Eric was a bit taken by surprise and the words 'Well Done' just did not come to his lips - he finally blurted out 'Cremated, please.' He was totally embarrassed as the girls had spent all day preparing for Jessie's cremation. The rest of us all roared with laughter and it just broke up the tension that everyone had been feeling and we were able to have a great time together. As Jean was staying down to attend to things with Margaret I went home with Eric and Margaret to leave my bed at Mari Vale free for her. Late in the morning Margaret Culpin took me to Marjorie's who of course had lost her sister and was now the only surviving member of the family. We also called on Marjorie the next day and found Jean and Margaret visiting her after a very successful clearing out of Jessie's room at the Abbeyfield Home. They took me back to Mari Vale later that evening. I arranged for flowers to be sent to Marjorie and Jean and John in memory of Jessie and to Dyls and John as a thank you. I was then able to fit in an afternoon and evening with Vera and Ruth Haigh which I greatly enjoyed. Ruth was a professional caterer and had made a lovely meal - the two of them were good company. On

3 Kathryn Smith has checked this out with her and there does not seem to be a connection to our Gardyne line.

Sunday Margaret and I went to Whitegate Drive Baptist Church where they referred to Jessie's death. They noted her loyalty to the church and the part she had played in negotiating the integration of Station Rd church into Whitegate Drive. The minister Laurence Jones told me he was interested in vintage planes. He was aware of the Croydon Aircraft Company and sometimes wrote articles for vintage magazines. I shouted Margaret and Geoff for dinner at Bumbles, a country hotel which they had favoured for some of their Christmas family gatherings. On the Monday I rang Jean and invited myself up for the day - I went by the coastal route through Barrow-in-Furness as I had never been on that road before. I found Sarah there and Carolyn was arriving in the evening. Jean and Margaret reported that they had received long phone calls from both Ron and Dawn. Carolyn did not finally arrive until after 7 pm so I stayed on for an hour and then had a quick trip back on a very quiet motorway.

Tuesday was the day of Jessie's funeral which left from Mari Vale about one o'clock. I travelled in the black seven-seater limousine provided by the undertaker and three cars followed with the members of the wider family. This arrangement underlined the fact that I was regarded as one of the near family. We picked up Marjorie at Eric and Margaret's and proceeded to the Crematorium nearby. Services are normally pushed through in only half an hour but there was a gap behind ours so we were not quite so rushed. The service was conducted by Rev J T Jones, a former minister and a close family friend. He spoke at length of Jessie's faith and commitment to the church in various roles - Sunday School Teacher, Deacon, Missionary Secretary, Cubs, Choir, Church Secretary, negotiator for the amalgamation of the congregations and liquidator of the saleable assets of the demolished Station Road building. 'Finally,' Mr Jones concluded, 'The Lord came and said 'Now' ... and she left her room and went where she met Harry again after all those years, and her Dad and Mum, and Winnie and Millie and to receive a great welcome.' Quite a number of friends of both Station Road days and Whitegate Drive were there and we all chatted outside for some time after the service.

The family party then adjourned to the Pickering Hotel south of Garstang for a buffet sit-down meal. I was asked to say grace which was nice. I was seated with Jennifer and Stuart Smith, close friends of Jean and Margaret and Margaret Culpin. I told Jennifer I remembered her as a little girl in church in 1944-5 and she said she remembered me also even though she was only five years old. We returned to Cabus in the late afternoon where there was a round of farewells as one party and another took their leave to go home. I wrote in my diary, 'When all had gone it was suddenly quiet, for Margaret to be satisfied that Jessie, her Mum, had had a good farewell with a goodly number of friends to share in it. I felt a special pleasure that I had been able to be a part of it, and to represent David, Ron Susan and Dawn.' I phoned Dawn and Ron to report briefly on the day and to assure them that the flowers had arrived - Margaret had given them to Jean to take home.

Jessie's timing was impeccable. The next morning I was booked to fly from Manchester for the start of my return to Philadelphia and home to New Zealand. I said goodbye to Geoff and Margaret, thanking them for all the very many kindnesses they had done for me. It was a simple trip to London where I had to pick up my bags from the domestic flight

and recheck them at the overseas terminal. We were informed that the container of bags had not been loaded in Manchester. They would be sent down on the next flight but that would not arrive in time for my outward flight - I left details for them to be sent on.

My adventures were not yet over. At Chicago we had boarded our flight for Philadelphia and had left the gate and were heading out to take off under a very black sky when suddenly the aircraft turned off onto a hard standing area. The Captain told us all take-offs had been cancelled because of an impending thunder storm. We could believe in the storm as we could see it coming and within a couple of minutes down came the rain with continuous flashes of lightning. It was one of the heaviest thunderstorms I had ever experienced. We could only sit in the aircraft and watch the water pouring along the runway very glad we were not trying to get into the air. We sat there with nothing to do except watch the storm for nearly four hours. I had brought nothing to read on this fairly short flight. Some planes had taken off earlier but apparently the storm was persisting south of Chicago along our route to Philadelphia. David had gone to meet me and he got some confused indications that the flight had been delayed. He had very wisely brought a book so he could make some use of the waiting time. Next morning I sorted out my laundry - it was pretty meagre as I had still not got my bags. That night we attended an outdoor performance at the Mann Centre on a fabulous evening. The day after I hung around the house to take delivery of my bags. Eventually I phoned up and they confirmed that they had arrived and would be delivered in about an hour - they eventually arrived all intact.

On Sunday the family had either gone out for a cycle ride or slept in or were otherwise engaged so I walked up the hill to Calvary Presbyterian Church. There was a visiting preacher who spoke on the 'Cloud of Witnesses' mentioned in Hebrews. Back home I learnt that the Black Caps had won their first ever test victory at Lords by 9 wickets and the All Blacks had beaten South Africa 32 - 6 with Mehrtens kicking nine goals. Two weeks before they had beaten Australia 28- 0. It must have been the All Black's year. Later in the week I borrowed the car and drove out to the Pennswood Village at Newtown to call on Barbara Scharzschild who was an aunt of Bernard Thornton. I felt a bit overwhelmed joining the busy sunken freeway in the centre of the city but I had checked my route and was able to find the necessary exits and eventually the turn off to the Village. It was a very hot day and as I turned into the road to the village the outside temperature gauge was displaying 100°F. Barbara had invited me to tea and we had quite a time together. She said as I was coming away that she had wondered what she had let herself in for agreeing to see a stranger for four hours or so - and a man at that. 'But it has been no trouble, has it,' she said. Her husband had been a professor at Princeton. In retirement they had taken a great interest in the environment and in bird migration in particular. She had a very pleasant apartment in the complex with two bedrooms and a study. We seemed to chat very freely and I think we both enjoyed the time. The village is operated by a Quaker group and is very lovely. The waitressing at dinner was done by girls from the Quaker School nearby. I had no difficulty finding my way home and privately felt quite proud that I had been able to negotiate the trip on my own. We had a trip out to Ruth's in the evening as the day cooled off and next day Kate ran me round town to clear up some things and do some shopping. I shouted the family plus a friend of Kate's to dinner at a restaurant overlooking the Schuylkill River - it

wasn't cheap but it was a very nice meal. Next morning I was all packed up for my evening flight except for my golf clothes. David took me to Eagle Lodge Golf Course again where we were a little short of time to complete the round. We came home for a quick shower, packed my damp golf clothes - it had been very hot - and were off to the airport within half an hour. David is very relaxed about making these deadlines and does not see the point in arriving very early. We were a little late boarding and then had a further wait for take-off clearance. On three different occasions during this flight I saw very spectacular thunderstorms. The lightning seemed to be almost continuous and really lit up the tops of the vast billows of thundertop clouds. It led me to believe that there is more lightning above a thunderstorm than we see from below. The delay in Philadelphia had cut my changeover time in Los Angeles but the departure gate was close - I think I was the second-last passenger aboard. This time my bags arrived with me in Auckland, including my golf clubs!

I had arranged to hire a car and made contact with some Auckland friends like Doreen Broadbent and Alison Paterson and then stayed a night with Dorothy Wood in Hamilton. I called on Jim and Phyllis Gardyne and Val Jones in Tauranga on my way to Gisborne where I stayed for a week or so before heading back to Gore.

I counted myself very fortunate to have had the experience of a Quaker School graduation in Philadelphia. I was also pleased to have been on hand when Jessie finally passed away. It was good to have arrived in time for her to recognise me and chat a little and the timing of her funeral the day before I was leaving was nothing short of wonderful. It was great to be a part of the family on that special family occasion. But I was also glad to be home.

It was a case of returning to the daily round. I found myself on boiler duty at the church for the next three weeks. This was to a great measure my own doing as others of the team had been filling in while I had been away. Some days could get quite filled up but I was keeping up my involvement with the local community. I took a two day trip to Queenstown going up through Alexandra and joining the Frankton Vets on Wednesday, and the midweek Kelvin Heights golf on Thursday - I have no recollection of how well I played on those days. The next week I left for Timaru for a visit to Vic and Winnie. I had lunch with them and chatted on into the afternoon. That night I stayed in a B&B in Oxford with Norton and Jean Dunn. It happened to be their Bridge night and they left the house straight after dinner. My accommodation had separate access with its own tea-making facility and television. It was a lovely summer evening so I sought out the Waimakariri golf course which I had to myself - I was able to complete about 11 holes before dusk stopped play. The course was very dry with lots of run and good greens and I played two balls.

Next day I headed to Picton to report for the 6.30pm ferry. When I arrived there was no queue and all looked strangely quiet. I went in to the ticket office to enquire what was what. 'Oh, Mr Elder, your ferry was cancelled. Did you not get a phone call?' I said that I had not but I had probably already left home and might have missed it. She checked up and found my name was not on the passenger list. I had in my hand my ticket issued by the Information Centre in Gore but I suspect that they had not completed registering the book-

ing with the ferry company! She offered to put me on the next ferry in three hours time or I could choose to stay the night in Picton - at my own expense - and catch the morning sailing. Then she had an after-thought. "There is a freight ferry leaving any time now but it takes four hours to get to Wellington instead of three.' I worked out that this would still get me to Wellington at the same time as my original 'booking' so I said I would be happy with that. There was only just enough time for me to drive on and a few minutes later I was on my way. The only passengers were the drivers of a number of large transport trucks which were part of the load. I had intended to have dinner later on but the chef came and said they were about to close. I was served with the biggest hamburger I had ever seen then or since - it was a struggle but I managed to eat most of it. I had left my overnight bag sitting on the bed at home so I had phoned to ask Mary to collect it and courier it to Wellington care of Dawn at the hospital. That took a day longer than I had expected. Dawn had Marie and Tony Sole to dinner that night.

Sunday was to be Jamie's birthday so I had planned to set off early to drive to Gisborne. I did not leave as soon as I had hoped because my car battery was flat - I presume I a door not quite closed had left the inside light on. The AA soon got me going and I arrived in Gisborne late in the afternoon in time for some of the birthday party. The school had a visit to the Whangara Marae next day so I went out and watched the welcome from a distance. Whangara was the setting for the popular film 'Whale Rider' and this visit made the film so much more fascinating. The next Saturday saw us laying bark in the native tree section of the garden. We had a visit from Lesley's brother Richard and his wife Kathy and we all went to Val's in the evening for Lesley's birthday. In between I had managed a round of golf with Ralph Williams and paid a visit to the very beautiful Eastwood Hill Arboretum and to Rere Lake and the Falls.

The following week was the start of the East Coast-Poverty Bay Veterans golf tournament⁴. The first day is a qualifying round and the players are then divided into groups of sixteen according to their gross scores - the next four days are match play. The format results in every player reaching a final on Friday including a Plate and a Consolation competition. In the first round I beat Alex McGregor 1 up. On the second day I beat Norman Balfour 2 up and 14 to play (!). I lost one down on the third day and lost again 3 & 2 on the Friday. Bob Bell who beat me in the last game was a very steady golfer who had worked in his youth for one of my clients and a contemporary at Gore High, Mory Paterson from Wendonside. So I had a sort of half-successful tournament. There is a story about that win of 2 up and 14 to play on Day 3 - my opponent obviously defaulted the game at the fifth tee. He had borrowed his friend's small motorbike and at that stage he could not get it started. We were then at the furthest point of the course from the Clubhouse. He was quite crippled so there was no question of his continuing to play. When he caught up with the owner of the cycle the owner asked, 'Did you try the switch by the carburettor?' He had never known about that switch. I had been clearly on top in that game and I had no doubt the result would have been the same had he been able to continue.

4 Such a happy coincidence that this tournament is timed so close to two of the Gisborne family birthdays (Ed)

The following Sunday Hannah had her birthday party a little in advance of the day. I paid a visit on Monday to Tolaga Bay and to Ruatoria. When I told Val I had been there she said she wished she could have been with me. She was brought up in Ruatoria where her father operated the village store. We had the family birthday celebration for Hannah on THE day.

I headed off next morning for Wellington via Taupo where I stayed in a B&B just short of the town on the Napier road. I drove down to Wellington on Friday for the weekend with Dawn. I caught the morning ferry on Monday, spent a night in Oxford, had lunch with Vic and Win the following day and reached home that night.

For some time I had been finding it necessary to pass water very frequently. Indeed, I was becoming acquainted with all the public toilets between Gore and Picton and had become expert in pacing my stops to deal with the situation. My GP had diagnosed an enlarged prostate and referred me to K P Samalia, the same Dunedin urologist who had operated on Millie. I had an appointment with him at the beginning of December 1999 in his rooms at Maniopoto Clinic. He carried out a retention test and found that I was retaining at least 40% of the urine in the bladder - hence it tended to fill up again quite quickly. I decided that I would like to have the matter cleared up sooner rather than later so booked in to have it done privately at Mercy Hospital in Dunedin. At the time the Urology Dept at Southland Hospital was going through a bit of a crisis period and the wait there might have been quite long. I think Dawn came down on Tuesday to Dunedin and we stayed a night in the Pacific Park Hotel. I had a blood test at midday, was admitted at 5 30 pm, and had the op the next morning. All went well and I was discharged the next day. It proved to be successful and there was no indication of any cancer cells. My PSA reading was very satisfactory and I counted myself very fortunate. However, Mr Samalia had detected some small lesions in the bladder and scheduled me for a regular cystoscopy every six months or so for the immediate future.

I had come to the end of 1999 and was now facing the first days of the Millennium year.

Year 2000

There had been a lot of speculation about the coming of the Millennium Year 2000. Years earlier the casual thought had come into my mind to wonder if I would be there to see it. Having been born in 1918, my 82nd birthday would occur during that year - my father had died just after his 82nd birthday. On the other hand, my mother had lived to almost 99 so her genes might well see me through. In the event I saw the new millennium in with good health and prospects but of course Millie was not there to share it with me. At the time of writing several more years have gone by and the Millennium has passed well into history.

New Zealand featured very prominently in the celebration of the Millennium as we live so close to the International Date Line. We are the first nation in the world to welcome the sun each day and therefore were the first to reach the Millennium. Gisborne, being one of the most easterly areas of the country, claims itself to be 'the first city to see the light' and made much of this distinction. The city went to some lengths to brighten up its appearance for the world spotlight and put on a very big fireworks display along with many other special events. The celebrations were repeated all round the world as such a significant new year rolled round the earth with the sun making its daily rising. We spent quite a bit of time on TV during the day watching the show progress round the world as the western nations welcomed the dawn.

Ron and Lesley were visiting the south that year and came to Dunedin on 18th January. A few days later we headed to Queenstown and booked in at Alpha Lodge Motels on Frankton Road. On Sunday morning we went to church and then took the trip up the Gondola to the Skyline. We went on to Arrowtown for lunch and called on Dawn Gardyne at Frankton. The following day Ron and Lesley and girls set out for Twizel where they planned a stop-over on their way to Christchurch. I paid visits to people like Pat and Phil Fougere,

Dorothy Taylor, Ian and Phyllis Gardiner and Frank Smith. Ian, Phyl and Frank were in the Wakatipu Rest Home at this time. About three days later I was heading to Christchurch for Susan's induction as the 'Bush' assistant minister at Knox Church in Bealey Ave¹. This took place on a Thursday night and the next day I took the family up on the gondola to Mt Cavendish for lunch. Then restaurant has a terrific panoramic view over Christchurch and across the plains towards the northern end of the Southern Alps. That evening Ron and Lesley and the girls flew to Wellington. I stayed on over the weekend and returned home on the Tuesday.

We were very distressed to learn in February that Lesley had discovered a lump in her breast. It which was diagnosed as cancer and she elected to have a mastectomy. I have noted in my diary that the operation had gone well and the nurse had stated that the observation signs were OK. The girls had been in to see her and were staying with Chris and Lucy, Lesley's recovery went well and I was to have considerably more contact with her at a later stage. In the meantime I had been up to Dunedin for a check up with my urologist Mr K P Samalia. He was checking the bladder lesions every three months and burning any new growth with diathermy. I had the first of these checks in February with a repeat in May. Each check cost me about \$700 dollars at this stage as it was done under anaesthetic and involved a short time in bed until the anaesthetic had cleared. On one of these visits I stayed in a B&B in Roslyn just below the New World Supermarket. The hostess was very kind and helpful. I was going to order a taxi to take me to Mercy Hospital early in the morning but my hostess insisted that she could deliver me and pick me up later - which she did. When I had made the booking by phone she said that her single room was booked but she would give me the double room. Upon my arrival she said she had reversed the arrangement and given me the single room. So far, so good. The advice from the surgeon was to drink plenty of water for the first day or so and I was following doctor's orders. As I was resting in my room her other guest arrived. She was a very good friend and they stood in the downstairs lobby chatting away gaily to each other. The bedrooms were on the ground floor with the rest of the house on the higher level so it was convenient for them to chat on before the landlady went back upstairs. Meanwhile I was getting more and more desperate for a clear passage to the bathroom. The water drinking had been more important when I had the Prostate operation and on this occasion I had overdone it. Eventually I could wait no longer so I donned my dressing gown and hastily made my excuses as I exited my room and dodged into the bathroom next door. I was most embarrassed when she started to introduce me to her friend saying something like, 'Oh, this is your bedmate for tonight.' I disappeared as quickly as I could. Oh, the relief. We were able to meet later on a much more formal basis.

News came through from Blackpool in March that Marjorie was very unwell. When I talked about it with Susan she expressed the regret that we were so far away as it would be good to be able to call in and share in the trauma Marjorie was experiencing. As I thought this over I realised that Susan had not made a visit to the English family apart from a hasty trip when her Grandma was ill. I phoned her and offered to pay for her fare if she could get

1 The 'Bush' ministry was so called because it was financed from a fund made available by a family named Bush. The senior minister, Bruce Hanson, was Moderator for New Zealand that year and also had some health problems and an assistant was appointed to ease the burden all round.

leave. She had not long been in her position at Knox Church in Christchurch but they graciously granted her the necessary time off. Marjorie had severe abdominal problems with a growth of some kind and she was terminally ill. I gather that Jean and Margaret never understood the definitive diagnosis but she was obviously very sick. In the event, Susan had to say goodbye to Marjorie and return home just a day or two before she died but I was very glad that the visit had been made.² A few months later we were all grateful to receive from Margaret and Jean as Executors a cheque from Marjorie's estate. I was particularly touched that Marjorie had left me a share in the half of her estate that was left to her sister Millie's family. It was very useful in helping to finance the trip I made the following year.

The Elder Gathering

In February of 1999 my nephew Russell Elder had mooted the possibility of having a get-together of the descendants of George Robertson Elder who had come to New Zealand in 1960. Russell had become interested in genealogy and in particular in the family tree of which he was a part. He sent out a letter suggesting it would be good for the descendants to meet to get to know each other and to share any historical photos or memorabilia with each other. His provisional move got a positive response and he was emboldened to call a small assembly of interested family members in Dunedin. About twenty-five people met in the Pine Hill Presbyterian Church Hall on a Saturday in April 1999. From this grew the proposal to have a larger gathering of all the descendants of the five Elder brothers and sisters who came to New Zealand from Scotland in the period from 1858 to about 1867.

The Gathering was to take place in Waikaka over the Easter weekend of 2000. There was a mini-gathering of the J R Elder family in Oamaru two days before the main event. Kathryn and I attended along with Ernie Elder from Oamaru and my brother Victor from Timaru. Much of the brothers' early activity had been in the Oamaru district. We met at the Museum and learned from old histories that George and James had won the contract for constructing and 'shingling' the main street of Oamaru from the original tussock. Shingled was the word used in the contract but the more common term in New Zealand would be 'gravelled'. They had also formed a portion of the main road towards the Waitaki River. The party visited Waitaki Boys High School and Waitaki Girls High School. James had been actively involved with both schools and had been strongly in favour of Waitaki Girls being established much nearer the railway station for the benefit of girls who came in by train - the boys school was quite a distance from the station. Dawn had stopped off in Oamaru on her way down to the reunion and I had met her at the train.

We went on to Oaklands Farm near Maheno where James had spent most of his settled life. We visited the site of the first house and admired the huge oak trees he had planted which were now about a hundred and forty years old. Some of the party picked up acorns to germinate and grow. It was these oaks which gave the Oaklands name to the farm. The party moved on up to the newer house which stands high on the terrace. The current residents gave the visiting family members a warm welcome. Although much altered and extended the house was sufficiently original to be recognisable from the old

² I have often thought since that it has been remarkable that, in spite of the distance, a member of our New Zealand family has been in England at the time of the death of all three of Millie's sisters. Ron was in England when Winnie died, and shared a little in her service, I was in England when Jessie died, and Susan paid this visit to Marjorie.

photographs which some of the descendants had brought along. The family members were very interested to make this visit as it really brought them back to their roots. I think it took them on to the Gathering with their appetites whetted³.

Kathryn Smith (nee Gardyne) and her husband George were both very interested in family histories and George had previously been involved in compiling a history of one of his ancestral families. Kathryn had already accumulated a lot of information about the various branches of the Elder family. She had taken on the organising of the reunion which was held at the Waikaka Sports Pavilion on Easter Monday and Anzac Day of the year 2000. She had coopted a number of family members to contribute information and help in various ways and a very successful gathering was the result. She had prepared long family trees on rolls of wallpaper and these were hung round the main room of the sports centre. They were of great interest to the respective descendants. She added actual pictures in the appropriate places to bring them to life. Family members were able to find their own names and see how they fitted into the family tree.

I made a note at the time that there were 158 people present. Some had travelled a great distance. From the James Elder family there was a family of five who came from Uruguay - Virginia Elder Giura with her husband and three children. Rosemary Bayley came from Argentina. Sheila Lees and husband and Ruby Kaser and her son came from Sydney, Australia where most of the Effie Elder-Newton Edwards family had emigrated from Argentina. Bruce and Fraser Elder came from Tauranga and Auckland with their wives and families to bring the total from the James Elder family to twenty-one.

Kathryn had found it difficult to contact and gain interest from the William Elder family and there were only seven of them present. One of these was Lloyd Elder Duncan who had long had an interest in his family tree and who had obtained much information from the Mormon Church genealogy records. There were twenty-two from the Hannah Elder Paton family - four sons of David and Margaret Paton. Only four came from the Eliza Hercus family - her descendants were few in number. The family of George was the most represented, which was to be expected as the idea for the gathering had stemmed from that branch and its members were well known to the promoters - there were ninety-four.

Kathryn had invited me to open the proceedings and extend a welcome to all the participants. I reviewed a little of the background of David Elder and was able to say I had visited his grave in Stirling, Scotland and had enjoyed contact during my life with descendants of each of his five children who had emigrated to New Zealand. I particularly welcomed those who had come to join us from the USA, Uruguay, Argentina and Australia and our cousins from the North Island. I repeated the warm welcome saying, 'You are among friends. You are actually among family. You will have much opportunity to mingle, to get to know your relatives and to find out how you are connected. Make yourselves at home.'

³ There was a interesting twist to this visit from my point of view. My cleaning lady had been in contact with a fellow named Neill who was leasing a farm near Oamaru which had been previously in the possession of people named Elder. He also had a connection to the Elder family himself. One of William Elder's daughters had married a Dunedin optician named Hugh Neill and this chap was descended from that line.

Following the welcome on Monday morning a brief video of Orkney was screened and some of the Scottish family history was reviewed. After morning tea there was a Roll Call and the groups of families were identified. An interesting side issue cropped up with two fourth cousins. My grandson Ken from Philadelphia had a very strong likeness to Martin Giura from Uruguay and they spent most of the time together. They could easily have been taken for brothers instead of fourth cousins in spite of the fact that each had received many other genes from the spouses of direct descendants. In the afternoon group photos were taken and Caledonian-style sports were arranged for the younger relations. The dinner that evening was interspersed with items and tributes to the pioneer settlers.

The following morning was Anzac Day and the members of the Gathering were invited to join the service in the Waikaka Centennial Hall and to join the march to the War Memorial. After lunch I conducted a tour round the district. We viewed the site of the old Waikaka School by the river where the Gardyne family had attended school - two of them had married Elders. We saw the site of the North Chatton Church and Manse where my parents had been married. We visited the site of the first East Chatton home built by George Elder at Cliffdale, so named because it was on top of a sheer cliff on one side - the later house was built at the other end of the farm which was named Springdale because of the source of the house water supply. Finally we called at the site of the East Chatton School which all of George Elder's family had attended and the neighbouring property where my parents had farmed for thirty years.

I had realised that some of the folk attending would not be setting off home until the following day so I organised an Elder dinner at the The Gables restaurant quite near the motels at which they were staying. There were about a couple of dozen who had a very happy evening to bring to an end a momentous occasion. The restaurant had entered into the spirit of the event by printing a souvenir menu featuring background snippets from the local paper. It also happened to be Dawn's birthday so we invited her friend Christine Garthwaite to join us.

Very much credit must go to Kathryn Smith for the tremendous job she did in planning and running the venture and for her work in researching and recording so much information for the attendees. She was ably supported by George and others had helped as they were called upon. Bruce Elder stood to thank all who had helped and I assured him that the event had been a success because of the number who had taken the opportunity to come and share in the occasion.

In May I was called to Dunedin for a consultation with Gerry Wilkins regarding my static heart rate during exercise and the accompanying breathlessness. First I had an X-ray, then an ECG, a pre-admission check and a treadmill test. I had no difficulty physically walking and running on the treadmill for the prescribed period but the heart monitor showed very little increase in the pulse rate and I became quite breathless. The complaint was diagnosed as Sick Sinus Syndrome which occurs when the electrical messages from the brain do not reach the Sinus Node at the apex of the heart and it is not instructed to increase its beating rhythm to provide the extra oxygen required by the straining body muscles. The

situation in the heart is seen with an angiogram which shows up the partly closed arteries in and around the heart. In my case one main artery had considerable blockage but not sufficient to demand immediate attention. The insertion of a pacemaker was designed to overcome the Sinus Syndrome and I found that it worked very well indeed. The Pacemaker was inserted with only a local anaesthetic so I was conscious and able to hear all their conversation. There was a very relaxed atmosphere in the theatre. The angiogram involved the insertion into the artery in the groin of coloured dye into the blood stream and this delineated the arteries and thus disclosed the narrowed areas. It was this wound which carried the greatest risk and necessitated a night in hospital. It was rather nice that Ron had come down and spent quite a lot of the day with me. He said he did not fancy his Dad undergoing heart procedures without a member of the family on hand. I was sent home with a nitro-lingual spray to use at any time when exercise or cold air brought on a bout of angina pain. I found this very effective but did not have to use it very often. I had no trouble with the groin incision apart from a massive bruise which duly went through the various shades of blue and yellow till it cleared.

In early June I went up to a special golf weekend in Queenstown marking twenty-five years from the opening of the new golf course out on the Peninsula opposite our house at Kelvin Heights. I found that they had spent a lot of money on the course, changing some of the holes and reshaping most of the greens. By introducing split levels and mounds into the greens they had made putting more tricky and this gave the course a greater challenge. I had a fairly good round and received a bottle of wine as the oldest ex-member present and playing in the two-day tournament. I had been auditor for the club for several years while I was at Kelvin Heights. I enjoyed meeting up with members I had played many games with in the past.

Some time earlier I had been co-opted onto the Victim Support Committee in Gore. It was the objective of Victim Support to take over from the police the support and counselling of victims of accidents and crime. I felt it was a very worth while service that made sure that victims were not left to get along on their own. Victim Support was at that time autonomous in each local district but was affiliated to a national association. There was no official source of funds to pay the organiser and the mileage and phone costs of the support personnel - they received no remuneration for their work which was completely voluntary. A woman named Sharon Taylor, wife of a police Senior Sergeant was the local organiser at the time and she did a very good job indeed. That year we cooperated with the Police in running fund-raising road-blocks near local townships in Gore and the surrounding districts. I joined groups in Edendale, Wyndham, and Tapanui and we received great support from the people we stopped. First and minor offences are often treated in the District Court by way of diversion whereby the offender is required to make a donation to a charity instead of being convicted. Where a victim had been involved, this diversion donation often came to Victim Support and was another source of funds. Victim Support governance was eventually transferred to the National organisation and the local supervision ceased. Local volunteers are still recruited and trained but the administration and control is all managed from Wellington.

The passage of the years meant that I was required to undergo a medical for the renewal of my driving licence followed by a driving test. I was able to pass each of these with ease. My car was not so lucky - I needed a 'star' repaired in my windscreen before I could get a warrant of fitness.

During the winter school holidays Lesley started her six-week course of radiotherapy at Palmerston North. For the two weeks of the school holidays Ron and the girls were able to be with her. It was arranged that I would travel up and keep her company for the remainder of the time. After attending the Probus meeting on 12th July, I set off for Christchurch on my way north. I called on Vic and Win in Timaru and eventually arrived at Susan and Roger's place late in the evening. While in Christchurch I had a round of golf at the Harewood Golf course and visited some old friends - Ron Verity, a RNZAF associate from our training in Canada, and John and Lois McCausland, former members of the Queenstown Golf Club. Susan had a dinner party on the Friday night and I headed for Picton on Saturday.

I turned up at 5.30 pm for my sailing to find that there was no queue of waiting vehicles and everything looked a little odd. I enquired at the ticket counter and was told that my sailing had been cancelled. 'Were you not phoned?' I was asked. 'No, but I have been on the move.' Then she looked on the passenger manifest and my name was not there. I had booked through the Information Centre in Gore and although I had a valid ticket it seemed they had not processed the booking correctly. 'We can book you on the first boat in the morning and you could get accommodation overnight, or we could get you on the late sailing which gets to Wellington at 12.30 am.' Neither was very attractive but while I was mulling these options over she had another idea. 'There is a freight boat leaving any minute but it takes four hours.' It didn't take me long to work out that the arrival time would be the same as for my original booking so I accepted this alternative and in less than five minutes I was on board the ferry. There were only a few passengers - most of them were the drivers of the big rigs which were crossing to Wellington. I had been intending to eat later but the caterer came to me and asked if I would like to order right away as they were going to close the galley down. In my haste I ordered the first thing that occurred to me and was presented with the biggest hamburger I had ever seen - I gave it a good shot but it beat me!

I spent the night at Dawn's but set off in the morning in time to attend Tawa Linden Baptist Church. Then I called in at Southward Veteran Car Museum for lunch and paid a short visit to Alex and Celia Gardyne in Waikanae. I reached Palmerston North about 5 pm. Lesley was booked into a Cancer Society flat for the time of her treatment for which no charge was made. I understand that Ron and Lesley made a donation to the Society equivalent to the rent and I was so impressed with the sympathy of the arrangements that I also left a donation. The flat was a two bedroom unit and served the purpose very well indeed. It was rather a frustrating time for Lesley as she had to be in Palmerston North for the whole week just to have five daily treatments of less than five minutes duration each. The process of checking in, changing and waiting time usually tied up most of an hour but for the rest of the day she was free.

Lesley used much of her time sorting packets of photos and putting them into small albums each containing the record of a calendar year. She had a friend from her early hospital service days who lived in the city and she and I were invited there for meals from time to time. We spent the first weekend in the flat and went to the Anglican Church just down the street and then visited George and Sheena Marshall out at Turakina, about an hour's drive away. Another afternoon we drove up the Pohangina Valley from the turn-off near the Manawatu Gorge entrance and found a pleasant teashop for afternoon tea. One day I crossed the Tararuas by the Pahiatua Track - misnamed as it is a good if winding sealed road - and had a round of golf on the Pahiatua Golf Course - 100 - 22 - 78. Wednesday of that week we lunched in The Plaza and did some window-shopping. We had Fish and Chips for tea. On Friday the hospital arranged early appointments for out-of-town patients and Lesley was able to catch a mid-morning flight home - she came back in time for a late appointment on the Monday. There were no direct flights - travel both ways was through Wellington. Meantime I set off for Wellington through the Wairarapa by car, visiting Mt Bruce Bird Sanctuary on the way. Dawn and I dined that night in Evans Bay. On Saturday I delivered Dawn and Alison to the airport and had a round of golf at the neighbouring Miramar Golf Club. The next day I went out again to church at Tawa where I met up with Marjorie Duncan and her daughter Shona Murray and her family. I also met Bing Lucas whom Millie and I had met in England at Guildford some years before. In the afternoon I had about fifteen holes at Judgford near Pauatahanui. On the Monday morning I did some rose pruning for Dawn and headed to Palmerston North to meet Lesley at the airport in Palmerston North and take her to the hospital for her afternoon appointment.

The next weekend I took Lesley up to her brother Rocky's at Hastings and went on to visit Alan and Joanna Dunn in Napier. I returned to the flat that evening and then again went down to Wellington, this time via some back roads under the Tararuas in the West Wairarapa. Lesley got back to Palmerston North in a Cancer Society car with one or two other patients from Hawkes Bay. That week I sneaked across to Marton for a golf game with George Marshall - he beat me two and one. That weekend was the last of Lesley's period of treatment and we left mid-morning on the following Friday for Gisborne. We had lunch with Rocky and Sally at Pukehou and reached home about 5 o'clock to a very warm welcome from her girls and Ron.

That was Friday the 11th August and the family took the opportunity to make Sunday lunch special as a celebration of my birthday. Lesley's mother Val Hawkins was there as she always a regular guest for Sunday lunch. I stayed in Gisborne for a little over a week, having a round of golf with Ralph Williams (which I won) and a meal with Nicci and John Mathieson. Nicci is the daughter of my second-cousin Bruce Elder. She and her solicitor husband John live on a small Mandarin orchard just out of town. John originally came from Invercargill. They gave me a box of mandarins to put in the boot of my car to take home and I distributed them among friends when I got back. I headed north through the Waioeka Gorge to Tauranga and reached Joyce Ingram's home in the early evening. She and Jack took me to dinner at Otumoetai along with Joyce's friend Elinor Elder, Bruce's ex wife. It was interesting to meet Elinor who was a sister of Jack's first wife. She was a strong character who had been a City councillor for three or four terms and had sought nomina-

tion for the Mayoralty without success. She was heavily involved with the establishment of Bethlehem College, a Christian school. The school started with infants and expanded by one class each year as the first infants grew through the grades. She invited me to meet her again next morning at her daughter Jane's home adjacent to the school. Jane's husband is a GP and has his surgery beside their home. Another of her daughters, Kirstie, was there also. I have also met all these girls on other occasions at Bruce and Johanna's place. I was able to call on Jim and Phyllis Gardyne at their home in 6th Avenue quite close to the centre of town. Jim is always glad to see relations and friends. He was very appreciative of the health and fitness he enjoyed at his age - he is seven years older than me.

Upon leaving Tauranga I headed to Hamilton via Morrinsville. I could not get a reply from Dorothy Wood - I called at their home and decided that she must no longer live there. Then I recalled that her oncologist was Christine Elder, daughter of George and Hazel Elder in Alexandra. I phoned Christine on my cell phone and she agreed to look into the case and call me back. When she did I learned that Dorothy had died about six months earlier. I was grateful for the information which I had feared would be the case. I was a bit sad that I had not heard of her death.

That mission accomplished I set out for New Plymouth, eventually reaching Urenui where I deemed it wise to seek accommodation for the night. I did so in a comfortable place just off the main road. The road had passed through some very rugged country, particularly as we moved further south and there were some lovely areas of bush. The earlier part of the journey led through the southeast of the Waikato and King Country which had good farming land but the terrain gradually got hillier and more rugged. Urenui is on the coast and there was a very pretty little bay with a stream emptying into the Tasman Sea. I set off again in the morning heading for New Plymouth. I managed to leave my Bible in my room - it was sent on to me later. It was only my second time in the city - we had passed through on our way to Hamilton in 1959 when we had toured with Millie's Mum. I cruised slowly through the town and my imagination was caught by a monolithic column of rock near the south end of town. I scaled it to the top. It was a very steep and rugged climb but there were rope hand-holds at crucial spots. Nevertheless, I was aware that it was a bold venture for an 82-yr-old on his own and so I was very careful. I had quite a sense of accomplishment when I reached the top - and I had another when I got safely down again.

I had always been intrigued with what I had heard of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Gardens on the slopes of Mt Taranaki so I decided to pay a visit. It was not a good time of year for the rhodos but the flavour of the extensive garden could well be enjoyed. I headed south from there along the foothills of the volcano where every few hundred metres the road would duck down to cross a ravine cut out by the streams coming off the mountain after rain. I ended up at Turakina at George and Sheena Marshall's for the night and then pushed on next day to Wellington and Dawn. On the way I visited the bird sanctuary in Shannon called Owlcatraz. Ron had told me about it and it was well worth a visit. They have quite a number of interesting birds and animals in a lovely patch of native bush. The main feature is a darkened aviary where they keep the nocturnal New Zealand Morepork owls (ruru). I discovered that they fly very accurately in the dark because they remember

the location of objects in their surroundings. Their flight is also completely silent - the guide got them to fly across the cage and we heard nothing.

On Monday I was on the early ferry to Picton and finished the day with Susan in Christchurch. I had a couple of days there and then headed south. After calling on Vic and Win in Timaru I spent the night at 'The Hills' near Waimate. The B&B was a few miles out of town towards the hills and the accommodation itself was fine. However, the farmyard on this life style block was a bit of a shambles. They harboured animals of various kinds and the pens and paths were neglected and muddy. It was a very wet night but the weather had improved by morning when I set out on my way south. In Oamaru I called on my cousin Ernie Elder and his wife Jean, had lunch at Moeraki Boulders and then drove on to meet up with May Gerken and Isabel Morrison in Dunedin. By this time we had caught up with the news of the death of Phyllis Gardiner and I later picked up Dawn at Momona Airport. The funeral was scheduled for 1pm the next day which was a Saturday. The Gardiner children had requested me to pay the main tribute to Phyllis - this came rather at the last minute because of my being out of communication while travelling. Dawn and I arrived home at Devon Street about 6.30 pm. Somehow between then and 1pm the next day I managed to prepare the eulogy. Reading it today as I am writing this I am very happy with what I put together. Phyllis and Ian had been very good friends. I don't think that any time in that friendship was more significant than the first seven years in Gore before we moved to Invercargill. To a young bride transported to the far side of the world the friendship of someone like Phyllis was extremely important. Phyllis also introduced Millie to her circle of friends and many of these connections were also important to Millie in those early years. She enjoyed, for instance, going to Parent Teacher meetings with these people and much later enjoyed friendship with them and others in the Womens Club. After the funeral we enjoyed a lovely meal at Copthorne's with Dawn Gardyne and her bridesmaid, Estelle Shaw. We must have come back to Gore during that evening as after church and lunch with Roger next morning, I delivered Dawn back to Momona for her flight to Wellington.

I notice in my diary mention of the funeral of John Finn on the 21st September. John was a Catholic but he appealed to me as a genuine Christian. He had experienced a great deal of ill health latterly including a number of bowel operations. He told me how during one of these his life was at a very low ebb on the operating table. He told of an 'out-of-body' experience where he seemed to be floating above his body in the theatre and then was drawn back into it. It had been like seeing himself from a third person point of view. Sadly, his death occurred on the operating table while he was undergoing yet another operation. I respected him a good deal. He and his wife, who had died earlier, used to entertain extensively with piano and voice and were well known in the town.

An interesting event occurred in October when I invited a bunch of contemporary accountants to lunch at Croydon Lodge to mark the sixtieth anniversary of my joining the New Zealand Society of Accountants - the professional body is now known as the Institute of Accountants. Included in those who came were Keith Ashley, Owen O'Connor, Tony Kearney, Alan Chisholm, Alan Macdonald, Jack McClean and Fred Richardson. The Institute forwarded me by post a certificate marking the anniversary. Later I attended a meeting

of the Southland Branch of the Institute when a member was presented with his fifty-year certificate. I was a little miffed that this had not been done for me.

In mid-October I planned a brief visit to Oamaru to renew my acquaintance with members of the Paton family. These were my second cousins whom I had met at the Elder Gathering. I checked in for three nights at the Alma Motel just south of Oamaru, phoned Jim Paton and called to see him. After chatting for a while he asked me to drive him to his brother Walter's place on Reid Street. It was arranged that Walter and his wife would invite other members of the family to lunch the following day. There were Walter and his wife Barbara, Andrew, Hugh, Jim and their sister Hannah. It was very exciting getting to know these individuals whose existence had long been known to me but whom I had not met until the Elder Gathering back at Eastertime. One evening I went out to the region of Kauru Hill where the family church is situated - most of the family members had been christened there and in most cases married there as well. A widowed sister-in-law lived in the district but I did not find her at home. Her son directed me to her daughter's home nearby where she was baby-sitting. Although only an in-law, she was very interested in the connections of her late husband's family. I visited Hannah one morning. She had not married but had kept house for her father David Elder Paton - my father's cousin - who had lived into his nineties. Perhaps she had missed out in the marriage market. She was in possession of many of the old photo albums of her parents which had been added to by herself. They were very interesting. Jim and Walter took me round the district where David Paton had farmed and over the property now farmed by Jim's daughter and son-in-law. They kept recounting stories of events which had happened on the farm - the binder capsizing on a steep slope and having to be held down and other incidents caused by the steepness of 'Round Hill.' Sadly Jim took ill and died on Boxing Day two months later so I was glad I had made the trip when I did. I felt a quick affinity with him and would have liked to have seen more of him. I also enjoyed meeting the other members of the family.

I resumed the regular round of events over the next few weeks. A typical week early in December listed the following events: Sunday - Choir and Church; Monday - Rotary and Sen Citizens Choir Xmas dinner; Tuesday - Twilight Golf and Victim Support; Wednesday - Local Veterans Golf; Thursday - Sen Citizens Lunch, Sen Citizens Concert and St Andrews Choir; Friday - District Veterans Golf Mystery Tour; Saturday - Golf. Some of these events were one-offs but that week did not include Travel Club or Probus which meet once a month. In the middle of December I had a further bladder Check and Diathermy which caused me to miss the Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner.

That Christmas was to be spent with Dawn in Wellington. I set off on Tuesday 19th December and called to see May Gerken and Vic and Winnie on my way north. As my family all know, May had lost her husband at Casino in Italy in the war and her only daughter spent a good many years in England. The family returned to New Zealand and not very long afterwards May's daughter Averil developed Cancer and died. As I called on May I said, 'I wondered if you would like a hug' She said, 'I can do with a lot of hugs.' I spent the rest of the week with Susan and Roger in Christchurch and then travelled to Picton on the 23rd. I spent the night - or most of it anyway - in Broadway Motel, waking at 4 am to report to the

ferry at 5 am for the early sailing. This got me to Wellington in good time on Sunday which I took as a quiet day.

Christmas Day saw Dawn and me at the 10 am Cathedral Christmas Service and then at her colleague Vaughan and Neela Richardson's in Karori for a late-morning Brunch. Vaughan cooked lashings of extras - pancakes, bacon, eggs - which were eaten in a very informal manner. We had Christmas dinner at Zuccollo's out at Pauatahanui where we had a lot of fun. Jane is a very good friend and mentor to Dawn and they have a strong relationship. Jane is a Paediatric Pathologist and Gerry was a Geriatrician.

On Thursday 27th December I travelled up to Gisborne to see out the end of the Millennium year and usher in 2001 on New Year's Eve.

An Exciting Year

I left Wellington about ten o'clock for Gisborne as I had planned to celebrate New Year with the family up there. I think I took time out in Napier to call on Alan and Joanna Dunn and made comfort and refreshment stops frequently to avoid excessive fatigue. I enjoy the trip to Gisborne. Some sections of the journey I find particularly interesting - the stretch from Levin through Shannon and the Manawatu Gorge to Woodville; the diversion by Route 50 from north of Waipukerau bypassing Hastings and Napier; and the hill sections north of Napier. It is true that some of these sectors present a few driving problems, particularly when there is heavy or slow traffic, but the driving and the countryside is full of interest.

It was leisurely trip and I arrived in plenty of time to see in the New Year. Gisborne had celebrated the arrival of the Millennium year, and they also celebrated its departure. There was a lot of activity in the centre of the city around the Clock Tower in Gladstone Road. We spent some time in town where there was much music and frivolity and returned home to watch the fireworks from the lounge and deck. This is a splendid vantage point for watching fireworks with a view across most of the inner city. Rockets leap into the air from various parts of the town and the little boy in Ron ensured that some also lifted off from his back lawn. The bursting of the rockets provide very beautiful bursts of coloured lights and are very spectacular. I recall Ron remembering that the previous year they had been in town and he had lifted Hannah up on his shoulders so she could have a better view - when the New Year count-down began he realised that she had fallen asleep and he had to shake her awake to experience the crucial moment.

The next couple of weeks were spent with the family in Gisborne, enjoying outings to the beach, golf games with Ralph Williams and his friends, a meal or two out, contacts with Val and with Alan and Dawn Box and some ventures on my own.

I left Gisborne on January 15 for Tauranga and had three nights with Bruce and Johanna. This proved to be an interesting visit. On my first day they took me out for a trip on the motor-sailor yacht which Bruce co-owns with two partners. There was a quiet breeze and the sailing was fairly smooth with quite long reaches before we had to tack. Next day Bruce advised me that they were sailing that afternoon in the weekly race. The wind was quite a bit stronger and he said I was welcome to come but warned me that there would be more frequent tacking with the boom swinging across the cockpit and the angle of the boat changing rather suddenly. I thought it over and then told him that although I had enjoyed the sail the day before he had not converted me to sailing and I thought I might take the opportunity of slipping across to Hamilton to see Pete and Pam Vester. Millie and I had known them in Gore, on holiday in Queenstown when he was woodwork instructor at the High School there and also in Invercargill. Pam was a cousin of May Gerken. I phoned Pete and he said I would be welcome but warned me they would be going out in the later afternoon to the first Rotary meeting of the year - a garden BBQ. I asked if I could come to the Rotary meeting as a visiting Rotarian. In the morning I called on Jim and Phyllis Gardyne and had lunch with Joyce Ingram. I set off to Hamilton and I recall wondering what I was doing driving an hour or more to see people who were going out. I got there and went on with Pete to the Rotary meeting. As he opened the meeting the President announced they had Ivan Elder visiting from the Gore club and then invited members to get their meal from the buffet. As I sat down with my meal a lady sat down beside me and asked, "You are Ivan Elder from Gore?" I replied that I was. 'I am Dorothy Wood's daughter, Dale,' she said. She went on to say that when her mother died and the house was sold they had to pack up her things and clear the house urgently. She was aware that she had been unable to write to me as my address was packed away in these boxes. She was hoping to start sorting things out over the Christmas -New Year period, but had been too busy. So the visit to Hamilton provided me with more information about Dorothy's death which I has learned about from Christine Elder. I was able to have a good chat with Dale and enjoyed meeting her - she is a very nice person. I felt that I was meant to go to Hamilton even though I was wondering on the way over if I was crackers.

The following morning I set off for Taupo and stopped off at Wairakei golf course for a round. It was misty that morning and was just clearing as I started. There was a pair in front of me and at the short second hole I caught up with them before they could tee off. They invited me to join them and I was glad to do so - they introduced themselves as just John and Carol. Carol played a very good game and John's game looked a bit rusty, probably because of lack of practice. He also had a knee problem and did not play the last couple of holes. I was very impressed with one shot Carol played out of a fairway bunker with a 'wood', picking the ball off the sand very cleanly. John told me he was in 'finance' with the National Bank. Later on I noticed a tag on Carol's bag that said 'Lady Anderson.' I discovered some time later that he was Chairman of Directors of the National Bank and was later appointed Commissioner to take over the Hawkes Bay District Health Board. They were a very pleasant, friendly couple. Of course, he did not know that he was playing with the ex-Mayor of Gore! I have not recorded my score but I recall a reasonable round with a couple of holes on which I got into trouble. Moving on from Taupo to Wellington I had a couple of nights with Dawn and then went to spend the weekend with Susan and Roger in Christchurch before carrying back home.

All the time from the beginning of Millie's final illness Mary Elder had been coming to vacuum and clean and dust. She looked after me very well. I have mentioned how she came to help serve afternoon tea at the time of Millie's death and she often went the second mile. At one time I found that she was paying off a car loan at their usual exorbitant rate of interest. I offered to pay off the loan and advanced her the money free of interest. I was glad to do this and so cut out the penalty rate of interest for her. She was very faithful in her repayments. Her service finished when I married Elizabeth and moved next door and about the same time she moved to Dunedin.

In mid-February I attended a big sale of second-hand machinery and oddments at Balfour on behalf of Estate J E Horrell. Jim had been a bulldozing contractor and small-scale farmer and had been a client of mine for many years. He had a weakness for attending clearing sales and buying up old tractors or machinery parts, heavy girders from demolished bridges and junk of various kinds. The Estate had decided to sell off this store of accumulated treasures. It was really surprising what some of the items fetched while at the same time a lot of junk went for a song, mostly to another buyer with 'second-hand disease.' I would loved to know the total that was realised - I imagine it would have been a goodly sum.

Over the two and a half years since my neighbour Jim Young had died, his widow Elizabeth and I had had occasional contacts with each other. We each had periods away from home and would clear each other's mail to prevent a build up in the mail box, a sure sign of an absent occupier. On my return I would collect my mail - often just the free papers and circulars - and might give her three or four pikelets or something as a small thank you. On her return from a trip she might do something similar. Early in March the Probus Club organised a trip to Invercargill Civic Theatre for the 'Last of the Proms' show. Elizabeth was not a member of Probus but there were vacancies in the bus and Jennifer Grieve offered her a seat, knowing Elizabeth's interest in music. Most of the front seats were already occupied by couples so being on my own I sat near the back of the bus. I noticed Elizabeth arriving a little after me and taking a seat further forward. As we all went into the theatre both Elizabeth and I stood aside to let all the couples get seats together and ultimately took the two remaining seats side by side. We enjoyed the show and I was aware of Elizabeth's strong voice enthusiastically singing 'Land of Hope and Glory' and 'Jerusalem' and 'There'll always be an England' and other favourite English songs. We left the theatre independently and I was one of the last to enter the bus. As I moved down towards the back I saw Elizabeth sitting on her own, so in a neighbourly way I asked would she mind if I sat with her. Of course she wouldn't mind. It was in that hour on the way home from Invercargill that I became very conscious of her as a very attractive woman and my feelings began to be stirred. However, life went on fairly normally for some time - I notice that my calendar was fairly full over the next few weeks and I think Elizabeth had some time away during that period.

I had been attending physio for a week or two for a calf injury, Mary had warmly invited me to come to her son Peter's marriage in Wyndham. She was very happy with Peter's Dianne so I agreed to come down for the ceremony. I knew a few of the guests but did not linger long as I was not acquainted with most of them. I congratulated the Bride

and Groom and quietly made my way home.

John Kerse had been converting Vic's farm at East Chatton to dairying and was building a milking shed and forming tracks. I was interested to go out to the clearing sale in which he was selling off his sheep and all the plant and machinery and oddments that would no longer be required. This event marked the end of an era as the farm had been a sheep farm with cropping on the side for 120 years or more. Much of my interest was in things that had remained the same about the original homestead, like the orchard which was planted when I was a boy some eighty years earlier and which was still producing apples. Most of the other familiar features had changed or disappeared. The old house in which I had been brought up had been converted to a shearing shed when Vic and Win built their new house out by the road. It had been completely demolished much later to make way for a new shed. The stable, barn and an old implement shed were still there, as was the byre where I had occasionally milked the cows but it had not been used for some time.

I had an interesting afternoon out with the Rotary Club on a 4WD trip to the Game Lodge of Alan Stewart in the Leithen Valley on the north slopes of Mt Wendon. Allan and Noelene Smith offered me a seat in their own vehicle and I was very grateful. Alan's father had been a client of mine when he shifted from Balfour to take on this development block. Alan runs a basic flock of sheep on the property but has developed two blocks exclusively for deer. He has two herds. The larger herd grazes over 1500 hectares and numbers about 1500 animals. The smaller block of about 300 acres has much more bush cover and is inhabited by superior stags with trophy racks. He markets these trophy heads in the United States for big money and the buyers come over for their booked week of stalking and shooting sport. At the time he was charging US\$25,000 for the ordinary trophies from the larger block and US\$50,000 for the special trophies in the smaller area. He also ferries the clients up to the Wanaka area where they can hunt for Thar and Chamois. It appears to be a very successful venture and it made a very interesting outing.

In complete contrast to these events was a visit for lunch by Dawn and Alan Box of Gisborne. Dawn was Lesley's Aunt and they lived in a lovely unit in a gated community where I had visited them on my trips to Gisborne. They were doing a South Island tour and I had pressed them to have lunch with me on their way through Gore. We had a very nice time together¹.

I attended a meeting of the Croydon Aviation Association and gave a talk on my training experiences in Canada and my flying in England during the war. It was interesting to meet these flying enthusiasts whose centre for their hobby activities was located at Mandeville airport. Some of them were associated with the Croydon Aircraft Co for where

¹ I digress here with some foresight to comment that since then both have died. Alan collapsed with a severe heart attack in the foyer of his church while having morning tea. Only a couple of years later, Dawn had a stroke while driving to have lunch with her sisters. She managed to stop the car safely. An observer noted her plight, phoned for the Ambulance and got her to hospital but she died some three or four days later. Dawn had been missing Alan very much and had been getting forgetful. It was very sad for the Box family and for sister Val and her other sisters that they lost both Alan and Dawn in such a short space of time.

Susan's husband Roger worked for a number of years. I had a weekend with Brian and Pauline Bayley near Arrowtown and enjoyed their warm friendship. It will be recalled that Brian's Aunt Judy had been a long term friend of Millie's. I again joined a Probus trip to Invercargill to see the Dancing Horses at the Stadium. These animals are from the very famous stables in Austria, and put on a very wonderful performance.

A week or so later I was back at the Invercargill Stadium to see a Davis Cup tennis match - I didn't record the names of the players or the result of the match. I went from there to Valentines restaurant for a special family dinner to mark my sister Vera's 75th birthday. It was very interesting to see almost all the Pearce family together, something I had not seen since early Christmas gatherings at Blackmount. On Palm Sunday I had lunch with Jack and Vyvienne McClean and then went to a performance of Stainer's Crucifixion. Millie always enjoyed playing our recording of this oratorio at Easter time. During the war I had attended a live performance in St Mary's Marylebone where the premiere performance was sung.

On Anzac Day I was at Waikaka for the main service. Hugh Gardyne was chairman of the Anzac Day Committee and had invited me to be the guest speaker. I quite enjoyed the opportunity but there was a slight embarrassment. I had used the poem 'In Flanders Fields' as the basic theme for my talk, leading on from it to some of the lessons we can glean from war experiences. To my dismay I discovered that they had asked a girl from Knapdale to recite that very poem before my turn to speak. This she did quite accurately but rather mechanically and with very little phrasing. In the context of my talk I was intending to quote the poem with appropriate phrasing and emphasis. I wondered whether it would be all right for me to repeat the poem with the emphasis I wanted or whether this might cause embarrassment to the girl. I got round the issue by acknowledging her contribution before repeating the poem as the sentiments expressed in it were important to my message. Waikaka organises these Anzac Day functions very well, inviting all the youth organisations and all the sub-regions in the district to lay a wreath. They have Scouts and Brownies joining in the march to the cenotaph and presenting wreaths. They do very well in their choice of speakers and I know quite a number of the district folk - I enjoy joining the march from the Hall to the Cenotaph.

About this time I was consulting Jan Prattley about bookings for an overseas trip. My diary had a note of things for my attention before I departed: Historical Society Audit ready; tiles for the front porch; ignition control for the car headlights; spare wheel; carpet cleaning; chimney cleaning; fire drill for Senior Citizens; make prints from slides. I was still involved with the Senior Citizens Choir and my diary shows that we went to Alexandra, to Invercargill a couple of times and to Balclutha to sing in Rest Homes and we also did a concert for the Senior Citizens in Mosgiel. The Rotary Club made a visit to Invercargill to the Richardson Truck Museum which houses a fascinating display of fifty or more vintage trucks spanning most of my lifetime. Bill Richardson built up a very large transport business by buying up smaller country trucking units and many of the museum's vehicles bear the names of their previous owners. Together they represent a wide coverage of developing transport in the regions of Southland. One of them was a Stirling truck retrieved from the farm of Ian Baird of East Chatton. Ian is married to the daughter of George Dun whose

father Davie Dun used to give me rides when I was cycling home from High School.

On the 11th of June I had my car at Mitty Hoods for some panel-beating repairs and it was to be picked up the next day at closing time. I was planning to leave for overseas on the 15th from Auckland and had invited Elizabeth to have dinner with me on the Tuesday night. That evening I went out to my garage to find it was empty - I had neglected to pick up the car from the panel-beaters. Somewhat embarrassed I phoned Elizabeth and asked if we could take her car. No problem. We were heading down Devon Street and rounding the corner into Ardwick Street when she asked, 'Where are we going?' I replied that I had booked at The Gables which was known for its nice atmosphere and good food. Near the end of the meal I took my courage in both hands and told her that I was getting very fond of her. I knew that I was somewhat older than she was but I was a bit surprised when I learned that she was nearly 21 years my junior. We did not make any further plans at this stage but that age difference was going to be of concern to me as we began to think of marriage. More of that later. Sufficient to say that at this stage she did not particularly encourage me - she also said nothing to discourage.

I headed this chapter 'An exciting year' intending a reference to my overseas trip. Perhaps the above paragraph was exciting enough to justify the chapter heading in itself!

About 9 am on the 14th of June 2001, Roger picked me up and delivered me to Gore Railway Station to catch the Southerner for Christchurch. The reduction in passenger services over the years had resulted in the demolition of the extensive station buildings at Gore - all that was left on the long platform was a small shelter. It was a pleasant morning and soon we could see the train down the line opposite the Gore Racecourse. It did not seem to be getting any nearer and eventually it became obvious that it was stationary. News began to filter through that the engine had broken down. After some considerable time a shunter engine arrived from Mataura which pushed the train into the Gore station. Rumours began to circulate that a fresh main line engine was being sent from Invercargill. They proved to be true and we finally got moving about 11 am. The fact that we were running late had consequences through the whole journey as we missed scheduled meeting times with southward trains. We had extra waits here and there for track clearances and arrived very late into Christchurch. The train crew carried cell phones and I was able to contact Susan. She had an evening meeting so I arranged that I would get a taxi from the station. In the end a teenage lad on the train said his family would be picking him up and as they lived near Susan I could have a ride with them. When I mentioned Susan's name and job, the lady admitted to being a member at Knox but not very good in her attendance. I reached Susan's home shortly before she arrived back from her meeting and we had a nice chat before bedtime. Next morning we had breakfast together and she took me to the airport for my flight to Auckland.

I had initially been planning my trip to England and USA and it had suddenly occurred to me that I could easily go to England via Argentina and see more of the Elder relatives who had come to New Zealand to the Elder Gathering. My knowledge of the Argentina families was limited to the actual family of Robert and Effie but almost all of these

had already died. It was the next generation that I would be able meet up with on this trip. Marjorie's legacy had come through some six months previously so I indulged myself by travelling business class most of the way. It was to be a journey in several parts.

South America

The flight left Auckland in the early evening and headed southeast on a great circle route to Argentina. This took us almost directly over Gisborne but the town was almost completely obscured by cloud. It was clear towards the south and Lake Waikaremoana in the Ureweras and Hawkes Bay were plainly visible. The route took us close to the Antarctic ice but it was during the night and we could not see anything. We crossed the South America coast over South Chile in the early hours of the morning. As we were flying towards the dawn it was a short night. I can still picture the Andes range of snow-capped mountains standing out in the low morning sun and the dark shadows caused by deep valleys. We crossed over the Patagonian Plateau which extends nearly four thousand kilometres from the southern tip to the north of Argentina inland from Buenos Aires. The plateau is very dry and unproductive as it lies in the lee of the Andes and receives very little rain. We flew over land for many kilometres before we reached Buenos Aires. We circled the airport over open rather unkempt country and landed, taxiing up to a deserted International Terminal. We soon discovered that the national airline Aerolineas Argentina had just collapsed financially the day before. In fact there had been an angry demonstration about the collapse at the airport that day and the family had been wondering if it would be peaceful for my arrival. We must have had favourable winds as we arrived about forty-five minutes early. With only the one arriving flight to service and with preferential treatment as a business class passenger, I reached customs and immigration before the rush and was cleared very quickly. I was out of the terminal even before the scheduled landing time.

There was no one to meet me. David Hay Elder's daughter Rosemary Bayley had told me that I would be met by her teenage daughter Toia - short for Victoria. There was no sign of her but for the reasons mentioned I was not surprised and settled down to wait. Quite a long time went by with no one appearing so I called Rosemary's home. The phone was answered by her housekeeper who spoke, yes, Spanish. She handed me over to four-year-old Mateo (Matthew) and I kept repeating Toia's name. He replied in a flood of Spanish in which I made out the words 'aero porto'. I thus assumed that she was on the way. Maybe half an hour later, after I had wandered to the domestic terminal and back, I met up with Toia carrying a cardboard sheet with 'Ivan Elder' on it. Great relief! They had assumed the plane would arrive on time and that it would take ages to process the passengers and therefore had allowed time for all this to be completed. Toia had her boy friend with her and they were using his car. It proved to be a long trip back to their home in the satellite town of Acasusso. Rosemary had arrived home from school by the time we got there and so all was well. The family consists of Toia, and Thomas who were active in the young peoples group at church; Gustavo a 13-yr-old with an angular figure and a high-pitched voice; the very active John who collapses asleep on the couch when he has spent his energy; and little Mateo who was obviously a late child. Rosemary's husband Enrique was known as Quique (Keekay) - he arrived back on Saturday morning after working in Montevideo for the week and was also very welcoming. They told me the story of Rosemary's trip to New Zealand for

the Gathering. The family had arranged it secretly, even to the point of gaining the 12-day leave of absence from school. They told her only three days before she was to leave.

Shortly after my arrival Rosemary's Aunt Lillian Crease called, very interested to meet this 'cousin' from New Zealand. She was the widow of Albert Crease, brother of Rosie's mother Norah who had married David Elder - she was therefore not a blood relation. She was 88 years of age and was a very pleasant lady. In the afternoon, Rosie and Quique took me to the banks of the Rio Tigre, a tributary of the mighty River Plate. It is itself a very large river and was running very high at the time. We had coffee and lemon tart in a riverside cafe but had to abandon a promenade walk due to a heavy shower of rain. On our arrival home we found that Stuart Elder had arrived. He is a son of Robert Owen Elder and a cousin of Rosemary - he was very interested in information about his grandfather and his origins in New Zealand. The family had carried on a correspondence with their aunts Lily and Violet in Oamaru up until about 1971 but had received virtually no news since then. Stuart said that as his Grandfather was passing South America on his way to London to train at Spurgeon's College he had to spend four days in Montevideo. While there he was told there was a great need for missionaries in the River Plate area. The comment eventually led him to make that his place of service.

Quique's parents came for dinner. His mother had no English and I had no Spanish. At one point when I was telling a story she said to Rosie in Spanish, 'What the hell are they talking about.' I told Rosie I had been thinking the same thing while her mother-in-law had been animatedly telling them something a few minutes earlier. We all had a laugh. I went with Rosie the next day to the early Sunday church service in English, a relic of earlier days. There were about thirty people present for what was a very stiff and formal service - at least the preacher was more relaxed and natural. I wished I had gone to the later Spanish service which attracts a lot of young people as it would have given me a better insight into the true spiritual climate.

Mention of Owen Elder makes it appropriate to say something about him. He was a doctor who specialised in Anaesthesia and was prominent in the Argentina Association of Anaesthetists. He married Isabel Penrose and they had three boys - Malcolm, Stuart and Roy. He was very highly regarded in the family. There is a story that when World War II broke out he went to England as a single man to volunteer his services. He was rejected by the British Army Medical Service so he returned to Argentina. In doing this he crossed the Atlantic twice in convoy in the earlier days of the war. I later saw his grave in the plot in which Robert and Effie were buried. His sister Lily was also buried in this plot. She was a nurse and had been Matron of the British Hospital - she was awarded the MBE for her services to medicine.

In the afternoon we went into town which was about a thirty-minute ride for about 70c. We had afternoon tea in a cafe on the waterside where former warehouses are being converted to apartments. They call it 'recycling.' There I met Virginia who had come across the river from Montevideo to see me. Rosie and Stuart joined us in town. I shouted the

meal which cost US\$91 on my Visa card². Stuart pointed out examples of British, French, Spanish and Italian architecture, representing the international influences in the early development of Argentina. We entered the main square and saw the President's Palace and the balconies from which Juan Peron and later his wife Eva Peron used to appear on State occasions. Madonna also performed there, I was told. On another side of the Square was the main Roman Catholic Cathedral.

The next afternoon Elizabeth, Pat and Karina arrived to pick me up and take me to Adroque. Elizabeth and Pat are daughters of Jim Elder whom I had met in England - they were both very little girls then. Jim had gone out to Argentina about 1947 and spent the rest of his life there. Elizabeth had travelled about fourteen hours by coach from a holiday resort down south which she and her husband managed. She could remember me in England but Pat was too young to recall that far back. At Pat's home I met Jim's widow Valerie who was nearly 89 and was virtually bedridden. She had recently broken her hip which had healed but left her unable to walk. A Physio had been visiting her to try and get her mobile again but it was proving very difficult. Although confined to bed, her hostess instincts were still active as she had said to Pat, 'You will have to get out linen for Ivan's bed.' Pat told her she had already done that. She remembered me very well and we shared memories of former days in England during the war. When I was at Brighton waiting for repatriation in 1945, Millie had come down to London and she had stayed with Jim and Valerie until she learned the date of her own passage and went back home to finalise her affairs. Karina is Pat's only daughter but she has two sons, Hernan and Pablo. Pat is married to a hairdresser, Miguel Conte. Their sleeping accommodation was very limited because Valerie was occupying the main bedroom. So Elizabeth, Pablo and I went across the road and round the corner to sleep in Jim and Valerie's home which was maintained party furnished for overflow visitors.

Pat produced an autograph book which had been given to Effie Elder by her sisters-in-law in 1908 when the couple had visited New Zealand. I should have said that after his training Robert Elder went straight to Argentina and Effie Hay travelled to Buenos Aires by herself at age 24 to marry him - she had been 17 years of age when Robert went to England to train. What a brave girl. She even took a harmonium with her which was later used by the church - it had been somehow disposed of after her death. Stuart was keen to find out where it had gone and to recover it back if possible. Effie and Robert had to wait six months after her arrival before they could get married. On a tour around Adroque Pat showed us the new church on the site of the original one founded by Robert, the rather nice hotel where they had spent their honeymoon about 100 years earlier and the later church at Llavollol (pronounced 'yavoyol') founded by Robert and friends shortly before his death. We also saw the house in which he and Effie were living at that time and where Effie remained for a further number of years. It was looking very well cared for. I remember feeling quite moved as I looked round the church which had been founded by this cousin of my father's whom he had regarded so highly.

Pat had a gathering at her home and a number of the nearby families came. I was

2 At the time Argentina had a fixed exchange rate for their pesetas on a par with the US dollar. Later the peseta was floated and very quickly devalued.

showing photographs which included one of Wilfred in Air Force uniform. Robert said to me, 'Watch this.' 'Charlie,' he said, calling to his son across the room, 'Give us a smile.' And there was Wilfred's smile to the life. Robert's father was Wilfred's second cousin so Charlie would be two generations on from Wilfred's. Others were making comments about me like 'Isn't he like Frank?' or 'He's like David, from the eyes up.'

I was very interested in the autograph book. There were entries by James R Elder, Arthur Elder (father of Bruce in Tauranga), My Aunt Eliza, J R's wife Isabel, Owen Elder and many others. The one from Owen Elder reads:

Two's company; they were three;
the maid, the kitchen lamp and he;
And that is no doubt why
the kitchen lamp went out.

There was one from my Auntie Iza which is worth repeating as it shows something of the kind of woman she was:

I cannot tell why there should come to me
a thought of someone miles and miles away
in swift insistence on the memory
unless there be a need that I should pray.
Perhaps, just then, my friend, in fiercest fight,
a more appalling weakness, a decay of courage,
darkness, some lost sense of right.
And so, in case he need my prayer, I pray.
Friend, do the same if I intrude
unasked upon you on some crowded day.
Give me a moment's prayer as interlude,
Be very sure I need it; therefore pray .

Eliza Elder SS Ionic 20th October 1908.

Auntie Iza travelled on the Ionic to England with Robert and Effie on her way to London to missionary college before going to Peru. The Elders would have had their three children, Owen, Lily and Jim with them on this voyage. Jim was born in New Zealand in July and would have been only three months old. Their first child Jean died in Argentina before she was three.

And an entry from Robert's father, James Robertson Elder:

He who at noon looks sunward
Sees not his shadow fall
He sees the radiant glory
And sunshine bathing all

Thus fix your eyes on Jesus
Behind thee gloom shall flee
Nothing but love shall greet thee
And Grace shall set you free.

J R Elder Oaklands, Maheno 4th Oct 1908

And one from Jim Elder, also named James Robertson Elder, born Christchurch 12th July 1908:

For Joy, For Joy, to think when I am dead,
My son shall have mankind his friend.

Eltham College Kent 11 March 1917. Nine years old.

What a great thought that your son can be blessed by the worth of the father.

Among the family members gathered at Pat's for the evening was Roy Elder, a brother of Stuart's and the third son of Owen. Roy is a saxophonist and later visited New Zealand where he performed in universities and schools. He had a gorgeous wife Gloria and a small six-year-old son Julian. Gloria did not speak English. Recently I have received an e mail with a photograph of a second glorious baby who would be about thirteen years younger than Julian. Doreen Edwards, daughter of Newton and Effie Edwards (Robert and Effie's youngest daughter) was present with her two daughters - they were beautiful girls who also spoke only Spanish. Both were in the advanced stages of pregnancy and had their husbands with them. The Edwards family moved en masse to New South Wales a good number of years ago but Doreen moved back to where friends of her generation lived. Sadly Newton Edwards died in a tragic accident when relatively young - I think he was manager of a farm.

It was planned that I would go down about 1200 km from BA to Neuchen to see something of the country and to meet Malcolm, a cousin of Rosemary's and brother of Stuart and Roy. Stuart booked the ticket for me and I reimbursed him. Stuart made a special point of not telling me how to recognise Malcolm and of not telling Malcolm how to recognise me. In the event, as I walked out through the exit his eyes and mine met and we were quite sure. Malcom had married late to a widow called Graciela who had four children. He and Graciela also had two or three children of their own. Malcolm spent time with me but I did not see much of Graciela who was working and left the house early. Malcolm is a doctor like his father and is the Medical Officer of Health for the Province of Neuchen. The city is situated on the northern part of the Patagonian Plateau and is in a very dry area. The saving grace is the presence of two large rivers flowing out of the Andes mountains to merge on the outskirts of the town. Malcom took me to see the Rio Negro (Black River) which was running bank-high in flood. They had had no rain in Neuchen - the high level of the river was due to heavy rains which had fallen in the Andes two months earlier! It is a mighty river - I would guess that it would take at least a dozen Clutha rivers between its banks. There is no bridge but a vehicle ferry runs across it.

Malcolm also showed me a hydro station about seventy kilometres upstream on the Neuchen river which holds a lake about 70 km long behind a dam 86 m high by 580 m wide. During construction they unearthed the skeleton of a dinosaur which is displayed in a museum nearby. The Neuchen area is known for its fruit which is grown with the aid of irrigation from the two rivers. Thus it has very much the atmosphere of Central Otago. Quite near the town there is a low dam with a road bridge spanning the Neuchen River. Some years previously the control on an upstream dam failed in some way, releasing a wall of water down the river. An alert guard noted what was happening and opened sufficient gates on the downstream dam/bridge to mitigate the effect of the flood, and no damage resulted.

While I was there Malcolm negotiated the transfer of my bookings from Aerolineas Argentina to an Uruguayan airline called Aero Pluna so all was well for my ongoing flight to Rio. My flight back to BA got in about mid evening. Pat was waiting there for me with Karina to take us home and we had time for a very good chat. Pat and I were completely at ease with each other and she said she would miss me when I went - this from the shy little girl who had taken time to become friends with me in England. I would certainly love having her nearer at hand where we could meet from time to time. She has three lovely children, thoughtful and kind like herself. Her husband Miguel does not speak English so our communication was limited to smiles and nods.

There was another party that evening. Guests arrived at about 9.30 pm and left after midnight. They were commenting that I was the first Elder to come from New Zealand to Argentina for 100 years since Effie came. They were very interested in what I could tell them of how their great-grandfather and his brother George had come to New Zealand. Basically they had little knowledge of those origins.

We left for the airport about 10.30 the next morning - it was a different one alongside the River Plate. There was a delay of an hour for my flight. I was driven out by Hernan who had taken time off work but they would not leave me till they saw me safely aboard my flight. It was sad saying goodbye. These people were now friends and part of my family. The trip across to Montevideo was very interesting. The airport was set alongside the River Plate which at this point was fifty km wide. During the war the River Plate had become famous as the refuge of the Graf Spee, a German pocket battleship which had been badly damaged by units of the British fleet, including the NZ cruiser HMS Achilles. I recalled the reports that the British were doubtful whether they could prevent the Graf Spee from slipping out of Montevideo after emergency repairs. What, I thought, can't they block off the mouth of a river. I now found out why - Montevideo is on the northern bank close to the ultimate mouth of the river which is some 220 km wide. Like the Rio Negro it is a massive river which drains a large part of the central South American continent.

After the short flight to Montevideo I was called from the plane and taken to a 'Transit Lounge' to await my flight to Rio about two hours later. I had no visa and I did not want to go through Immigration or Customs. The wait was somewhat tedious but eventually we were called for our flight in a Virag Brazilian 737-400 airliner. It was a very recent model

so Air Brazil must have been more profitable than Aerolineas Argentina. So ended my very wonderful visit to my Argentina relations. My father always had a high regard for his cousin Robert Elder. Robert was in direct contact with Auntie Iza as they were both in South America and both spoke Spanish. News of him and his family had drifted through to us over the years and I grew up with a knowledge of them. Meeting up with family members in England had linked me up with the family and I had become very fond of those whom I knew. After meeting the group from Argentina and Uruguay at the Elder Gathering my interest had been refreshed and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting up with so many of the family in their home area.

In Llavollol I had seen a report of the recommissioning of Arthur Elder for missionary work in Brazil with the Baptist Missionary Society. Arthur and Kathleen had been missionaries in China and had been forced out with the rise of Communism just after the Second World War. Frank Duncan, our minister in Gore, had also been forced out by the Communists and had met Arthur at a missionary conference in China some time earlier. I never managed to meet Arthur, though he had retired to England some years after the end of the war. He was a friend from Bristol Baptist College days of Rev Ralph Darvill of Station Road, Blackpool. How strangely do our lives sometime intertwine.

My visit to Rio de Janeiro was a sheer bonus to the visit to Argentina. Eric and Margaret Culpin's son Paul was living there with his wife Kim Antonia and two daughters. Paul was employed by an oil company operating in Brazil. Rio was a picture of lights surrounding the enclosed harbour as we came in to the airport after dark. The dark comes very quickly so close to the equator. I easily recognised Paul and we were soon on our way into town and through the tunnel from the city centre to Lagoa (lagoon) where they had an apartment overlooking the almost enclosed lagoon. The car was driven into a secure ground floor garage serving all the apartments - safety was a big feature of life in Rio and they travel in cars with doors locked against interference while stopped at traffic lights in or traffic. We reached the apartment by elevator and walked into the lounge which commanded a clear view across the lagoon to houses on the other side and then up and beyond to the magnificent statue of Christ on the mountain Corcovada. The flat was quite spacious and I had a room and bathroom to myself. I spent a little while in the lounge looking at the view after Paul and Kim went to bed, just enjoying the sights and letting myself wind down after a very full day.

Next morning Paul and Kim were up and away to work but their Brazilian maid Elizabeth gave me breakfast and Kim was back shortly afterwards. She then had a session with a tutor who was teaching her Portuguese which is the official language of Brazil. Most South American republics speak Spanish but Brazil is an exception. After a quick lunch our driver took us to the girls' school which was celebrating the Festival de Junis with national dancing. The girls were all in colourful costumes but Kim had forgotten to take a change for Faye who had to come with us to lunch in her fancy dress. She was so embarrassed that eventually Kim took her to an outfitters and bought her a cheap pair of trews and a top. Paul and Kim were very friendly and welcoming and when we were in the car Faye spontaneously put her hand in mine in a very friendly way - it was nice. My diary says that Rio is one big

traffic jam, although there are good arterial routes to the outer suburbs. Late the next morning we picked up the girls from school as they were starting their four-week summer holiday. I wrote in my diary, "Pick up at school was a shambles - narrow streets, hundreds of children, about half as many cars.' We had lunch in a shopping mall. It was known as a 'Kilo Lunch' as the cost was arrived at by weighing the food selected at the buffet. After collecting the car from the office parking space we headed to the Sugar Loaf, a very steep-sided 400m high rock on the point of a small peninsula jutting out into the harbour. We rode up in a two-stage cableway to enjoy a magnificent view from the top over the narrow entrance from the ocean to the main harbour below. It is a very popular rock climb and we could see climbers making their way up the steep face. The next day I did a 90% pack before going out as Kim had asked me to take a parcel to England for Jean and John's Ruby Wedding. Then Paul took us to the Corcovado. People can drive almost to the top of this spectacular hill. Morning cloud cleared as we reached the top and we marvelled at the magnificent view. Corcovado is 700 m high and the statue of Christ on the very peak adds another 30m. It is a giant figure and was erected in 1931. We had lunch in town, returned home for a short while and a cup of tea and then headed for the airport. This took us along an expressway with 'above and below' traffic lanes going in opposite directions. We had time to spare after check in so the adults had coffees and the girls had ice creams - Sasha had quite a problem with ice cream leaking out the bottom of her cornet. They left the airport as I went into the departure lounge. I was very touched by the warm welcome they gave me and the trouble they went to show me the outstanding sights of their city.

England & Scotland

The British Airways Boeing 747 was equipped with the new completely reclining seats in Business Class. These can be arranged for couples side by side or screened for single passengers. It was wonderful to be able to stretch out almost like in a bed. At Heathrow I was met by Mac and Bertha Davies' younger son Gordon. He went with me to the rental car pick up and then met me outside the airport and led me to his home in Watersplash Road not far from Heathrow. I had seen Gordon as a baby and toddler during the war but had not met him since and I had never met his Angela. They were lovely - warm and friendly and very interested in photos and news of Gordon's relatives in Argentina. Gordon works for a relief organisation and frequently visits South America in connection with his work. He had been to Argentina and so had met many of the people I had seen there. We had a lovely lunch in very balmy conditions in their back garden and then I drove by the M25 to Downe for a couple of nights with Frank and Dot. I found them in poor condition. Frank had to be told and often persuaded to do anything at all and Dot was exhausted. One day each week he went to a day-care centre to give Dot a break. This happened while I was there and I was able to take her out for lunch to a restaurant in a popular garden centre. The family was investigating possibilities for full-time residential care for him.

Leaving Frank and Dot I headed north towards Cambridge, crossing under the Thames River by the Dartford Tunnel and then west to Market Harborough. I had arranged to spend a night with Alan and Freda Archer but this turned out to be a bit of a mission. On the way to Market Harborough I quite suddenly developed a streaming cold - I was very surprised at its sudden assault. The next day I went to a Probus luncheon with them where

I enjoyed the good company. Unfortunately Alan and Freda had accepted an invitation to afternoon tea with some friends and this delayed my departure for Cabus. Because of the cold I had decided to forego a side trip on the way north in order to get to Margaret and Geoff's to recuperate. Alan had advised me on a route to take through Birmingham which would have been fine but for the afternoon tea delay - I ended up in very heavy traffic through the city. In the very slow crawl I missed seeing the car in front of me stop and I did a nose to tail bump. His Volvo was unmarked but my Renault had the front slightly crumpled. I contacted Avis who sent a truck to convey me to their depot and replaced the car. This caused a considerable delay so I phoned Margaret to say I was running late. I was still very uncomfortable with the cold so I had to concentrate very carefully on the two or three hours drive to Cabus. Happily I arrived without further mishap. As I recall the cold cleared up fairly quickly - and I very much preferred the replacement Vauxhall Vectra to the original Renault.

Two days later I headed off to Manchester with Margaret to meet David and Kate who were flying in from Philadelphia. I did not have their specific flight number or even their airline - I just knew that they were coming in about 9 am. We left in good time and once we were at the airport I identified a flight which seemed to fit their time. They did not appear. After some time I walked the kilometre or so by the elevated walkway to the other terminals and was about to climb the stairs when Kate spotted me. She told David and we met up. A good hour and a half wasted. I had trouble paying for the car park and we had a lot of difficulty finding an Avis depot to sign David on as a driver. I had planned to name Kate as a driver too but this would have involved additional insurance risk as she was under twenty-five. I thought maybe it was just as well as she had no experience of driving on the left. We eventually solved all these problems and then struck a real downpour on the motorway going up to Cabus. There was a 'tailback' because of an accident but we managed to arrive well before lunchtime. Margaret and Eric arrived in the afternoon. We left for Isel in the early evening following the motorway all the way to Penrith, then going by Ullswater and through Keswick to Jean and John's. David bought a present for Jean and John in Keswick on the way through. We had a lovely time with them in the evening.

We were on our way to our Scottish adventure. I had long had a wish to drive northwards up the west coast of Scotland from Inverness and Inverewe Gardens. When David heard of this plan he invited himself to join me and this produced some good company, not to mention some financial benefits for me - for instance he had booked and paid for the ferry crossing to and from Orkney. We left Isel mid-morning for our first main objective, my Great-Grandfather's grave at Stirling. On arrival in the town we went straight to David Elder's grave which I found easily. Moss had grown over the lettering which made it difficult to read. I had again the sense that this ancestor of mine must have been a very sincere Christian. The gifts he received from the people of Lybster some twelve years before his death were so generous that he must have been greatly appreciated there. I think David found it a little unnerving to be looking at a grave marked David Elder. We lunched on a high lookout spot in a corner of the cemetery with a tremendous view to the west and south, and towards the famous Wallace monument to the east. After lunch we met up with a chap named Tony Murray who spends his time in the Genealogy Room in the ancient hospital

building beside the Church of the Holy Rude. He recalled a visit from Kathryn and George Smith and Dawn Gardyne and also from Ruth Elder of Alexandra. I left him quite a bit of updated information about my branch of the family. We then made good time northwards to Inverness. We stayed in the Maple Court Hotel which was very comfortable. I had a lovely bath before dinner. However, I had a real problem getting out of the fairly deep narrow bath with no handrails or grips of any kind. I finally cocked one leg over the side and levered myself up and out. For a few minutes I felt I was in a really tight situation with the bedroom and bathroom doors both locked.

Next morning we headed across the new bridge high over the harbour entrance and across Black Isle towards Dornoch. Dornoch was well known to me as a Coastal Command flying base during the war though I had never had occasion to go there myself. Just before we reached Dornoch we turned west past Loch Luichart³, Loch Maree, Gairloch, and Loch Ewe to Inverewe Gardens which Millie and I had visited some thirty years earlier. They are remarkable for the semi tropical plants which flourish so far north due to two factors - the effect of the warm Gulf Stream hitting the coast of Europe and being diverted northwards and the effective micro-climate effect achieved by the planting of some very tall trees to break the force of the westerly storms.

Continuing further north we passed Gruinard Bay which I described in my diary: 'Gruinard Bay is overlooked by hillsides of massive granite rock. Bluffs of rock piled on rock on rock and very spectacular.' I think I have a penchant for this type of country - it is one of the reasons why I enjoy parts of Central Otago. We overnighted just out of Ullapool at Advreck House overlooking Loch Broom. Ullapool is one of the few larger ports on this stretch of the Scottish Coast. Kate entertained herself here with the car-lock zapper, switching it on and off from her room and laughing at the people in the street wondering what was going on - a car which kept flashing its lights with no person in sight! In the morning we explored the town briefly and noticed a very large American yacht anchored in the bay. On our way north we drove through endless miles of hills, peat bogs and grassy-looking country which showed very little evidence of productive capacity. We diverted into one little port and found a good meal at a hotel for lunch. On the road from there on to Durness at the north west tip of Scotland there were lots of single-lane roads with passing bays - Millie and I used to call them 'varicose vein roads.' I observed in my diary: 'The roads were mostly excellent, all sealed, and the scenery magnificent, a constant kaleidoscope of steep hills, rocky hills, lively mountain streams, peat country, and green sloping stretches from the hills into the valleys.'

We were bound for Tongue on the north coast which was the home of Stuart and Ngaire Mingham. Ngaire was the former Ngaire Reid of Gore days and the couple had been missionaries in Botswana. They were taking time out to look after Stuart's elderly parents. Ngaire was a qualified midwife and with another lady served a wide area of Sutherland County with this service. The village is situated alongside Loch Eribell, a deep loch where the German submarine fleet surrendered at the end of World War II. Next morning Stuart sent us off with a prayer spoken so quietly that I could not hear a word of what he was say-

3 In 1970 Marjorie had been asked to play the organ in the Luichart church service

ing. We were heading to Scrabster for the ferry trip to Orkney.

Orkney - and David Elder's Footprints.

The morning was wet and overcast but it did not affect our catching the ferry for Stromness on Orkney. In the conditions the outlook was quite bleak. Orkney is a wind-swept island with very few trees, presumably because they find it hard to flourish in the harsh climate. We explored Stromness, the main port for access to Orkney, before crossing the island to Kirkness where we booked into The Royal Hotel. David claimed the bigger, corner room with an outlook over the town. It was still daylight at half past ten in this far northern city and when I was up to the toilet at 3.45 am it was already light with signs of dawn and sunrise in the East. The next morning we found the Ortak manufacturing silver jewellers. 'Or' is short for Orkney and 'tak' means thanks in Viking Danish - Orkney Thanks. They had some lovely stuff and I bought Kate a set of earrings and also a set for Dawn and a silver paper knife for Susan. The Ortak silver jewellery factory made use of the designs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, an architect of Glasgow, who developed a particular style which commanded popular admiration.

My Great-Grandfather David Elder served a considerable portion of his career as an Inspector of Fisheries in and around Orkney. His family tree records that his children were born or baptised in Kirkwall, Rendall and Westray with the last two born in Burnt Island (Fyfe) and Lybster (Sutherland) after the family left Orkney. Westray is an adjacent island and the other places were on Orkney. Our purpose was to see the place where my Grandfather had been born and where his father had spent most of his working life. As Inspector of Fisheries he was responsible to ensure that the herring catch was correctly prepared for packing, that sufficient salt was used in packing the fish into barrels for export and to collect the Customs Duty. There was no refrigeration in those days which why they packed the fish with salt in the barrels. The inspector was usually housed in the Custom House where he would have an office to carry out the administration - often the office was just a room in the Custom House residence. One of the first places we visited was St Mary Rose Village on the Island of Hoy which I believe was his first station. Then we went out to Rendall, the parish where my Grandad was born, and we explored the main town of Kirkwall where three other members of the family were born. I found it quite moving to be in the area where these forebears had lived.

We found some interesting facts and places in our two day stay. Within the circle of islands which constitute the Orkney group is the large bay of Scapa Flow which is a historic British Navy base. It was hard to defend in wartime as enemy submarines could sneak in between the islands to make an attack and slip out again. In 1939 a German submarine through one of these gaps at high tide to sink the HMS Royal Oak with 833 men aboard and managed to escape. The Navy used Italian prisoners-of-war to build causeways between some of the islands in order to close off these access gaps. Great benefit is now derived from these road connections with the outer islands. Near the prisoner-of-war camp they adapted two Army Nissen Huts into an ornate Catholic Church. Its was elaborately decorated inside in the richly ornate style of many continental churches. The work is beautiful. On the outskirts of Kirkwall we visited the Highland Park Whiskey Distillery which uses bar-

ley shipped up from Black Isle near Inverness which we had crossed over on our way north. Apparently the quality of the Black Isle barley and the quality of the spring water in Orkney makes a very good combination in the production of whiskey.

We had a fairly early ferry on the day of our departure and I set my alarm to wake in good time. Having showered, shaved and packed I was in good time for breakfast and had time to read my daily portion in the Scripture Union notes. The reading for the day was from John 14: 'Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions --- and so on.' Now I was about two weeks behind with my readings through being on the move. This was the reading intended for two weeks earlier but I read it on this particular morning. We crossed to Stromness and boarded the ferry. The sea conditions were smoother and the sky clearer than on our way north and we had a good crossing. Just as we were called to our cars at Scrabster I heard a speaker announcement for Mr Elder to call at the Purser's Office for a message. I was asked to call a phone number which I recognised as the number of the Custom House B&B in Helmsdale where we were booked to stay that night. We called Ann Macdonald on David's cell phone and were told to call New Zealand. We found a phone box and I called Dawn on my telephone card. As I was talking to her a call came back from Ann Macdonald on David's cellphone - she must have had Caller ID. While Dawn was telling me in my left ear that Wilfred had died, David was conveying into my right ear the very same news second-hand from Helmsdale⁴. I had been well aware when I left home that Wilfred might not survive until I got back but I was still very sad to get this news. It was so much for Wilfred's sake as he was getting very confused but rather because I would be unable to say farewell to him at his funeral in the usual way. We just had to travel on. David was driving and while I was looking at the countryside on the way down to Lybster I was mourning for my brother Wilfred. I found it was interesting that the reading from John 14 was read in the service in the Baptist Church at Gore without any awareness that it had been especially significant for me. I learned later that Wilfred had died at about 7 am that morning - it was about the same hour of the morning that I was reading the passage in my bible in Kirkwall, Orkney.

We came to Lybster and turned off the main road into the main street of the village. Right at the end of the street we came to a sign pointing to the harbour. We found that they had established a Heritage Centre in one of the old storage sheds. 'Come on, Dad,' said David, 'Let's go and have a look.' I was brought out of my state of reflection. The Centre proved to be a historical presentation about the herring industry on the East coast of northern Scotland. It was new and fairly raw but the information was interesting. There was a coffee shop and I asked the attendant if they had any information on Inspectors of Fisheries. 'That would be at Wick,' she said. I explained that I was asking because my Great-Grandfather had been stationed there and she referred me to Alex Calder, a local who was just then in the Centre having a coffee. I explained my query to him and he said, 'You need The Book of Lybster.' I asked if it was available and he thought so and then offered to go home and bring his own copy down for me to see. 'Have your coffee and I will be back in ten minutes,' he said. He duly returned with the book and we found David Elder's name briefly mentioned

⁴ Ann had spoken to her neighbour who had taken the original message and gathered from her the reason for the call. I learned when I got home that they had not been able to raise Ann so they had phoned the number of the garage in the same street. The Macdonald's phone was near the front door and she and her husband could not hear it in the night. It was also a unique fact that they knew I was booked into the Custom House and coming from Orkney that enabled her to make connection with me.

five or six times. I think Alex must have been a trustee of the Centre. I asked him if he knew where the Custom House was. He smiled. 'My wife and I lived in it for a number of years,' he said. As we left we found the Custom House, now called 'The Yarrows', and I was able to buy The Book of Lybster in the stationery shop for twenty five pounds - I felt it was a very worthwhile visit. I told Alex Calder about the presentations made to David on his departure from Lybster and showed him a typed copy of the inscription in the Bible. He asked if he could have it. I felt I wanted to keep it with me but I promised to send him a copy when I got home. Eventually I got the inscription photographed so as to show the original writing and posted it to him with a letter of explanation.

Our night in Helmsdale was very interesting. The Custom House had a special appeal as David and Jessie Elder had lived here for the ten years or so before he retired. Ann Calder's parents had bought the House for eighty pounds when they were married 73 years before our visit. The house had been built in 1818 and is an historic 'Listed House.' We found Ann very warm-hearted and helpful and she felt to me almost a part of the house as her family had owned it for so long. It was a very special night for me.

We carried on to Aberdeen the next day and where we were booked into the Thistle Hotel. On the way we visited Dunrobin Castle, the home of the Countess of Sutherland. The castle featured a striking formal garden which made a spectacular sight from the upper windows. The Countess also has a property near Tongue and Stuart and Ngaire Mingham often used to meet her at church when she was up there. The Sutherland family were responsible for much of the horror of 'The Clearances' back in the nineteenth century. On leaving the castle we crossed back over Black Isle and over the high bridge at the Inverness harbour entrance and thence on through Cairngorm country. From the hotel I phoned my nephew Stuart Elder to express my sympathy. I offered to send a tribute to be read at the funeral service. We intended this to be sent by email but David could not get a connection for his laptop in the hotel so I phoned Susan for a fax number and wrote it out long hand. We sent it through about midnight - Ron went down for the funeral and read it during the service. Someone told me he did so in a way that made it sound like it was coming from me in person. I was glad to have this opportunity to contribute especially as I'd had quite a bit to do with Wilfred in his deteriorating years. I would often call at the Rowena Jackson home and take him out for afternoon tea and a drive. I have a picture of the two of us at the lookout on Bluff Hill. Clarice survived him for another six years but she was virtually a helpless resident at the home.

The next morning saw the parting of our ways. David and Kate were flying to London and then to Corsica to join Peggy and Ken who were on holiday there. I saw them into the airport and to check-in. I returned to the car and drove to the exit. There I discovered that I should have paid at a central pay kiosk for a pass to activate the barrier arm. My credit card would not do the job. Fortunately they have an emergency procedure and I was able to talk to a supervisor and find out what to do to pay at the exit. So one learns to keep up with technology! I was planning to see Millie's college friend Renee Mackenzie in Bearsden in Glasgow but had also thought about calling on Mamie Bruce-Gardyne out of Kirriemuir on the way. I phoned Mamie but got no reply so I set out straight to Renee's.

On the way I calculated the travel time and decided to call on Mamie on an off-chance - I was glad to find her at home. She was very pleased to be remembered and we had a very happy time for about an hour. With a couple of stops for coffee I reached Bearsden in the early evening and had a very pleasant stay with Renee. The next day she went with me to The Hill House designed by no less a person than Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the Glasgow architect whose designs had been featured on the silver jewellery in Orkney. The house at Helensburgh down the river Clyde was designed outside and decorated inside according to the Mackintosh style - except for the owner's study. The owner, a Mr Blaikie of the McMillan Publishing Company, reserved the decorating of this room for himself and it was very dark in sharp contrast to the rest of the house. The house has a magnificent view down the lower stretch of the Firth of Clyde. The Mackintosh style is basically a perpendicular style and appears in small panels and designs inset with glass. He liked to design the fittings as well - thus there were unusual lamp shades, cupboard doors, free-standing pine boards with inset glass and an alcove at the first turn of the staircase in the same style. Later in my trip I was given a coffee mug in his style and I also have one which Elizabeth brought home from England. I had never heard of him before but now suddenly he was 'in my eye'. From Renee's place I crossed the high Erskine Bridge and then joined the elevated M8 over the central city on my way to Cabus. The following day I was able to talk to Ron and Dawn and Susan and heard about the 'warm and sincere tribute' to my 'gentle giant' of a brother - they felt that my tribute had been well received at Wilfred's funeral service.

England again and Ireland

I had no time to rest. I had decided to close my bank account with Lloyds in Blackpool Bank so I went to the usual branch in Waterloo Rd to find that it had closed down. I had to go into central Blackpool and there it took me some time to achieve the closure. First, the closure had to be approved by a senior clerk. Then the safe had to be opened to obtain enough funds - this required two keys. Third, the teller found a discrepancy of about 8p in the figure he had been given - this turned out to be an incorrect calculation for the interest to date of closing. Finally I walked out about three quarters of an hour later with my £817 in cash. I handed my rental car in and Margaret took me back to Cabus. Two days later Geoff and I went to the British Open at Royal Lytham St Annes near Blackpool. We parked in an open field from where a free double-decker bus took us some distance to the golf course. We spent some time watching No 1 green and then selected the stand overlooking No 15 green and watched a succession of the players come through - Bob Charles, Seve Ballesteros, Sandy Lyle among a number of other well-known players. Over the back of the stand we could see Tiger Woods, Michael Campbell, Colin Montgomerie and others putting out on the first green. We watched the Open on TV over the next two days but on the Saturday night we headed to Shipping Hall near Kirby Lonsdale for Jean and John Springett's Ruby Wedding celebration. The Hall was excellent for our party as we had the exclusive use of the lounge with a table for fourteen at one end. I had prepared an album with pictures of Jean from baby to wedding and of various stages of the girls. I had added amusing and sometimes a bit cheeky comments about each picture. I read this and showed the pictures before the meal and Jean was delighted with it. Dawn had done a great job for me in scanning the pictures and setting them in the typescript. The evening was a huge success which was very good as Jean's health over the years might well have

prevented them reaching their fortieth. I valued the chance to be there. The following day everyone collected at Margaret and Geoff's and gradually peeled off car by car to make it to their homes that night. As a footnote: the Open was won by David Duval with Tiger Woods 28th equal and Michael Campbell in 26th equal place.

I had a day out with Eric and Margaret at Silverdale near Arnside. We had a lovely lunch at Eaves Farm Garden Centre and Cafe. In the shop I bought three tea towels, with quips about Grandchildren, Senior Citizens and How We Can Tell We Are Old. Back home in New Zealand I used them at Senior Citizens for the humorous story after dinner. We did quite a bit of walking up through the woods and then along the water front and had dinner at The Fighting Cock. Pork Pieces and Bread & Butter Pudding made a very good meal. Geoff and I had two days of golf which he won off the stick and then I headed to Ireland.

The flight left from Blackpool with a stop at Isle of Man. Flying out from Blackpool was a bit nostalgic for me and I was intrigued to land in Isle of Man. I had flown round the island many times during the war but had never set foot on it. On one occasion I had waggled my wings at Harry and Jessie and the girls who were on holiday there. I was in Belfast about an hour earlier than Janet and Hugh were expecting me but that was really no problem. After we reached their home at Coagh Hugh took me through their joinery factory which was closed for the annual holidays. The factory was very highly organised. They had two main lines - making kitchens and making cupboard doors. The latter was now their core business and the machinery was very highly sophisticated and computerised. Doors accounted for about 70% of the throughput and an order for only five thousand was regarded as a small one. They supplied to Northern Ireland, Ireland, Great Britain and to Europe.

The following day took us north to Portrush where we eyed the Portrush Championship Links from the road along the hill and visited the Giants Causeway. I had often read of this but the reality was even more striking than I had pictured in my mind. The remarkable hexagonal columns of rock fitted together like honeycomb. Portion of these look like the pipes of an organ so that area is known as 'The Pipe Organ'. Before going home we dined at the very popular Royal Court Hotel right on the north coast of Ireland. The following day we headed north west to, Mellon Village, a reconstruction of the kind of Irish village which the emigrants might have left to go to North America and the Antipodes. The construction was paid for by the huge Mellon Bank in the United States as the bank's founder had come from that area. Millie and I had visited a very similar reconstruction in Connecticut in the States. It was well done and contained an example of each type of building in a former Irish village. At the end there was a mock-up of an emigrant ship from which you finally go through a door to a mock-up of an American colonial village of the time - it was a very effective transition. We carried on to Londonderry where we walked the inner city wall and looked over the site of the famous 'Bloody Sunday' massacre during The Troubles. The local authority headquarters were labelled 'Derry City', underlining the antipathy to anything British among at least an element in the population. Hugh told me that the difference between north and south was not just a religious one but mostly a political one. Northern Ireland had received many immigrants from Scotland at the time of the clearances in Scotland and over a longer period who were mostly Protestant. This accounts for some of the

differences between the Scots-Irish in the north and the true Irish in the south. South of the border there was a large majority in favour of a united Ireland but in the north it was union with Britain that was favoured.

I flew back to Blackpool and found I was to be with Eric and Margaret for a day or two as Geoff was to have an angiogram. This reported 90% closure of one of his arteries and they prescribed an angioplasty and the insertion of a stent. He was to have no golf for a few days so he loaned me his clubs and power trolley when I went up with Jean and John to Isel. Jean and John took a meandering route up through the Lake District - we spent some time in Hawkshead and I enjoyed this very pretty village again. John took me on the steep and very picturesque road over the hill from Elterwater to Ambleside and on to Isel. The following day they took me down the coast to Ravenglass for a ride on the miniature railway to Muncaster Castle. This was to be the site of Sarah and Andy's wedding on the 3rd of November which was the main purpose of the trip. The castle is very impressive with very lovely gardens which would still be showing some autumn foliage at the time of the wedding. Jean dropped me at Maryport Golf Course the next day after lunch and I enjoyed a round with two balls. The first nine holes are on links country and the second nine more hilly with regular grass fairways. Green fees were about \$60 which I thought a bit expensive considering the greens had no automatic watering and the Clubhouse was very ordinary. I enjoyed the exercise and the play. John told me next morning they were taking me to see something different. He was very cagey about it but thought I would find it different but interesting. We went into Workington and ended up at St Michaels' church almost alongside the port. Some time before the church had held a fair which had raised some £4000. That night the church was burgled and the thieves attempted to open the safe thinking there would be a good haul in it. The proceeds of the fair were not in the safe so the thieves went unrewarded. However, the safe was under the coat pegs where the choir hung their gowns and the explosion or the candles used to enable them to see apparently set fire to the gowns and fire gutted the inside of the church. The substantial stone frame of the building withstood the flames. The Diocese decided to rebuild but did so with a limited seating area, at the back of which was a glass screen which could be moved and extra seating brought in for civic occasions and larger gatherings. Inside the West Door, part of the interior was fitted out with conference rooms which could be hired out for seminars and meetings. A small lift gave access to the upper floor. A narrow balcony with one row of seats ran round the auditorium at this level. This work was all carried out in modern materials but they which seemed to meld in very well with the much older structures. I found it a very interesting, tasteful and practical reconstruction after the damage. We observed a wedding party entering the church and were standing by when the Vicar gave the thumbs up to the organist to start the Wedding March. In a quick aside to John he quipped, 'Modern Technology.' A little further down the coast at Whitehaven we found the port area had been very cleverly refurbished with mementoes and signs of the fishing nature of the town. In the centre there was a remarkable sculpture of fish all entwined in the shape of a cone some ten or twelve feet high. I returned next day to Cabus.

Margaret and Geoff dropped me at David and Jean Bruce-Gardyne's on their way to a short holiday at Tewkesbury. David and Jean showed me some interesting places round

the Cotswold district. Jean took me to The Unfinished Mansion near Stroud. This was very odd. Construction had been started about 1854 but everything suddenly stopped in 1860 when it was about two-thirds built. Tools, ladders and materials were left as they had been at the end of a day's work. About 1920 one of the descendants lived in it for a while and installed a stove. The house featured strong walls and pillars topped by stone arches to carry the weight of the stone roof tiles. The National Trust has taken the property over and has completed roof repairs to protect the main structure. Why was work stopped? Why is there such a mystery? Nobody seems to know! Later in the day Jean delivered me to the home of Graham Davies. Strangely, they recognised one another. Graham had been site architect for additions to the hospital where Jean was Matron some years before. It's a small world. Graham and I caught up with the 55 years or so that had passed since two NZ airmen had come to his home when he was a young school boy. Margaret and Geoff picked me up at the end of their short holiday.

On my birthday I hosted a family party at the favourite Ye Horns Inn. We had a very good meal and everyone was in good mood, enjoying being together. It cost me £126.85. We got home late and I felt I had enjoyed a good birthday. A long call from Gisborne gave me a chance to talk to all four of the family there. Hannah described her attempts at playing Indoor Basketball where she found it difficult to keep up with the speed of the game - 'They were all on Fast forward and I was just on Play.' The next day or two included a round of golf, some walking with Margaret out Marsham way, a visit from Margaret and Eric and a trip to Southwell to see Dyls and John. Dyls was just walking again after a knee replacement. One day we saw a full interview with Don Bradman about his cricket career and subsequent life. He had scored many centuries and had a test average of 99.96, which has never been approached by any batsman since. A final question after reviewing all his achievements was, 'What would you most like to be remembered for out of all your life and exploits?' After he thought for a moment, he replied with two words, 'My integrity.'

On the 19th of August we set off early for Manchester Airport in the rain. The Sunday traffic was not so heavy. At check-in a very nice girl looked at my passport and said, 'You have just had your birthday, Was it nice?' 'Yes,' I said - so we were friends. The flight was routed through London. On take-off the pilot thought there was a slight grabbing of the brakes and he alerted Heathrow. He told us he did not want to be unable to stop at the gate and demolish the Terminal and warned us that there would be an escort of fire engines as we landed. He was right. There were about four engines on each side of the runway and they kept pace with the plane until it slowed down to taxi speed before quietly veering off and returning to their respective bases around the airport. 'A good exercise for them' was the comment of the pilot.

United States and 911

David met me at the airport and took me to Green Street where the rest of the family were waiting. David and Ken and I had some golf on the FDR course near the baseball stadium late one afternoon. Ken and I did some shopping in town another day and came home by bus. We had a round at Walnut Road Golf Club on Bluebell Hill and finished up out at Tom's new place at Carversville, near Doylestown. It is a lovely place, not yet fully furnished

at the time but very lovely with a swimming pool which Peggy was enjoying. I borrowed David's car and drove towards Doylestown to call on Joan and Peter Hurt. Joan is a sister of Lorna McLeod who was the widow of Andy Elder from Buenos Aires. Joan knew all about the family there and I had a pleasant time with them. Over the next few days Peggy was spending a lot of time at Tom's house and David and I were left to pretty much look after ourselves. Ken was sometimes out with Peggy but mostly out with his mates when he was in town. I drove out to Ruth's one day for a visit and enjoyed the time with her. Her large house was creating maintenance problems and the prolonged hot spell and drought was playing havoc with her garden. Peggy went down to the Shore with to her friend Sandy Dych's place and we all went down to Tom's cottage at Cape May over a weekend. David and Ken and I had a round of golf at the White Oaks Golf Club which I found a bit difficult. We had quite a party at the Cape and the house seemed full of bodies. Tom's house is in a relatively staid modern area, just clear of the inner shore on Delaware Bay where the tide comes and goes but there are no breakers to speak of. The older part of Cape May town is preserved in the style of the Colonial days.

Back in Philadelphia we celebrated Labour Day on September 3rd with a family party and barbeque at Ruth's. Tom was there in his luxury BMW and had the barbeque lit when we arrived. An interesting sight for me on the way out to Rydal was a very large flock of Canada geese on the river, apparently a resting stop for the migrating geese leaving the cold north and the coming winter. An interesting visit at this time was a tour of the Masonic Temple which was the headquarters of Masonry for Pennsylvania. There are seven or eight 'Lodge' rooms with special chairs for the Grandmaster, Senior Vice and Junior Vice. The rooms are variously decorated in Roman, Greek, Moorish and Spanish styles. The temple is said to be styled after Solomon's Temple. There is a model of the temple in the Museum and photos of replicas based on the details specified in the Bible. It is a very elaborate and ornate building. One evening we were invited to a very enjoyable dinner with Sandy and Joe Dych.

I had decided to cut down my time in Philadelphia as I was getting weary of travel. I brought all my bookings forward a week. So it was that I left Philadelphia on September 10th - referred to in the US as 9/10 - to go to Knoxville in Texas to spend four days with Lorna McLeod (Elder) and to meet her family.

David was very blase about being at the airport in good time but when I said my reservation did not match my ticket he got a move on. Sure enough, my check-in took some time and I had to fork out US\$100 for my change of bookings. The flight to Chicago was half empty. However, Chicago airport was very busy as always and the flight to Knoxville was full. Lorna was there to meet me and we enjoyed a good evening. Next morning we were in a relaxed mood untill Lorna phoned a friend we were planning to have lunch with and he told her to turn the TV on. The Twin Towers in New York were being attacked by hi-jacked aircraft. We turned on and sat horrified as we watched the replays of the attacks and the sudden collapse of these impressive buildings. We heard the story of the attack on the Pentagon in Washington and the crash of the fourth hi-jacked plane in Pennsylvania, roughly in the area I had flown over during the previous morning. We watched on and off

for some considerable time. Lorna could not stand the continual horror so she would want the TV switched off - then a few minutes later her curiosity would rekindle and she would turn it back on. It was reported that thousands of people worked in each of the towers and there was speculation that there could be thousands of deaths - the final death toll of just under 3000 seemed like a miraculous escape from what could have been so much worse. We had a call from Susan and shortly after from Ron to check on my status in relation to all that was going on.

That evening we had dinner with Martin and Kath Elder and Ian, Sarah, and Brad. They were interested in my stories of the visit to Argentina and I told Ian of the other Ians that I knew of in the wider family. They live quite close by so the next evening Martin came down to Lorna's and I showed him the pictures of my Argentina trip. He brought his two big dogs with him and Lorna warned me that she had lifted the lid of the toilet as that was the dogs' water bowl when they were in the house !

I spent a long time on the phone checking on my forward flights. All flights had been grounded at the time of the 9/11 attack and schedules were in complete disarray.⁵ I kept getting an engaged signal so I would hang up and immediately dial again. On about the twentieth try I got through and confirmed my new dates. Eventually I re-booked all my flights forward to the original timetable which meant that I imposed myself on Lorna for longer than I had originally planned. I think she enjoyed having me around and getting an update on her Argentina family - they were closer to her than to me.

I kept checking my flights from Knoxville. The first flight was at 9.35 am but when I checked a day or so later it had been cancelled and I was re-booked at 8.35 am. On the evening before departure I checked again and the second flight had been cancelled and I was now booked on a flight at 6.35 am with check-in an hour earlier - this meant leaving Lorna's at about 4.30 am. Schedules were very chaotic and it was really good that I was being looked after by the airline.

In the meantime Lorna took me to the Appalachian Museum, a village-style collection of old buildings, artefacts and agricultural implements and some examples of Native American heritage. Tennessee is Cherokee Indian country. It was very good. Martin and Ian were taking a tractor out to Martin's farm which he shared with three others and Lorna and I followed out later. The 'farm' is in hilly wooded country not very far out of town and was quite small and basic. There are two log cabins which had minimal amenities but Martin and Kathy had lived there until Ian was ready for school. Kathy had insisted they shift to town at this point. Apart from taking the tractor out Martin was planning some work on one of the cottages but they found themselves hindered by a wasps nest which they had to deal with first. Martin has a 'bee in his bonnet' about this place but Kathy seemed to have had enough of it. All the family met up in church on Sunday. It is quite a substantial Presbyterian church with a good congregation. Lorna's daughter Irene and husband

⁵ On 11th September all passenger aircraft were on the ground within two hours of the first crash into the Twin Towers. Aircraft were ordered to land at the nearest airport suitable to the aircraft type and people for the most part proceeded on by land transport. More distant travellers like myself were re-booked as flights became available. There were no flights at all on the 12th. On September 13th, airlines were able to relocate their planes to their proper airports and it was not until September 14th that limited schedules were resumed.

Bruce attend regularly and Lorna was a little surprised when Sarah and Brad came also. An interesting thing was that at the close of the service all the congregation retired outside and joined hands for the singing of 'Blest be the tie that binds' and the benediction. On the Monday we set out for Asheville, North Carolina to visit the Biltmore Estate, established by the Vanderbilt family. It was built between 1889 and 1895 and has 255 rooms. The managed Estate was originally 125,000 acres but has been reduced in size over the years and is now only about 8,000 acres with most of the remainder now in forest. The drive took us through a very picturesque gorge in the Great Smoky Mountains and there was lovely country all the way. Like most of the East coast and southern states, one notices the great number of trees. The mansion was magnificent and must have required a very big staff to run it. On the ground floor there was a master bedroom and a 'master' guest room. There were eight more double bedrooms on the first floor, sharing en suite facilities between two. The toilets were flush and appeared to be original. Below stairs there were three kitchens, a large pantry, maids bedrooms, a bowling alley and an indoor swimming pool. There were also extensive gardens. We lunched in a restaurant in the former stables nearby. It was a wonderful day.

Lorna and I both set our alarms for the morning of my departure. I woke, showered, shaved and got dressed and packed up but there was no sound from Lorna. I finally knocked on her door and found her fast asleep. We made it to the airport and she dropped me at the entrance. No parking was allowed within 500 yards of the airport so she was directed to a distant part of the parking area. By the time she got back I was all booked in with my baggage checked all the way to Auckland. She told me later it took her nearly half an hour to find her car as in her haste she had not carefully noted where it was. With all this rebooking I was left with about 6 hours stopover in Chicago and a little more in Los Angeles. I was struck by the fact that the usually busy Chicago airport had only about a third of the number of people as had been there a week before.

I see from my diary that I don't report being annoyed about all these changes. 9/11 had been a world shattering event and I was glad that I had escaped any direct involvement. I felt that the airline staff rose to the occasion magnificently. Sure, I was inconvenienced and so were my hosts in Knoxville. But the airlines had to deal with literally planeloads of travelers who were upset. I have heard that at any one time there might be about 60,000 people in the air over America. My trip to Auckland went smoothly although the stopover time between flights was rather tedious. Lorna cancelled the visit to Boston she had planned for about a week later and decided to make the trip at another time.

I had enjoyed a very interesting trip into unexpected places, - Argentina, Rio, Orkney, and Knoxville - as well as the usual pleasures of visits to England and the States. It was time to settle in at home.