Kith

"Your life," said Dr. Thompson to me, "must be full of incident." This started me thinking of how life is made up of incidents, some small, some large, some very surprising, and some quite ordinary. They can be "funny-ha-ha", "Rolling-in-the-aisles funny.". Or they can be peculiar, unhappy, or tragic. Or "can I believe my eyes?" odd.

Some we like to recall and some we would rather forget. Some do not come back to us until many years later on in life, to be recalled by sounds or scents, a distant train coming nearer until it comes to a halt with a great puff of steam, a long, drawn out whistle and grinding of brakes, or wood smoke from a garden bon-fire in on an autumn evening. All can bring tears to the eyes or sweet memories. Even our dreams are incidents in our lives. They influence us as much and are as wonderfully interesting as the day dreams of our waking hours.

It is a pity that our night time dreams are so fleeting and slip away from us all too soon unless, as I have taught myself to do, one can re-call it back the instant one opens one's eyes. I can do this. I can re-dream old dreams. Of course, they do not follow the old dream in every detail, but the difference between the two does in no way detract from the enthralling interest of the first dream. I remember reading not so long ago about a quite well known writer, whose name I forget for the moment, who wrote that he thought sleep was a waste of time and so had as little of it as possible. This fellow, and others who declare they never dream at night, do not know what they are missing. Of course, I do get the occasional nightmare, when I wake up in a hot sweat unable to move my arms or legs, and when I am totally unable to stretch out my hand to switch on the bed-side lamp. These are terrifying and debilitating.

The idea of recording the small happenings of life of my nearest and dearest was started by that remark from one of the best and nicest of family G.P's that anyone could possibly have, after I had recounted something that had happened in our house on that morning before I had attended the surgery.

This is not intended to be an autobiography in any sense of the word. My life as such could not be of much interest to the world or general public; I am just an ordinary Mum and Granny. But as a journal of snippets and newsy anecdotes, it may raise a few smiles. In any case it is something for my descendants to follow up if they ever wish to make a family tree. Often one reads in a newspaper a short, two hundred word article that catches one's eye and sets up a little chuckle and intrigues so much that we say to a friend,

"Did you read in the paper about X?", or whatever it was that amused you.

It could be knitting, babies, a film star, the Prime Minister, compost, or cooking. So, in such a way, I hope to entertain, intrigue, and interest anyone who might be reading this journal of my kith and kin. It is a record of what I know and of tales that have been handed down by my forebears.

And as Charles Dickens's David Copperfield said, "One can't start anything until one is born. "I will tell you when and where I was born.

I was born in Number 73, Mersey Road, Colchester, on the eighth of February, 1908, which now makes me at the time of writing this, as any one with, or without a maths degree will know at once that I am now over eighty years old.

My father, Edwin Grimston Nunn, had a business next to our house. It was fairly flourishing, as he had most of the trade in those days of the cycling boom, as well as the trade from the various military camps in the town.

He was born in 1872 on March 8th. He was about thirty-six when I was born, a tall, well built, quiet young man with mid-brown hair, and blue eyes set under thick, black bushy eye brows. A quiet, dreamy man with blue eyes, a sensitive mouth, and large thin ears. He spoke with the slow, sing-song accent and dialect of the Essex man. When addressing us he would call us "Together".

"Come on, Together!" he would say, if he wanted us for some reason or other. He was a keen astronomer and when we were quite small he would tell us about the stars, their names. their distance from the earth and their colours. This one was blue, this one was red, and Mars was the nearest to the earth. He very often said to us "One day, Together, they will put a man on the moon". Although he lived to be ninety two, he did not live long enough to see his words come true.

He was very proud of the way he could double up like a jack-knife. He could bend from the thighs and with knees straight he could place his large, bony hands flat on the floor, challenging us to do the same if we could manage it. He rode his old upright bicycle everywhere, weaving in and out of what traffic there was on Canvey Island. Motorists became aware off him peddling slowly along the road, making allowances for his not putting a hand out to the right or left until he was on the point of turning. He was an intellectual man, quietly spoken until his temper was roused and then he roared like an angry bull. Neither he nor my mother, Nelly, ever smacked us although we must have deserved at times. He was a kind father, loving his own children dearly but never welcoming other children around him or in the home. When our friends called for us, and there were more than two, he would say,

"You harbour the children! They make too much 'ni-oz' "....which in his Essexism was meant to be "noise".

Nelly, our mother, had the merriest of laughing blue eyes and real, golden hair down to her waist. She was very rarely angry or cross with us. Mother told us of a day when we three little girls were all under four years old and when "enough had been enough" for one day. Our father just sank back into a chair with a sigh of relief, saying as he did so,

"It is like Heaven!. One in the lavatory, one on the pot, and one asleep!"

I was the second daughter of my parents. They already had one little girl, of nearly three years old who was known as "Venie" throughout her life. She was a fair, haired child with black eyebrows, like our father. I think my parents were just a little bit disappointed at first that I was not a boy, as they had lost their precious first-born, a little boy named Bobby, about six years earlier. But our parents loved all their children dearly, making as our father used to say,

"Neither fish nor foul"

I was christened Amy Gertrude, after one of mother's sisters who had died at the age of 38. Had I been a boy, Mother was going to call me Eric, after a little boy in the old Victorian book called "Eric, or Little by Little".

Soon after I was born, I contracted scarlet fever, so my first few days were spent in an isolation hospital, and within a few days was joined by my sister, Venie, who was quickly followed by our father. I was, I believe, a plump little baby, but slimmed down as I started to walk, which was not until I was nearly two years old.

One year and eight months later, on October 26th, I was joined by another sister, Nelly Rosalie. But ever after, she was just "Nelly", until my own two boys called her "Betty", and her grandsons called her "Morry". I will explain this later.

Another girl! Poor Dad!

It was not until nearly five years later, when we were living in Manor Park, that a son was born to Nelly Lavinia, (my mother) and Edwin Grimston, (my father), and their joy knew no bounds at the birth of this little boy. Mother said he was her "supreme moment", so from that day, we three girls called him "SM" in our rare moments of irritation towards him. He was, and still is a gentle and most lovable person. He is now in his mid-seventies, has four strapping sons, one daughter, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

George, or, to give him his full names, George William Watson, was loved very dearly by all of us, petted, but not spoiled.

One day Dad called him "Master of the house"; so from that day on he was always known as "Master". This had a disastrous effect one day when he was about four years old. He took a walking stick and smashed several fragile gas mantles, saying as he did so,

"I am Master! I can break gas mantles!"

When Dad heard this, he very gently explained to little Georgie that being "Master" did not mean that he could break up the home!

He was a timid little boy and went to a private school run by two spinster sisters until he was nearly ten years old, Then he went to the local council school. Here he had his first fight which, to his surprise, he won. He came home from this school complaining that one boy, Tom Mellor, was bullying him and in general pushing him around, so during the official mid-morning break, he, George, could take it no longer and lunged out with his seemingly puny little fist and punched the other boy on the nose. This resulted into a battle royal which lasted until both boys were exhausted. We were told later by a friend who happened to be passing that as George was holding his own, he did not interfere in the fight. Needless to say, as so often happens, the two boys were firm friends from that day onwards.

Life in Colchester

So, I must return to Colchester and back to 73, Mersey Road, with memories, and tales told of it by our parents. There we were, Nelly, (my mother) and Grimmy, as my father was called, Venie, myself, and little Nelly in our little cottage where we lived until I was about five years old. Then we moved to Ilford, and later, on to Manor Park where, as I have already mentioned, George was born.

My own memories of Colchester are like a series of pictures. They are like "stills" from a film. Some are sharp and some are faded. The sharp ones we know are there and true, but the faded ones are those we are not quite sure of as we peer into the past trying to get the details right. Some of the things we remember and some we are told by our parents and other elders, but the problem is to decide which is which. I remember being sat on a table while a uniformed nurse washed my face and hands. This, I was told, was the nurse who attended to my mother at the birth of her third little girl.

I remember a colourful Christmas tree. I remember playing in the garden on a little patch of greenery that little Nelly and I called "our little green."

I remember that the woman next door had a prop holding up her linen line which swayed and moved in a most alarming way to us children. We lived on the corner of Mersey Road and Claudius, and our home had a back garden and a small front garden. It was here in this front garden that my sisters and I would run to the gate in great excitement to hear and see the Gordon Highlanders come round the corner of Pownal Crescent, turning left into Mersey road, swinging their kilts as they marched to "The Campbells are Coming", played on their bag-pipes.

For some time afterwards Nelly and I would go around with our toes turned outwards, and making bag-pipes of our fingers we would wail,

"Ow-ow-ow-owowow", to the air of "The Campbells are Coming."

As well as a small front garden, we had a long back garden ending in a narrow, pointed patch of grass that we called "our little green".

There we had our tea-parties, played with our toys, and made mud pies. The fence seemed very high to us, as we could not see over the top or through it. I remember on one occasion when the back gate was left open to let Nelly and me see something of the outside

world, on condition that we did not move from the gateway. Three events stand out in my mind from that day. One was when a horse and cart came by with a wooden crate on it and standing inside this crate was a man holding on to it, probably to keep it from falling off, but it filled me with horror. I ran indoors sobbing that I had seen "a man in a cage."

I thought he was being punished for something he had done wrong. It took quite a long time to comfort me. Another time we were at this open gate when a crowd of people headed by a man dressed all in white came marching up Claudius Road singing loudly. This we enjoyed very much. My father told us afterwards that this was an Easter parade.

I must have been about four and Nelly nearly three when we had our first taste of male chauvinist piggery. Once again we were watching the world go by outside the back gate, but we must have ventured a little further afield than usual, for two small boys aged about six or seven came up saying one to the other as they drew near,

"You take the big'un and I'll take the littl'un!"

They pounced on us and putting their arms around our necks, bore us to the ground, then ran off laughing. I gave the male sex a wide berth after that incident.

Schooldays

When I was five I joined my big sister, Venie, at the National School in Claudius Road. How long this lasted I cannot remember, but only one day stands out in my mind. I remember I had a navy blue "reefer" coat with brass buttons on it. It was a wretched day there for me, as I cried most of the time. First we assembled in the hall for morning prayers. There seemed to be little brass knobs all over the floor, one of which was allotted to me to kneel by. It hurt my knees as I knelt on it! The head teacher, one Miss Flitton, showed me some sweets on top of the piano, telling me I could have them if I stopped crying. I did not have them! When it was time to go home, I could not find my coat. All that I knew was that it had brass buttons on and some "ABC" biscuits in one of the pockets. I remember the joy and relief at seeing my mother coming down the road to meet me.

About this time Mother took a part time job teaching art in a private school run by some ladies named Stewart, (or Stuart). Venie then went to this school and Mother took us smaller girls with her. I have no recollection of any more school days in Colchester.

Our next school days were not until we moved to Sidcup after little George was born, just before World War One.

It was real when we were all very small that early on one Good Friday morning at Easter, a baker's boy threw a pebble at the bed-room window, and as it was opened by our father a bag of hot cross buns came sailing in through the window. This had been arranged by our father, but to three very small girls this was magic indeed.

When we were young and Mother wanted to keep us quiet, amused, or wanted to brush our hair, we would badger her with,

"Tell us about the things you used to do when you were a little girl!"

Her memory was amazing. She could remember as far back as when she was two or three years old and kept us enthralled for hours while re-counting her stories. My memory could possibly be a little at fault, but, I am not making up fantasies to amuse you, for as far as my sisters and I and concerned they are all true.

My father also told us many "tales" as he called them, of his childhood in Colchester in the 1870's and later, until he left Colchester for Ilford when I was about five years old. Little Nelly was nearly three and big sister, Venie, was going on for eight. My father never went back again except for one or two fleeting visits when one of his sons-in-law took him there in a car. But he always missed his roots and there were times when he wished for his "time over again". He, Grimmy, his younger brother, Joey, and sister Ophelia, were very close together, remaining friends until they were all in their nineties.

Charles and Eliza.

My maternal Grandmother was born in Lavenham, Suffolk around the late 1830's or early 1840's. Her mother was the daughter of a "gentleman farmer" so we have been told, whose name was John Butler, and I believe his wife's name was Honor. He had but one child, a daughter Mary, who, was a very attractive, high spirited girl with beautiful curling chestnut coloured hair. When Mary needed any money she would go to the village barber and sell one of her curls telling him to take it from underneath where it would not show. She was a fearless horsewoman, riding her horse around at a full gallop. Once when she was racing round, one of the farm hands called after her,

"Mary! Mary! We can see all you have got!"

To this she replied,

"You won't see more than God has made."

When she was fifteen and staying with friends, the family doctor took advantage of her, and the result was Eliza, my grandmother, who was born before Mary was sixteen years old. Eliza was always very reticent about her birth. She had a happy childhood and was rather a pious little girl given to holding prayer meetings in the meadows for the local village children.

She remembered that a certain gentleman whom she did not know used to come riding through the road, dismount and picking her up in his arms would say.

"My little girl! My little girl!" And then ride away again.

She was never told who her father was. When Eliza was about three years old Mary Butler married a local farmer, John Kett, who loved little Eliza and adopted her as his own, loving her dearly. Sadly, Mary and John had no more children.

Eliza was a clever girl, starting her education as a pupil teacher in a Dame's school. Then when she was about nineteen, she won in 1858, one of the first scholarships arranged, so we were told, by Queen Victoria, to enable her to go to Whitelands College in Putney. She left in 1852 with Second Class Honours, taking her first post as head teacher of the girls section at Tor National school in Torquay. This school survived until quite recent years. She was very happy there until she left to get married in the early 1860's.

The head master of the boys' section was a John Daniel Brown from Colchester. He wrote to his younger brother, Charles, in Colchester telling him about this lovely girl, Eliza Kett, saying that they must not let her go out of the family. Charles went to Torquay to investigate, saw Eliza and was completely captivated by her. She loved him dearly even though he took great delight in shocking her Victorian sensibilities. While attending a party one evening he excused himself from her side for a moment or two. Soon after this a young lady came in the room and began to dance with the young men in a most unheard of fashion for as she danced she kicked her legs up into the air disclosing her long lacy underwear. This young lady later revealed herself as none other than the irrepressible Charlie Brown. Eliza was duly very shocked and it took some time for her to forgive him. She did so, and they were married setting up home in Colchester. He, having a business in the town of "Cabinet, and Furniture Maker", made most of the furniture for his bride with his own hands. Some of it is still in use to this day, somewhere in Berkshire, being used by his great-grand children.

Charles and Eliza called their first home "Torquay House", and when they moved from there to another house in Alexandra Road, they called it "Tor House". Charles was a convivial man rather given to champagne. Such was his liking for it, that he was know as "Champagne Charlie". After some time he began to drink to excess, much to the horror of the pious, Victorian mind of Eliza. He rode every where on horseback in those days before the motor car had been invented. The stories go that one day he was so drunk that he fell off his horse and was found by his groom lying in the middle of the road with the horse standing guard over him. Then on another occasion when he was "half seas over" the limit, he arrived home to find that Eliza had locked him out of the house. After calling to and cajolling with Eliza to let him in, but, having no

response, he called a policeman, gave him a pound to break the door down, then still on his horse he rode in over the broken door.

Mother remembered her father, Charles, taking little Jack between his knees and handing the boy a golden sovereign saying,

"This is because you are my son Jack!"

Jack took the money. Then little Nelly, feeling aggrieved, piped up with,

"I'm your girl Nelly!"

Her father kissed her and gave her a bright penny,

"Because," he said, "you are my girl Nelly!"

Four year old Nelly new something was not quite right here, but could not put her finger on it.

The Children

Charles and Eliza had nine children: Lillian, Arthur, Rosina (or Rosie, as she preferred to be called) Mary, Ernie, who later became Bob, Amy, Jack, Nelly, and little Reggie.

Lillian married one Frank King who was employed by my grandfather in his business and by the time little Nelly was four years old he was an aunt to little Lillian King.

Soon after this my grandfather died, leaving Eliza a widow at quite a young age of about forty-three, with nine children, the youngest being little two year Reggie.

As well as making furniture and out fitting yachts he also made coffins and was pall bearer at many funerals. It was while being a pall-bearer and having to walk very slowly behind the coffin that he caught pneumonia and died within three days. When he died, the firm paid Eliza certain amount of money each month for some time, but it never seemed enough. So she went back to teaching, which was something she knew she could do to provide for her family, charging two shillings per week unless they were boarders.

Most of her pupils came from the many army camps around the town. My mother, Nelly, enjoyed name dropping so we were told of Major X's daughter and Captain Lapham's daughter coming to the school. She and her sisters were often asked to a childrens' party in one military camp or other that were situated in the town. A carriage would be sent to Tor House for the young ladies and they would be driven in style to the camp where there would be a soldier at the gate to wave them through, calling out,

"This way to Captain Lapham's party!"

When Nelly was about sixteen, the National schools began to take on in popularity and consequently Eliza's classes dwindled. Nelly decided to do something to earn money. She tried being a governess but she found that she was expected to be a nanny to the baby of the family as well.

So she started up a class of children on her own in Tor House. She went round the smaller cottages canvassing for children, putting her charges as low as one shilling a week.

She very soon had forty pupils and so was able to hand over to Eliza £2 pounds per week for several years. Although Eliza had engaged at her school for many years a certain Herr Waldo to teach her pupils German, and a Monsieur du Pre for French, it was not possible to keep this up any more.

Charles Brown, his brother Daniel, and sister, Susanna, were the children of John Brown, Cabinet Maker, of St. John's Street. It was this John Brown who made family history. In the year 1812, the coffin containing the body of Queen Caroline rested overnight in Colchester on the way to Harwich and thence to Brunswick. It is understood that the people of Colchester refused to allow her to leave England with the coffin plate inscribed

"Caroline of Brunswick".

They employed John Brown of St John's Street, our great-grandfather to change it for another

which read

"Here Lies Caroline, the injured Queen of England".

In the dead of night our great-grandfather Brown exchanged the coffin plate. Our mother Nelly Brown, was told of this many times. It was discovered until she left England. She was very proud of this.

Charles carried on in the Cabinet Makers and Yacht Outfitters firm until he died.

Daniel became a school master in Torquay.

Susanna married to a Dr.John Turner who, I believe, started the Turner Village for mentally handicapped persons at the bottom of North Hill, Colchester. Nelly said that "Uncle Turner" was always very good to his widowed sister-in-law, Eliza. He always sent them a ten pound turkey for Christmas, besides other gifts during the year.

Eliza also took in the odd recommended paying student as a boarder. One of these was Lome Strathern, a young Scotsman, who fell in love with, and later married Eliza's daughter, Rosie. Another lad was Herbert Eagle who fell in love with Nelly, but Eliza thought she was much too young at fifteen so sent Herbert away.

By the time Charles died, the eldest girl, Lillian, was married to one Frank King who was employed by my grandfather in his cabineting business. He, Frank, came to live in Tor House bringing Lillian, his wife, and baby girl, also Lillian. This made my mother, little Nelly, an aunt at four years old. Frank, an earnest young man, took up the roll of father figure and head of the household.

Eliza started a school in Tor House, charging two shillings per week, which thrived until Nelly left home to be married at the age of twenty four. Lillian began teaching here and was known as "Mrs King" by all the pupils, including her four younger brothers and Nelly. All through her life my mother referred to Lillian as "my sister, Mrs King".

Frank was always remembered with affection by Eliza's younger four little children, and with respect by the five older ones. He guided Eliza over money matters and became a father figure to them all. My mother always remembered the long walks on Sundays after church, which was three times a day when they were small. He would take them walking from Colchester to Wivenhoe where they might have a glass of lemonade to fortify them for the long walk back home. He was Eliza's right hand until her eldest son, Arthur, was old enough to go into his father's business.

Arthur had no liking for this. He wanted to be a vetinary, so he took a job on a farm to learn all as much as he could about animals. Eliza was very put out over this. When he came home from work she insisted that as he smelled of stables and horses he must use the back area steps and back door to come into the house. He married, at twenty two, Alice, a woman ten years older than himself who helped him, loved him, and pushed him through his many exams so that he, Arthur Oakely Brown, became a much loved doctor. He became head surgeon of a field hospital in France during the 1914-1918 war. He and Alice lived in Swindon in a house named "Norbury" until Alice died. A few years later Arthur re-married one of Alice's friends and seemed very happy. When he died aged about seventy, there was a column in the local newspaper about his funeral, which was attended by about two hundred people including doctors and nursing staff from local hospitals. Arthur and Alice had one child, a son, named Valentine to whom they were devoted, giving him the best education possible and sending him on to Sandhurst from where he became an army officer serving in the 1914-1918 war. He, poor fellow was killed on November 11th 1918, the very day of the armistice. (?) Arthur found that he, Valentine, had run up considerable debts amounting to about £1000, which in those days was a fortune. Arthur said it would take him a lifetime to re-pay these debts. Whether he paid these debts I do not know; he did not communicate with the family very much apart from a birthday cheque to my mother each year and five shillings a week to his then widowed sister, Rosie.

Eliza's eldest daughter, Lillian, who married Frank King, had one little girl also named Lillian. This little girl married a John Goodchild who was lame in one leg. He became a church

vicar in, I believe, Halesworth, Suffolk, being known as the "lame vicar". They had but one child who followed in his father's footsteps and became a church vicar somewhere in Suffolk. My mother, Nelly went to stay there now and again.

Eliza's second daughter, Amy, died at thirty-eight with what was called in those days "galloping consumption", brought on by an unfortunate love affair with someone named "Tom". This Amy was very beloved being the confidant and comforting friend to all the family.

My mother always remembers her wearing a pretty, colourful apron. This apron played a wonderful role the early years of her married life. Her first born, a son, little Bobby, died at twenty one months old from meningitis and as my grieving heart broken little mother sat by his cot watching him, he sat up in bed, and with glowing eyes, held out his little arms to someone unseen by other eyes and said,

"Pretty! Pretty!".

This was the name he had for Amy in her pretty apron. But Amy had died some months earlier. Nelly had then a wonderful sense of peace as her baby passed into the waiting arms of "Pretty". Who shall say that Pretty Amy was not there for Bobby? Nelly always believed it was so, and this belief helped her to come to terms with her great loss.

Rosie continued to live in Tor House for some years after she was married to a young Scotsman, Lome Strathern, He had come to Colchester to work and ended up lodging with Eliza.

He, Lome, was from a very good, old Scots family. I believe one of his cousins was High Sheriff of Glasgow at one time. Rosie and her four children, Donald, Olive,Marjory, and Fairly, always claimed decent from Robert the Bruce, of Scotland who married Joanna Strathern. Lome and my mother, Nelly, were firm friends throughout his short life. He died of diabetes at forty two. His daughter, Marjory, also died of diabetes when she was about sixty. Medicine has come a very long way since those days before insulin injections and tablets. On one of his visits to see Nelly he stayed to dinner. I dimly remember him as a black bearded young man. This dinner was evidently a pie of some kind and Nelly gave him a generous helping leaving the dish empty. When my father came in to his dinner I piped up with accusing four year old voice,

"There would have been a piece of pie for your dinner, but Mummy gave it to Uncle Lome!"

My father just laughed and assured me that he did not mind Uncle Lome having a piece of pie.

Of Lome and Rosie's four children Olive was the eldest. She was a fun loving girl and rather high spirited. When he, Lome was dying he said to Rosie,

"I don't know what you will do with that girl, Olive!"

Olive became a telephonist in Colchester exchange and married a man named Gould who was also a employed by the GPO. This man claimed a kinship with Nat Gould, the author of all those stories of "THE TURF". They lived in Mile End road, Colchester all their lives. They had no children, devoting their lives to their niece, Anita, daughter of Olive's sister Marjory. Olive's husband died at the age of about fifty but Olive was nearly ninety when she died. Marjory, Olive's sister married George Gilbertson, the son of a Major Gilbertson who had been stationed in India in the early 1900's. He married an Eurasian girl. On his return to England he was stationed in Colchester living next door to Rosie Strathern. Naturally the children became firm friends. The Gilbertsons had three daughters, Olive, Kitty, Flossy, and one son, George. It was to George, who looked very Indian, that Marjory married after he had a nasty accident on his motor-bike. After a while Marjory, George, and Anita went to live in Selhurst Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, taking Rosie, now an old lady of nearly seventy, with them. They had one child, a little girl, Anita, who seemed to resent the fact that her father was Anglo-Indian. She did not much care for her father's family saying they were snobbish. As far as I know she never married. She took up nursing somewhere. She inherited Olive's possessions and house in Mile End road, Colchester. Donald, or to give him his full name, Donald Brisbane Strathern, elder son of Rosie and Lome was sent after the death of Lome, his father, to the Royal Wanstead residential home for orphans in Wanstead. To get into this place. a boy had to be voted in by

some one of good repute. Donald was voted in and befriended by a Major of the British Army, I believe his name was Baker, but of this I am not sure.

He, Donald, spent much of his early days at the home of this man. My memory tells me that the name of this man could be Baker. I have no means of verifying this at all. Donald became sale representative for the tailoring firm of Hector Powy. After several like positions, he went into partnership with George taking a garage, hiring out and selling second hand cars. He married, and had two daughters, but when life got on top of him for some reason I do not know, he took an overdose of pills and died aged about fifty. Rosie's last and youngest child, a son, Fairley Steed, I know little off except that he eventually married, went to live in New Zealand, had three daughters, Joanna, Janice, and Jonquil. One of these daughters wrote a book about her wanderings around the world, calling it "Gullible Travels". She now lives somewhere in Scotland.

Mary, Eliza's fourth daughter lived unmarried at home in Tor House with her mother, Eliza, until, she, Eliza, died aged seventy in February 1908. Mary was a high spirited, attractive girl with slightly prominent blue eyes.

One young man she loved when young was Valentine, a friend of her brother Jack, in most respects a extremely eligible young man who spent many happy hours at Tor House. He liked cheerful music, so introduced Eliza to the hymns of "Sanky & Moody". He and Mary became firm friends, enjoying each other's company and walking out together, on the understanding that they took little Nelly, six years younger than Mary with them, who naturally enough resented this ruling of Eliza's. However it was not to be. Eliza put a stop to this affair when it came to her attention that Val was in the habit of going to Monte Carlo and actually gambled there. Mary naturally resented this and in some way it turned her a little against Nelly and through her life it seems that she felt a slight feeling of the same resentment towards Nelly.

Although they were on friendly terms, there was not much of a family bond between the two of them. Yet, when Nelly had her second baby born in Tor House, Mary was a kindly competent nurse to her. Her one feeling of resentment went no further than saying to Nelly as she handed over a baby,

"Here, take it! You all have them but me."

Nelly, my mother, was confined to bed with me, her second little daughter when Eliza, her mother died. She got out of bed to watch the funeral cortege pass by her bedroom window. She named me Amy after the sister who had died four years previously.

After the death of Eliza, Mary took as position as companion to the invalid wife of a Baptist minister living in Ashmore Green, Berkshire. This minister was one Harry Clark. The house was called "Ash House", which is still there today. The chapel still stands but the windows are boarded up and it seems as though it will never be used again. Before she died, Harry's wife asked Mary to look after him and to marry him. With the blessing of his now grown up family Mary did just this and was fairly contented with her life. Mary and Harry had one child, a little girl they named Mavis. She was a clever, bright child, playing the organ for the congregation at the age of ten years old.

Mary and my mother kept in touch although Mary had eventually married again to a member of the Plymouth Brethren. Mavis herself also married into the Brethren Sect and had one child, a daughter, Beryl. My son, Donald, started to correspond with Beryl when they were both about ten years old but after he had mentioned in one of his letters that he had taken small parts in films we heard no more of them.

He, Donald, together with his brother, Philip, had played small parts in the film "The Divided Heart" and another part in "The Loves of Three Women." When he came home the day he had been in "The Loves Of Three Women" he said to me,

"Guess who was playing in this film? Petula Clark!"

At eight years old he had fallen in love!

Once when Mary and Mavis came to see us when we lived on Canvey Island she, Mary

told Nelly, my mother, that she was too worldly.

"Nelly", she said, "When Jesus comes again to this world he will pass you by, because you are not ready for him".

This rather incensed Nelly for she answered sharply to her sister,

"Mary! When Jesus comes again I shall be as ready as you are, but I shall probably be sitting one of these children on the pot!", indicating her four little grandchildren all under five running round her feet. To which, Mary had no reasonable answer.

Once in the middle 1920's, my younger sister, little Nelly, then aged fifteen and two of Rosie's teenage sons, Donald and Fairly Strathern were staying with the then widowed Mary in "Ash House" in Ashmore Green which was hardly more than a hamlet miles from anywhere in those days, and finding themselves with no where to go and nothing to they began to do the "Charleston" in an upstairs bedroom, and play on the piano "God Bless The Prince of Wales", the only tune that Mary allowed to be played other than hymns on Sundays. Mary was so horrified at their depravity that she went out into the garden taking baby Mavis with her and walked round and round singing her favourite hymn seemingly to keep the devil at bay. She sang

"HE is coming perhaps today!"

Now, for the four younger members of Eliza's family....

Ernie, as he was called when young, or Bob as he grew older, must have been dyslectic when small, for it seemed as if he could not easily learn to read. It was called laziness in the good old days. Little Nelly read to all four of the young brothers as she loved them dearly. Ernie was the eldest, Jack was two years younger, Nelly, eighteen months younger than Jack, and little Reggie was two years younger than Nelly.

All four played together and fought each other fiercely. Mother, Nelly, said she could not remember a single day that there was not a fight in the boys' room, and more often than not she would wade in with arms flailing, especially if it was her favourite brother, Jack, in need of being defended against Ernie and Reggie. Nelly would see that justice was done. Once when Eliza was taking Ernie, Jack, Reggie, and Nelly out with her she said to them with sorrow in her voice,

"The people will say "There goes poor Mrs Brown with her naughty little children!"

So Nelly, stung a little by her mother's voice, retorted that she would never say such things to her own little children when she grew up.

"Oh, won't you," said Eliza, "I should hate to be one of your children!"

Nelly had five children, but sadly her first born, a son, died aged nearly two years old. Of the others not one of them can remember a rough or sharp word from her. She was much given to laughter, bursting out at the drop of a hat. We were never slapped.

Perhaps Eliza had need of patience with the younger members of her family, for once when the children were small Nelly persuaded her brother Ernie to become an Ancient Briton by painting him all over with blue paint from her paint box. She then took him to the front door of Tor House, opened it and pushed him out side just at the very moment when a lady was coming up the steps to make inquires about sending her little girl to Eliza's school. Eliza made the excuse that this was an aftermath of teaching history. One day Ernie had been asked to a picnic and Eliza lent to him Jack's best school trousers. All went well. Then the mother of the birthday child asked Ernie if he would like another jam tart which he accepted, then he put in down on his plate. A little two year old girl baby, Maggie, came toddling round to him, lost her balance, and sat down on Ernie's jam tart.

The mother saw this and picking the child up said to Ernie,

"You can eat it, Ernie, she's quite clean!"

Ernie nearly threw up. He managed to put it his pocket instead and forgot it was there. Next day when at the Quaker School that he attended Jack thrust his hand into his pocket to bring out his handkerchief and out it came covered with jam.

There was another fight in the boy's room that night! Forever afterwards that little girl was

called "Little-Miss Maggie-Sit-Upon-a-Tart"

In later life Nelly would turn to Jack when events threatened to engulf or overwhelm her. Money was very scarce. Jack ran away to sea when he was fourteen, starting as a boy on a sailing ship. When he came home he kept them all agog with tales of his adventures. Some were true and some a little far fetched -especially the one about when he was ship-wrecked in the Bay of Biscay. Or when he swam Shark Bay with a knife between his teeth. Although he obtained his Master's Ticket and became a naval captain he never had a ship. He worked for many years at the Surrey and Commercial docks as head stevedore and later in Southampton docks as Shore superintendent for the Pacific Line. They then lived in the Bittern Park district. He had married a very pretty Irish girl, Cissy O'Malley by whom he had ten children, who all live somewhere in the Southampton area even now. Except the eldest son, also Jack, who followed his father's footsteps and went to sea, but after a while he jumped ship in New York, living there for rest of his life. His full name was John Thornton Brown and when he was a teenager he would boast of the time when he would be the owner of a large house saying-

"I shall be Johnny Thornton of the Ma-a-ansion!"

We often wonder if he fulfilled his dream he had about "The Ma-a-nsion"

All Jack's children got on extremely well in Life. One became a doctor, one a master builder, having a large house complete with swimming pool in Southampton. He was Joseph Brown. Some of the others were Amy, Iris, Bobbie, Frank, Jimmy, Bessie, Denis, and Paddy. The others born in Southampton I never knew. Jack, like his father, Charles, before him liked his "pint". Sometimes after a session at his "local" when he was walking unsteadily homewards, he would take a handful of coins from his pocket regardless of value and scatter them for children to gather. We loved him.

To go from Sidcup where we were then living to have tea with Uncle Jack in Barking was a great treat. After tea on Sundays we would gather round the piano with either Nelly or Jack playing to sing Sanky and Moody hymns, the favourite being "Shall we gather at the River?" He had a set of Arthur Mee's Children's Encyclopedias from which we had much pleasure. We remember, too, with much affection, Cissy's mother and father who seemed to always there on the days when we went to tea. I can still hear the voice of Nan, as she was called saying sharply to one of her little grandsons when one of them asked for more "cumbercue" at the tea table. She gave him some more then said-

"Yes, here you are!. Take that! And you'll get n'more!"

When we were living on Canvey Island in the early 1920's, Nelly, my mother, had five of Jack's children to stay for a holiday by the sea. She had six of them, Iris, Joey, Bobby, Frankie, Denis, and baby Bessie who was called "My Peachy" by her adoring older sister, Iris. So, with four of her own as well mother had quite enough to do. As it happened, my father had bought an old ex-army round "Nissen" hut made of corrugated iron and this is where they all slept on camp beds. My father was not over keen on having so many children but he put up with it for Mother's sake.

Nelly, like Jack, loved the sea in all it's moods. Frank King, her brother-in-law, had instilled it into her by his many Sunday afternoon walks to Walton on The Naze, and occasional holidays at Mersey Island. We have an old tin type photograph taken at Walton. Frank is standing up at the back next to Amy who is holding a parasol over her head. Seated is Frank's wife, Lillian, with Mary by her side, and seated on the ground are Nelly aged about six years old, and little two year old Lillian, the daughter of Lillian and Frank. Little Lillian was also six year old Nelly's niece.

One year when they were older and going on holiday to Walton Mary, for some reason decided that she did not want go so stayed at Tor House with just the little maid, Caroline, for company. All went well for three days Nelly had a strong sense of foreboding. She told Eliza that she had better go home, and when asked for an explanation she said she though that Mary needed her at home.

"I think Mary needs me, I had better go soon"

Eliza said she had better go if she was worried over Mary. On arriving at the bottom of Alexandra Road, she saw Mary looking for her out of the drawing room window, waiting for her.

"Oh, Nelly! I knew you'd come! I felt so nervous on my own. I prayed you would come."

She cried, almost falling onto her little sister with relief. She had started to feel very lonely and panicky. She was about 20 then and Nelly 14.

Then again, Mary Kett, Eliza's mother, was away in London nursing an old friend when one night she saw a vision of Eliza standing by her bedside, and heard her saying,

"Mother! Mother!"

She packed her bags next day and arrived at Tor House just in time to be at the birth of one of her grandchildren. How does one explain such things?

Eliza heard one day that a loving home was required for a for a sick little girl for about weeks. She answered the advertisement and received a caller at Tor House, a Mrs Harper, who explained that one day as she was driving in her carriage through a certain village she heard screams coming from a from a cottage and on making inquires found that they came from a little girl, the niece of the woman looking after her. The child screamed because she was covered in painful sores.

It was probably infantile eczema, but no one knew of this then.

So, she, Mrs Harper, made arrangements for the child to be cared for and sent to school at her, Mrs Harper's expense. Eliza took in this little girl who by now was given the name of May Harper. May lived at Tor House for many years and was very loved by the family. May lived at Tor House until she was fourteen by which time she was cured of her illness. She became a teacher when she was older and as far as Nelly knew married very happily.

Another little girl who became a short stay boarder in Eliza's school was Ophelia Nunn. Although Ophelia lived in Colchester, the Nunns were having as sticky time financially so decided that it would be better if eight year old Offie was spared any troublesome events. Owing to Edwin's father, (also Edwin) involving himself with a law suits, a farm in Wivenhoe, and the Old Theatre Royal in Queen Street, Colchester, he became bankrupt. As they were expecting the bailiffs in any day, they thought it best for eight year old Ophelia to be elsewhere at this period in time. At the top of Diamond Place was a rumpus room for the boys that went over the whole house. Into this room went all Harriet's precious things. They were ranged on one side and bricked in by George Bone, their handy man, until all danger had passed. The many garden statues were buried in the garden. Her coming began a friendship between Ophelia and Nelly that lasted all their lives as Nelly married Ophelia's eldest brother, Edwin, when she was twenty four and he was thirty two.

Ophelia had three brothers, Edwin Grimston, eight years older than Nelly, Willie, and the youngest, Josiah, or Joey, as he was called.

Edwin was always called "Brother". In all the letters that passed between them he was addressed as "Dear Brother". When young he was called Edwin but after a while he became for some known as "Grimston", Grim, or Grimmy. Nelly, his wife called him Grim. The Nunns lived at this time in a house in Maldon road called "Diamond Place", so called because all its rooms were odd shapes. Not one was really square. On the rare times when we go back to Colchester we look at it and try to imagine how it must have been nearly one hundred years ago when my father's family lived there.

When little Offie went home to tea on Sundays she often took Nelly with her. Nelly loved the free and easy lifestyle of the Nunns, and at Diamond Place there were trees to climb, dogs and rabbits to fondle. and a pony to ride. The first time she went there she was shown into the drawing room. She was not prepared for anything so lovely as this room. The carpet was white with beautiful blue pansies on it and the furniture was Hepplewhite. The beauty of it made her stomach turn over and she was promptly physically sick on the carpet. Harriet made light of it then but reminded her of it in years to come. Nelly was very artistic and loved painting and beautiful things. She would rather have a good box of Reeves best paints, drawing paper and pencils than a doll or sweets. She often recalled the day when as a little girl she was taken "down town" to the newly opened Penny bazaar by one of her sisters and had seen, admired and wanted a pretty little tin tray. She looked good and hard before she spent her penny. Then paid for it and carried it home in raptures of joy at possessing this treasure with a beautiful German picture on it.

Alas, although it was plain to anyone that she wanted this tray, this beautiful thing, when Eliza saw it she made Nelly go straight back to change it for a stick of Evertor toffee. All through her life Nelly never forgot the sadness and the seemingly unfairness of her mother in doing this. The sense of loss that she had at seven years old made her see through the eyes of a child; we, her own children, always had the best of Reeves paints, and Watman paper to draw on, which we preferred to sweets ourselves. Nelly hated dolls and sewing, yet many a time her sisters would try to instruct her, giving her a pretty piece of cloth telling her to make a dress for a doll with it. Nelly would wander around miserably with the cloth in her hand to find an elder sister with enough time to help her. It was generally Rosie. Going up to her Nelly would say in a rush of irritation,

"Needle and cotton, and please will you cut it out!".

She was never any good at darning socks either. I remember, and so does my brother, George, a certain day when he was about to go to work in the morning and she saw a hole in the heel of his sock, and decided to cobble it up until he came home in the evening. He, all unsuspecting, put his foot up on a chair while she did the job, then he went happily off to work. After a while one of his work mates asked him who had mended his sock. He glanced down to see what was amiss and there he saw to his horror the grey sock had been cobbled up with red wool!

At Ophelia's home, Diamond Place, there was a rumpus room like an attic going over the whole of the house, and there were seats ranged round for the boys to do their school home work home. There were dogs, cats, rabbits and a pony. The rabbits belonged to young Joey.

One day he was driven to despair by Nelly, who one day let them out of their hutches. He was in such a fury that he chased little eight year old Nelly round and round the garden to reap revenge on, but she was very fleet of foot, having learned to run from her own brothers at times, so she ran to a tree and climbing a ladder that was there she was soon high up amongst the branches away from the furious Joey who promptly took the ladder away leaving her there. She could have shinned down quite well but she did not know where Joey might be hiding to catch her unawares. After a while just as she was getting worried and did not know what to do in case Joey was still lying in wait for her, along came six foot, sixteen years old Grimmy who saw her plight.

"Jump down, and I will catch you." he said.

"No, I can't!" said Nelly. "If I do you will see up my clothes!"

"You jump" he said, "and I'll turn my head."

So Nelly jumped happily and Grimmy caught her neatly and gently in his strong arms and lowered her to the ground. She loved him dearly from that day. She even became firm friends with Joey.

When the troubles of the Nunns was solved they moved away to another part of the town to a house in Military Road, so their paths did not meet for some years to come when Nelly was nearly twenty two and Grimmy thirty years old.

It happened one day when Nelly was at a loose end for somewhere to go or something to

do. The happy times she had in her childhood with Ophelia Nunn came back to her so she made her way across Colchester from Alexandra Road to Military Road where she heard the Nunns now lived. Ophelia was delighted to see her and asked her to stay to tea. Ophelia's mother, Harriet, agreed to this so Nelly stayed. One after the other Ophelia's brothers came in after their day's work. After tea Edwin offered to drive Nelly home in his pony and trap. Nelly accepted this and agreed to joining a family picnic at the coming weekend. This invitation included Nelly's two sisters, Mary and Rosie as well as Ophelia.

Six weeks later she and Edwin were engaged to be married. The engagement was for two year before they married in 1903. We have a photograph of this pony and trap outside a newsagents shop in Crouch Street. This shop was owned by Edwin's brother, Joey. It had been bought for him by Harriet, his mother. We have a photograph of him outside the shop with young Willie Houchen (?) the paper boy by his side boy by his side, and standing in the road way is a spanking, shining pony and trap with Grimmy proudly holding the reins.

He, Grimmy, owned a stable, two more ponies, another trap and a small van for removables. He, Grimmy, had also been set up in business by Harriet, which he kept going until the Army commandeered his horses during the Boer war. By this time Grimmy and Nelly were engaged, and were to be married within two years. During this testing time they wrote beautiful love letters one to another all in rhyming couplets. It was in these stables in a certain drawer containing Grimmy's private bits and pieces and book-keeping ledgers that he put all tied up in blue ribbon the letters that Nelly sent to him. Her also had in with these letters some very valuable stamps which including a rare Queen Victoria "Penny Black" stamp. And it was to these stables that Nelly went one day after they had a quarrel, because she had heard that Grimmy's mother, Harriet, had been reading these letters. Nelly went to this drawer, took the packet containing her letters, and, unbeknown to her, also his other precious objects and burned them there and then. When Grimmy came back to the stables and saw what she had done he was very upset. He wrote her a very unhappy and reproachful letter. She sent to him a letter so full of remorse and anguish. These two letters are the only two still in existence, and we, their children, cherish them. They forgave each other and were married on her twenty- third birthday, the eighth of June, 1903.

As Eliza, Nelly's mother, died when I was born, so Grimmy's mother, Harriet, died soon after my little sister, also named Nelly, was born. Grimmy never really got over the death of his mother. He grieved for her to the day he, himself died at the age of ninety-one. He adored her, much to Nelly's concern. She was much put out and a little jealous when he, Grimmy made a point of going round to see Harriet every Sunday afternoon. Harriet was inclined to be pessimistic and solemn, whereas Nelly was full of the joys of Spring so they probably clashed like cymbals when they met.

There was an occasion when a merry time was being had at a family gathering, when after a burst of laughter had subsided some what she, Harriet said in doleful voice,

"I don't know why we are all laughing so much!"

Moreover, Nelly had no idea how to run a house, never having been called upon to do much when living at home with four elder sisters in Tor House, and was an indifferent cook. But she was rather proud of the fact that she had made some splendid apple dumplings one day for dinner. She made some pastry, peeled and cut up the apples.

But she was over generous with the apples and did not have enough to put in the last dumpling. Her sister, Mary, complained about this, saying that she knew she would be the one to get it for dinner. While Eliza, unknowingly, was handing out the dumplings at dinner time, she, Mary, kept her eyes on that apple-less dumpling. Sure enough it landed on her dish!

She started to say something about it but was cut short by o Eliza saying,

"Nelly has worked hard at these dumplings, Mary, so enjoy them!"

Mary ate her dumpling in silence. She was the general factotum in Tor House as she grew older, being a very good housekeeper and manager. Nelly remembers the coldness of Tor House, of washing in cold water, of having chilblains in winter, and starched chemises that cut

under the arm pit.

The only two warm rooms in the house were the drawing room which was the sanctum for Eliza and the five elder children. Where Rosie was to be found lying on a sofa enlisting whoever was at hand to "rub my poor feet". She was not the strongest of people, being always thought of as "poor Rosie", yet she lived to be seventy-five. Once when little Nelly ventured into the drawing room as was met with a cool stare from Eliza and,

"Did you want anything, Nelly?"

Nelly quickly disappeared from view and hurried down stairs to the kitchen and Caroline, the little maid of all work, and the warmth of the old kitchen range. She and Mary were always to be found in the kitchen, Mary, because she rather enjoyed cooking, and Nelly was there to keep warm.

So, Nelly and Grimmy were married at Holy Trinity Church on her birthday, June 8th 1903. They arranged to honeymoon at Mersey Island, but the weather was so cold that time that they came home after three days. They had a small furnished house in Military Road, Colchester. This had been bought for them by Harriet. The original owner, a Miss Pretty, was leaving Colchester to live with friends, so Harriet arranged to have it from her, lock, stock and barrel. They were very happy in this house and their first born, a son, was born in it. But shadows began to loom for them, as this Miss Pretty from whom Harriet had bought the house decided she was not happy where she was and gave Harriet no peace until she was able to move back into it again. At this time the Boer war had started and the Government commandeered all three of Grimmy's horses for the Army, leaving Grimmy with out a job, no trade, and no means to support a family. When the Nunn boys were younger, their mother, Harriet, had wanted them to learn a trade of some kind, but Edwin, (their father), pooh-poohed the very idea, saying that there would never be the need for his sons to work. This might have come about if he had not squandered it on buying a farm that failed, by helping a cousin to lay claim to a law-suit that lasted nearly ten years before it was finally settled, and by taking over the old Theatre Royal in Queens Street with his two brothers Henry and John.

Edwin, the elder, died in the early 1890's. He was a bell-ringer in a local church and after getting rather hot one day he went outside into the cold air and catching pneumonia, he died within three days.

So, without a trade or profession, and no job there was nothing else to be done but to move back temporarily into the family home.

Grimmy went back to a warm, loving home with Harriet and Ophelia, but Nelly with little one year old Bobby had to move into Tor House which already housed Rosie and Lome, a dying Amy, although no one suspected she was so ill at the time, and Mary, the sister into whose care Nelly did not want to accept. After a while, Grimmy, a Colchester Royal Grammar School educated man found a job as a driver for a local antique dealer, a Mr Jarman. Edwin learned something of antiques while he was with Mr Jarman. He acquired an old bible that had at the back of it old cures for illnesses, such as "swallow a spider for croup", etc. but somehow this bible disappeared and he always mourned its loss. He also had the complete works of Bunyans "Pilgrim's Progress", which had beautiful plates in red, scarlet and gold. These he kept in a box allowing no one, not even Nelly, to touch them. After his death in 1964 we, his children, found that they had completely disintegrated with time. We would have had so much enjoyment with those beautifully illustrated books had we been allowed to look at them.

Nelly was not so happy back in Tor House. Amy was ill, and although Eliza was still teaching in her by now dwindling school, she was nearly seventy and needed care and attention as she had "dropsy" in her legs. Moreover, when Grimmy came to see Nelly and his little son, Bobby, Eliza insisted that as he smelled of the stables" he must use the bottom area steps to come into the house. It was in "Tor House" that another baby was born to Nelly and Grimmy, a little girl whom they named Kate Lavinia. Things began to get a little more difficult now for Nelly. The atmosphere was decidedly chilly. The most beloved sister, Amy, who had always been so understanding and kind to Nelly, died of "galloping consumption", leaving her feeling saddened

and very lonely. She was now ensconced in the old top back nursery finding it difficult to climb up and down four flights of stairs with two babies.

At the first Christmas after Amy died, before Bobby was two and little Lavinia, (Venie) six months old, Grimmy had found a house, 73, Mersey road. He was furnishing it, and making it ready for his family to move into in the New Year. He had a shop built on to the side and was getting all set up for a thriving business. Little Bobby was not very well having what the doctor said was a feverish cold. Nelly nursed him, played with him expecting him to be up and about with in a day or two. On Boxing Day he slept longer than usual so Nelly thankfully got on with ironing a dress for him to wear when his father came to see him that afternoon, but he never regained consciousness dying of meningitis two days later, poor little fellow. It was strange that during that night when Nelly sat up watching her baby son drifting away when he suddenly sat up in his cot, opened his eyes wide and stretched out to something or some one that Nelly could not see and cried out,

"Pretty! Pretty!"

This was the name that Bobby had given to Amy when she was alive. Nelly always said it must have been her dear sister, Amy who came to carry him away HOME in her arms. This was the only thing that could bring any kind of comfort to the wildly grieving Nelly. Her sisters were kind enough to her but she could not forget the days when she had not been as welcome with her two children as her sisters Rosie and Lilian had been with theirs. On the day of his funeral she did not want all the curtains closed as was tradition, but opened them all as wide as she could.

Soon after Bobby's funeral Grimmy came to tell her that number 73, Mersey road was ready to move into at any time and his business which he had called "The Garrison Cycle Dep" had good business with the various Army barracks in and around the Town. He had switched from horses and traps which he used to let out on hire to bicycles, the up and coming means of transport for both civilian and army life. Nelly was overjoyed! At last she had a home of her own. She told no one at "Tor House" about it until Grimmy drove up with a pony and trap to collect his family.

She dressed little Venie, packed up her belongings then went downstairs to the lower school room where Eliza was still teaching, and walking up to her mother, Eliza, she said,

"Well, goodbye, Ma, Grimmy has come to take me home."

Then she walked out of the house to the waiting pony and trap, and Grimmy. After the initial shock of the departure of her youngest daughter, Eliza had much to think about. Nelly remained very close to her family after this move to Mersey road. It was here that Nelly and Grimmy had two more little daughters, myself and Little Nelly. It was not until the second of August, 1914 that another son, George, was born to Nelly and Grimmy. 1914. (He was the one who broke the gas mantles as "Master of the House.")

John and Anne Nunn

John and Anne Nunn were my great-grandparents. How they met I have yet to discover. John was a Tailor and Hatter from Colchester and Anne was a farmer's daughter from Billericay in Essex who used to go to Romford market with eggs from the farm. These eggs were in panniers one on each side of a horse that she would ride home again. Could it be that they met in Romford while she was selling eggs and he, John, was buying cloth and leather? I must find the truth of this one day. I must try to find the church in which they were married. I should think it would be somewhere in or near Billericay. Anne and John had three children, Henry, John Edwin and one daughter. Edwin married Harriet Watson of Butt Lane Colchester and became our grandfather. He and his two brothers carried on with the tailoring business after their father, John died. He, Edwin carried on with the.....

End…?