

**“Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea!”**

**The Diary of An American Lady in Yorkshire (1948)**

**by**

**Elsa Paxton**

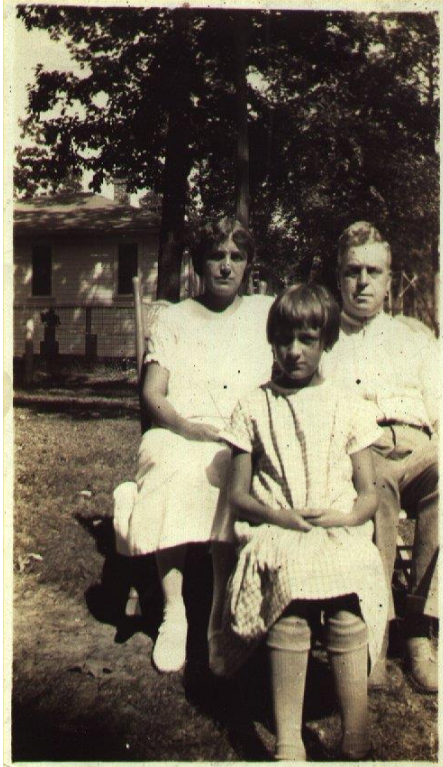
**Edited by**

**Peter Hodgson**

# Introduction

George Paxton was born in Richmond, Yorkshire in 1882.

One of ten children and ever one for adventure, he had emigrated to the United States, aged 21, in 1903, determined to seek his fortune. By 1910 he was in Chicago where he met and Elsa Engebretson, herself the daughter of Norwegian immigrants to the USA. They were married on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1911.



Soon after Europe was plunged in the Great War and many of his brothers and relatives fought and died in the trenches of Northern France. George himself was drafted into the US Army in 1918 although this was too late for him to see active service.

Meanwhile George and Elsa had a daughter – Audrey who was born in October 1915.

George was working as an Electrical “Switchman” and by 1930 was a foreman.

The years rolled by and another World War came. Throughout the Second World War, George kept in touch with his family in England and the letters winged their way back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean. One such letter is shown in the Appendix.

George promised to take Elsa and Audrey over to England after the war and he longed to visit “his folks” and show his family something of his home town, Richmond and the family he had left behind.

Figure 1 - Elsa, George and Audrey Paxton c 1925)  
1925



Figure 3 - The Paxton Homestead – Walworth, Wisconsin (c. 1940)

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Sadly, George passed away on 22 July 1945, just after the Second World War ended and it seemed that his dream of showing Elsa his homeland was laid to rest with him.

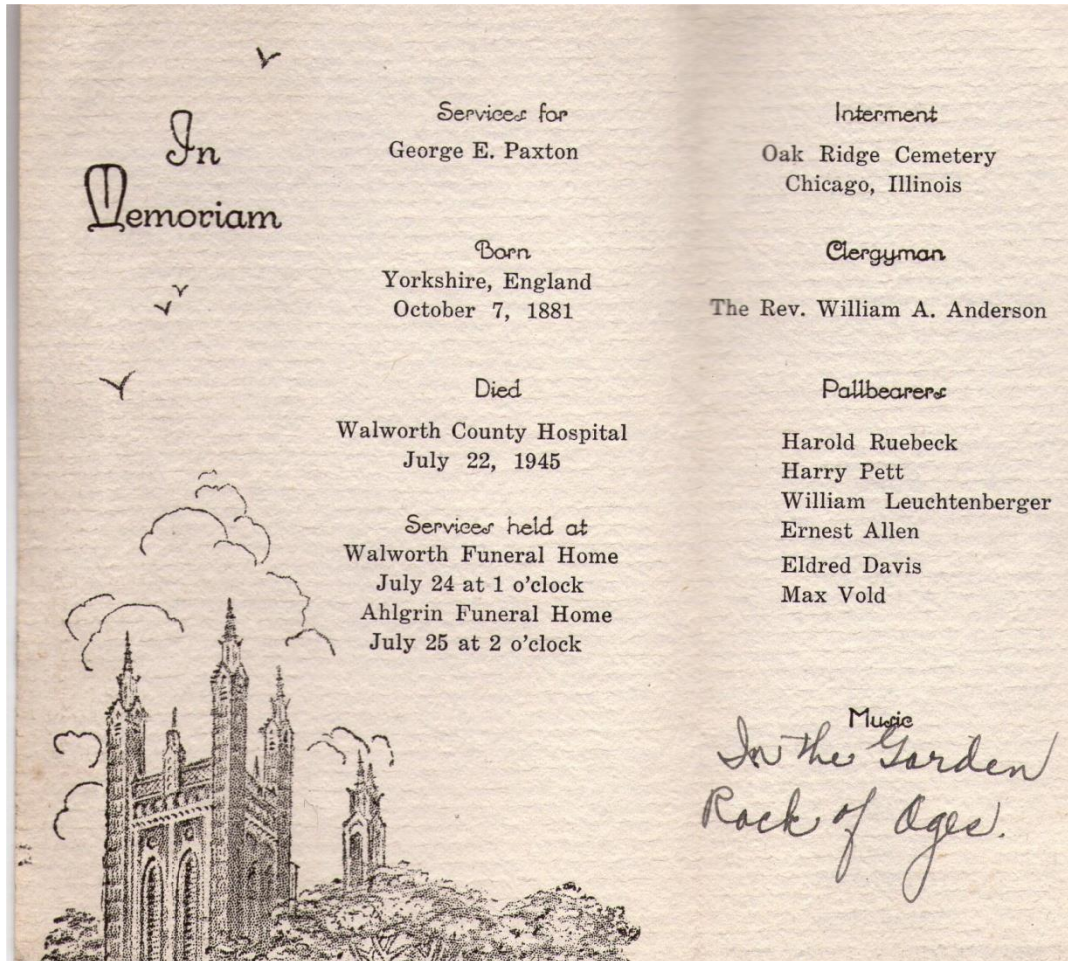


Figure 4 - Order of Service for Funeral of George Paxton, 24 July 1945

However, Elsa kept the dream alive and in July 1948, three years after George's death, she made her first journey to England, to meet George's family for the first time. During her 5 month stay she maintained a diary, which is reproduced here, describing her experiences of the journey and in and around Richmond and on her various excursions to Edinburgh and London.

The diary offers a brief, but fascinating view of the people Elsa met and the places she visited, in the immediate post war years when rationing was still in force. Everything was new to her and she was meeting everyone, family and strangers alike for the first time, so her words seem remarkably frank and fresh.

Clearly she fell in love with Richmond and Swaledale in particular and there seems so much genuine affection and love in her words. Anyone who knows this wonderful town and its people will know why.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

As the descendant of a Paxton (Frances Paxton mentioned in the diary, was my Grandmother and her inquisitive daughter Joyce is my Mother), I have wonderful childhood memories of the kindness of my Uncle Luther and Auntie Amy Paxton and visiting their house. Her words and many of the sights she describes are very familiar to me as they are, I hope, to anyone else who has known these places.

The diary is presented with accompanying notes and is based on a typed copy that was passed to me from my Mother, via my Grandmother and copied from her original diary by Elsa. I have tried to correct obvious typing errors, but left Elsa's personal way of spelling things (such as "thot" for "thought" and "bot" for "bought").

Rather tragically, one page of the diary is missing and so far I have not been able to find it. I hope one day I will be able to fill in that page! Indeed, there are many additional pieces of information that I wish I could fill in and (as any genealogist will know) this is often a never ending task. However, if anyone reading this humble publication should have any information about Elsa, her family, any of the people whose story is told here, or anything else mentioned, it will be most gratefully received and acknowledged with heartfelt thanks.



Figure 5 - Elsa Paxton Figure 6 - George Etherington Paxton

### **Elsa Paxton (Engebretson) b.26-Oct-1889 d.10 Sep 1972**

The daughter of Edward and Augusta Engebretson who were Norwegian immigrants to the USA in ().

### **George Etherington Paxton b.07-Oct-1881 d. 1945**

*US Naturalization records show a George Etherington Paxton becoming a naturalized US citizen on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1910.*

Peter Hodgson – Dec 2020 (72 years since Elsa wrote her diary)  
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# Dedication

**For all my family, especially for my wife Tracy, son Jack and daughter Ellissa.**

**In memory of Michael Collishaw, who first inspired my love of history and of Richmond.**

**In memory of Elsa and George Paxton, known to me through these pages, our Paxton heritage and the people and places we all know and love.**

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# Mrs. Columbus goes to Sea!

## 19 July 1948 (Monday) – Audrey’s and Gordon’s Home

We had planned this trip together, George and I, but he was called on longer journey from which there is no return.

George Paxton was born in Richmond, Yorkshire, England. He was 21 years of age when he came to this country and made a return journey in 1902 <sup>[1]</sup>.

I gave up all plans after George left, when to my great surprise a reservation came thru in February 1948, almost 3 years after his passing. This was one of the reservations written for at the time of planning but had not made its appearance until this later date.

The boat was the steamer “Washington”, a reconverted troop ship and all one class <sup>[2]</sup>. There were 1,630 souls on board, 1133 passengers and 497 in the crew.



Figure 7 - SS Washington of United States Lines  
([www.cruiseships.net](http://www.cruiseships.net))

After a few qualms and many excuses as to why I should not go, daughter Audrey <sup>[3]</sup> convinced me, as to why I should go, telling me in her curt humorous way, that I was over 21, spoke the language and that the responsibility would be an education. It was; and the school I attended for three months, was the very exclusive school of everyday living in a foreign country so different from our own beloved States.

### Notes

[1] US Naturalization records show a George Etherington Paxton becoming a naturalized US citizen on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1910 having arrived in Philadelphia in 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1903. It gives his address in 1910 as 734 South California Avenue, Chicago. George Paxton also made a return journey in 1908, returning to New York aboard the SS Cedric from Liverpool on 5<sup>th</sup> Sep 1908.

[2] The United States Lines' Washington was built by New York Shipbuilding Corp., of Camden, New Jersey, and was launched in 1933. She made her maiden voyage from New York to Hamburg on 10 May 1933. Purchased by the US government in 1942, she was renamed Washington in 1945 and was handed over to the US Maritime Commission after the completion of her trooping duties. She returned to service on 2 April 1946. In 1948, Washington was chartered to her original owner, United State Lines, for service on her original route, New York-Hamburg. She made her commercial last voyage, from Southampton to New York, on 12 October 1951. She was then turned back to the Maritime Commission, which placed her on Military Sea Transportation Service duty through 1953. In February 1954, Washington was mothballed as part of the Hudson River reserve fleet, becoming the largest ship ever to travel up that river north of New York City. She remained there until she was broken up in Kearny, New Jersey, in 1965.

[3] Audrey (Elsa's daughter), and her husband Gordon Hoff. Their home was in Glen Ellyn, a suburb to the West of Chicago.

[4] [A crossing on SS Washington \(You Tube\)](#)

## 20 July 1948 (Tuesday) – Chicago Airport to New York

On this day we left from Audrey's home and I began my great adventure. It was a warm and sunny day and Audrey, Gordon, Bill and Pamm including Merle <sup>[1]</sup>, accompanied me to the Municipal Air-port in Chicago. There we were my Aunt Olga, Uncle Herb, Evvie, young Herb and his new wife, all of whom were gathered to see me off <sup>[2]</sup>. Gordon in his nice way handed me a package telling me it was a little something to keep me from getting lonesome. It was a luscious box of candied fruit as I found out later. Boarding the plane I was given a seat. Looking out of the window I could see my little group and my last sight of Audrey caught her in the act of furtively wiping her eyes.



Figure 8 – United Air Lines DC6 at Chicago Municipal Airport (from a contemporary postcard)



Figure 9 - DC6 Interior ([www.delcampe.net](http://www.delcampe.net))

Amid a deafening roar slowly the great DC6 place rose. It was a United Air Lines plane and luxuriously air conditioned and very lovely. A red lighted sign above a door gave the order to fasten our safety belts; mine was broken therefore I had to change my seat.

On leaving the ground my feelings were never of fear; a feeling that is difficult to explain took hold of me, rather a buoyant feeling. To me it was the beginning of a glorious adventure.

Flying to New York, there to board a ship that was to take me to a country I knew nothing

about; to the relatives and families of George's five living brothers of whom I knew nothing except what I had learned thru long years of correspondence. What was this country like? What were the people like? Would I fit in? How awful if I didn't !!! Nevertheless for the present the sky was blue, the sun was brite and I was leaving all care behind me. Flying above the clouds I never felt closer to heaven (and probably never will).

Lunch was served on the plane with no motion to speak of only the droning of the motors. The lunch was daintily served on small grooved trays which hooked to the seats and all was very comfortable. The menu consisted of:

<i>Fresh Shrimp Cocktail</i>	<i>Crackers</i>
<i>Roast Young Duckling</i>	<i>Wild Rice</i>
<i>Buttered String Beans</i>	<i>Dinner Rolls</i>
<i>Pear &amp; Cottage Cheese Salad</i>	<i>Orange Dressing</i>
<i>Deep Dish Strawberry Pie</i>	<i>Iced Tea, Milk or Coffee</i>

Looking out and down the earth appeared like a great gray, green, and black carpet. Only two hours left of the plane trip and then New York.

### Notes

[1] Bill and Pam were Audrey and Gordon Hoff's two children.

[2] Aunt Olga and Uncle Herb and family were, I believe, related to Elsa's parents (Edward and Augusta Engebretson)

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

It is over and I am at La Guardia Air-port. Now for a cab and on to the Lexington Hotel <sup>[1]</sup> where my reservation is waiting. A very lovely hotel and in the very heart of this great city. Up to the 14<sup>th</sup> floor and into a very comfortable room. But oh! Is it hot! After resting and freshening up a bit I decided to find a place to eat a bite of supper and have a look about the town. But after a light supper in a cafeteria I found it lonely walking about, so decided to go back to the room and read. In this crowded city I felt lost. Looking out of the window folks looked like small toys moving about in the street below. It was very hot so I undressed and crept into bed and tried to read.



Figure 10 - La Guardia Airport, New York, 1940s



Figure 11 - Lexington Hotel, New York



Figure 12 - View from the 14th floor (2010)

But with the noise of the elevated trains and the heat, it was hard to concentrate. Everything was quiet for a moment when the telephone rang. Thinking someone had wrong number, I answered and discovered it was Audrey calling.

Never was anything so welcome as that small voice saying “Are you alright Mom?”. “We thought you had collapsed and wondered what became of you after you disappeared from the window of the plane.” She went to explain that neither she nor Gordy could sleep so decided to call. I told her I was very much alive and ready for most anything; but I am very sure I slept well because of that call.

### Notes

[1] The Lexington Hotel was built in 1929 and is located on the corner of 48<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue.



## 21 July 1948 (Wednesday) – New York & At Sea (Day 1)

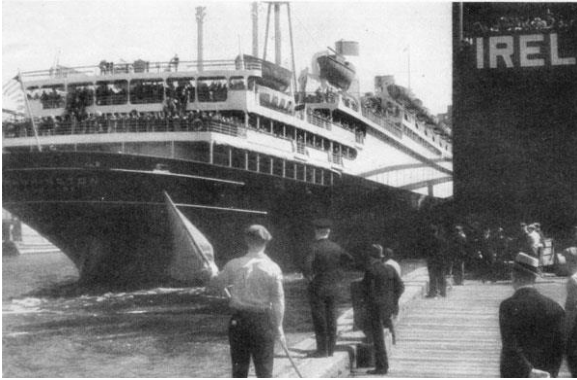


Figure 13 - SS Washington leaving Pier 61 New York ([www.cruiselinehistory.com](http://www.cruiselinehistory.com))



Figure 14 - SS Washington leaving New York ([www.cruiselinehistory.com](http://www.cruiselinehistory.com))

It is still very warm sunny and brite. After breakfast in the dining room of the hotel, I called a cab and drove down to Pier 61 on the docks and was checked in, bag and baggage. My state-room was a lovely room on A deck and my room-mate were 3 very congenial ladies. After claiming what I was told by the steward to be my bed, and putting things in their place, I decided to go on deck. I felt very much alone on this great ship standing on deck looking down at the sea of faces turned upwards looking for someone they loved, I began to feel my first misgivings.

The band was playing, confetti flying, everyone singing, crying or calling farewell to one another. Among all this turmoil I stood alone and my thots went back to George and the time he left the U.S to go back to England. I wondered what his thots and feelings were when he said goodbye to his loved England to make his new home in the new world? What would be my reaction to the folks I was going to visit and what would be theirs towards me? With all these thots milling thru my mind mingled with thots of Audrey, Gordy, and the darling children I felt the

movement of the great ship. We were off. The tugs and tenders were pulling, puffing and whistling and soon we were out of the harbour and on the board Atlantic where for 5 days we were on our own and with our companions in travel. It seemed like a miracle to me and I kept wondering how I could ever settle down to a mere living again after this experience, but then, folks do go abroad, come home and live healthy normal lives again.

In all the excitement of taking off I missed the statue of Liberty as I was on the opposite side of the boat. I missed her coming home too.

The journey started, I went down to the lounge and sent a telegram informing the children that I was really on my way. Here I met a Mrs Walsh and her daughter Joan from Ontario Canada travelling to Wales to visit her Mother. We immediately joined forces and at the dinner table met another fine lady, Mrs. Ellison of Cedar Rapids, IA. She was on her way to join her relatives also in England. We four became boat palls and were seen all over the boat together. Little Joan and I soon became fast friends and travelled around, up and down the boat together. Also we had tendencies towards sea-sickness and misery loves company.

## 22 July 1948 (Thursday) – At Sea (Day 2) – An unwelcome visitor!



Figure 15 - SS Washington at New York  
(Maritime Digital Archive Encyclopedia)

This day the second one at sea, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of George's death. Coming into my cabin this afternoon, I found a most beautiful gardenia corsage waiting a gift from Bill and Pam in memory and also a lovely basket of fruit which was later to act as an identification or my own self to the folks I was going to visit. I kept intact and never opened it until I reached my destination. This day is warm and sunny with the sea very blue and calm. Everyone is getting settled and resigning themselves for the voyage and all are now lined up for deck chairs and robes. Just to sit in your own chair for minutes or hours if one so desired, and to relax in every fibre of one's being and to watch the waves and the great expanse of sea, was pure joy.

My first nite on board was a rather exciting one. We had gone to the lounge to watch the dancing, and on retiring at 11.30 I found I had a visitor in my bed. This was rather a predicament as all my belongings had been moved to an upper berth and finding the occupant fast asleep, there wasn't much else I could do but climb the ladder and make myself comfortable until morning. This new bed-pal was an elderly lady whom I had not met previous to seeing her in my bed, and it seemed such a pity to disturb her. After quite an argument in the morning I saw the purser and things were arranged but she had really slept in the wrong pew that first night.

Each evening the bulletin board carries the order to set watches ahead on hour. England time is six hours ahead of our time. The chart shows we are about 449 miles out and the sea is getting choppy. We are not just 2000 miles away from Cobh Ireland. A luscious box of candy came to the state-room today a gift from Jean Bonthron; how sweet of her to remember me!

The food is very good and there is quantities of it. We are on the early sitting for all meals. Most of the passengers are Irish and such a happy lot. It has turned cold and we walked the deck to keep warm. Later we again went to the lounge and watched the dancing; retired at 11.30.

### Notes

[1] You Tube – A Crossing on the SS Washington c1948

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFuyIBq4opw>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFuyIBq4opw>

## 23 July 1948 (Friday) – At Sea (Day 3) – Irish Dancing.

The day is cold gray and misty. Everything I own in the way of warm clothing is in my trunk in the hold. On this morning breakfast was very welcome and very delicious; so much food and such a variety! A young Russian lad was my side companion at table, and he didn't miss much of what was served. If three cereals were served, he had three cereals. We always had two servings of stewed fruit he had both. If two choices of meat were on the menu, he had both, until sometimes I almost forgot to eat my own meal; I became so absorbed in watching him. Yet, he never was sea-sick a day, and I'm wondering if that was the answer.

Mrs Ellison and I are definitely boat pals. She is a past Matron and so is Mrs Walsh; so we really were fortunate in finding one another.

I discovered on the passenger the name of Mr Joseph Paxton. At dinner that day the steward informed me that a Mr. Paxton was looking for me. So far I haven't seen him. It is afternoon and I am feeling sick. The sea is grey looking and getting very rough. We sat on deck most of the afternoon and I see where the windows had been put up on both sides of the deck almost one half the length of the ship. The steward told us the farther we get out towards the Irish Sea the rougher and colder it will be getting.



Figure 16 - SS Washington - The Veranda Cafe  
(Shipping Wonders of the World 1935)

After the evening meal we again retired to the lounge this time to a reserved corner for the antics of the Irish, who were in the midst of their folk dances and songs. Some of those old Irishmen could certainly jig. They are a jolly lot and we shall miss them when they leave us at Cobh. There are movies shown every afternoon and evening but up to this time I haven't attended any of them.

Notes

[1] You Tube – SS Washinton interiors <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS5fT8aP9tU>

## 24 July 1948 (Saturday) – At Sea (Day 4) – Another Paxton?

**to All EUROPE**  
IRELAND, ENGLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY

**s.s. Manhattan** will sail June 15, July 13, Aug. 10  
**s.s. Washington** will sail June 29, July 27, Aug. 24

CHOSEN last year by 37,000 travelers, the *Manhattan* and *Washington* are two of the most popular ships afloat. For at surprisingly moderate rates, they offer you every comfort and luxury from tiled swimming pools to a bedside telephone. You'll enjoy, too, a genuine hospitality that is surprising for ships of such size and speed . . . grand food . . . thoughtful service. A thousand and one details reflect a management highly skilled in the art of pleasing experienced travelers who know travel values best.

**CABIN CLASS \$186 up**  
**TOURIST \$127 up**  
*Round trip reductions.*

**Other United States Lines Sailings**  
**Pres. Harding**, June 8, July 7, Aug. 3  
**Pres. Roosevelt**, June 22, July 20, Aug. 17  
*Cabin Class, \$141 up*

Also "American One Class" ships weekly direct to London—fortnightly to Cobh and Liverpool—\$105 up; \$199.50 up, round trip.

Ask your TRAVEL AGENT for complete details.

**UNITED STATES LINES**  
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*Offices in other principal cities*

The day is grey, rough and cold. I spent the day sitting on deck and must admit I am not feeling at all well. I met Mr. Joseph Paxton after dinner in the lounge. A small man about 75 years of age and born in Manchester and owns a textile plant in New York. This was his first trip home in 40 years. He has a son George E. Paxton and we thot that quite a coincidence as George's father name was Joseph too. We had a nice long talk and when we parted hoped to see one another again. He was positive he was related to the Paxtons in some way. But I never saw him again, and sometimes I have wondered if I really ever did see him. Perhaps he was sea-sick as I was. Retired early and was glad to get to bed.

Figure 17 - 1930s advertisement for SS Washington ([www.cruiselinehistory.net](http://www.cruiselinehistory.net))

Notes

[1]



## 25 July 1948 (Sunday) – At Sea (Day 5) – Sea Sick!

This is Sunday and I did so want to attend church with Mrs. Ellison and Mrs. Walsh, but didn't dare venture it as I was feeling pretty sick. The stewardess brot my lunch to the cabin and give me some sea-sick pills. I forced myself to eat some of the meal than went back to bed and with the swishing of the sea in my ears; I fell asleep and slept until for o'clock. I hunted my pals and found Joan sick too. We walked the deck all of us, but I just can't seem to get right side up.

This is the night of the Captain's dinner and is always a very gala affair. The sea is getting rougher by the minute and the boat is rocking and pitching. I attended and had a grand time, although I couldn't eat too much. It is just like a New Years dinner party with hats caps and confetti and noise makers.

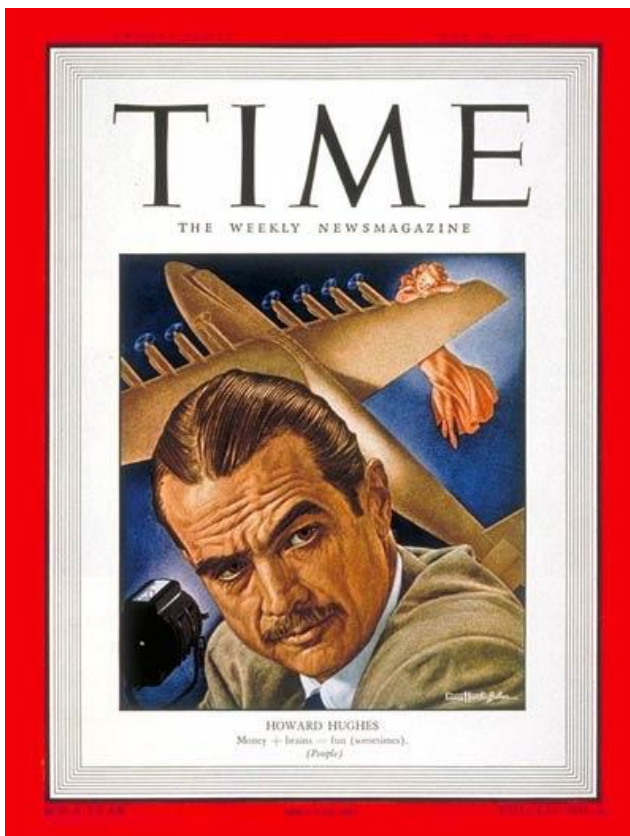


Figure 18 - TIME Magazine - July 1948 featuring Howard Hughes and his Spruce Goose

The captain is sitting at a table back of me and looks very foolish with a funny cap tilted on the side of his head. We were served stake, turkey, or ham with all the trimmings. After dinner we went on deck and stayed there until 12.30. The folks bound for Cobh dock early in the morning, and there is extra activity on board for everyone is watching for the Irish coast. I carried 3 boxes of Mother's stills sea sick pills and all to no avail. Had I found or remembered my writing paper I might avoided a lot of trouble. The story came from a little elderly lady at home, who advised wearing it from the first day I sailed until I reached my destination. It was just plain ordinary writing paper to be worn next to the skin never one's tummy. I did as I was told and all went well for 3 days. Then I lost (the) paper and forgot about going along as usual and shortly afterwards took ill. I shall always blame myself for not having a supply of stationary on hand.

Notes

[1]

## 26 July 1948 (Monday) – At Sea (Day 6) – The Duchess.

I have been thinking a lot about my brother Herb <sup>[1]</sup> today. It is his birthday and I can't help but wish he might see this big liner with me on it. It is still early and we are waiting for the call to breakfast. While waiting we see the beautiful ship "The Duchess" <sup>[2]</sup> pass and call her signal to us. A beautiful ship and bound for the States. Nine A.M. and here is the call to breakfast. Tomorrow all passengers bound for Cobh will dock. We shall miss them. The following day is our turn and i am looking forward to seeing London. There is never a dull moment on this ship what with the movies, deck tennis, dancing and other amusements. Then too, we have tea served every afternoon at 3.30P.M. We received our landing cards today.

### Notes

[1] At the moment I am still searching for details about "Herb" Engebretson, Elsa's brother who does not appear to be living with Elsa and her parents in the US Census records for 1920.

[2] Possibly one of the Canadian Pacific Line's Duchess class (e.g. You Tube: Duchess of Bedford <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nw1adeFP1v0>)

## 27 July 1948 (Tuesday) – At Sea (Day 7) – Cobh, Ireland

Today the Irish leave us. We stopped and a tender came out to meet us and to let the folks disembarking. We stood at the rail and watched the luggage being moved, while in the distance the beautiful shores of Ireland were viable in the mist. Goodbye to the Irish; it was nice travelling with you. Things seem very quiet and the decks and ship seem empty.



Figure 19 - Cobh Cathedral and waterfront

## 28 July 1948 (Wednesday) – Southampton, London, Darlington & Richmond

Today my feet will touch English soil. We land in Southampton at 8am. I arose at 4 A.M. and no one was awake in the cabin. I knelt on a chair and looked out at the expanse of ocean and there in the early dawn I saw it take shape; the first pale glimpse of the outline of hills of old England! Minute by minute the grey light turned to daylight and the hilly shore took form, and I saw the beautiful green of the fields and farms. George's home-land. The country I have come so far to visit. Standing alone with the sound of the waves in my ears I offered a prayer for guidance. I'm sure George was close by as I neared the land of his birth.



Figure 20 - Southampton Docks post war

Everything now was excitement and hub-bub. We docked at 8am and had to pass through immigration and landed at 9:30 on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>, a day ahead of schedule due to a tail wind so we were told. We were due in on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Going thru customs was a matter of routine, and as I had a long list made up for the purpose of insurance, it was quite a help to the customs officer, in my declaration.

The basket of fruit I was carrying and which I had kept intact, was in question. The customs officer pointed a finger at me and sternly asked "what is in the basket?" I told him I didn't know and that I had not opened it as I was keeping it intact for the folks to enjoy once I reached my destination. Still keeping that finger pointed at me, he said "do you mean to tell me that you, a woman, never even was curious enough to poke a finger thru the paper and take a peek?" I said "I most certainly do" he said "well, you are the first woman I ever knew who could carry a basket all these miles and not let her curiosity get the best of her. Pass"

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Mrs. Ellison and I then boarded the boat train. She didn't fare as well as I did, for she lost her trunk containing a beautiful ham weighing 18lbs. The lost of her trunk took the edge off our journey, and we sincerely hoped it would turn up in London! London, with Big Ben! What memories it awakened. Memories of war years when in the deep hours of the night I would hear the voices of the radio downstairs tuned in for the returns from across the sea and the one I loved listening anxiously for the news of his old country. And Big Ben ... how the clanging of his loud voice echoed in my mind as he struck the hour of 6am announcing the BBC was on the air. It was just past noon when we entered London and I saw him tall and shining in the sun against a clear sky. So this was the clock whose sonorous voice clanged across that great expanse of water' between my country and England. I can hear my dear one saying "Welcome to my old country, my girl!



Figure 21 - 1947 Postcard of Parliament Square and Big Ben

This is a good a place as any to say I was going to visit George's five brothers and their families <sup>[1]</sup>. There was Tom, the eldest, with Ina, his wife, and Ella their only daughter, they also have two sons both married; Joe, who lives in Darlington, and his wife, Lizzie; then Sep and Ame, Septimus for the 7<sup>th</sup> son. They live in Stokesley. Harry, who is a bachelor, and lives in Pontefract and then lastly Luther the youngest with whom I was to make my home, and his wife Amy or Jo as everyone calls her. The Paxton's at one time boasted 10 boys and just one girl Nance, who passed away 7 years ago, while one boy died during the war and two died in infancy. Harry's middle is Octavius meaning the 8<sup>th</sup> son. Brother Jo has one daughter, Frances, living in Catterick Camp with her husband, Jack Warner, and one daughter, Joyce. Frances has been wonderful correspondent thru the years always keeping us informed as to all the family news. My home was to be at Castle Hill 17 and here I made my headquarters for 3 months <sup>[2]</sup>.

Notes

[1] See Appendix for further details of the Paxton family

[2] Elsa actually stayed close to 5 months!



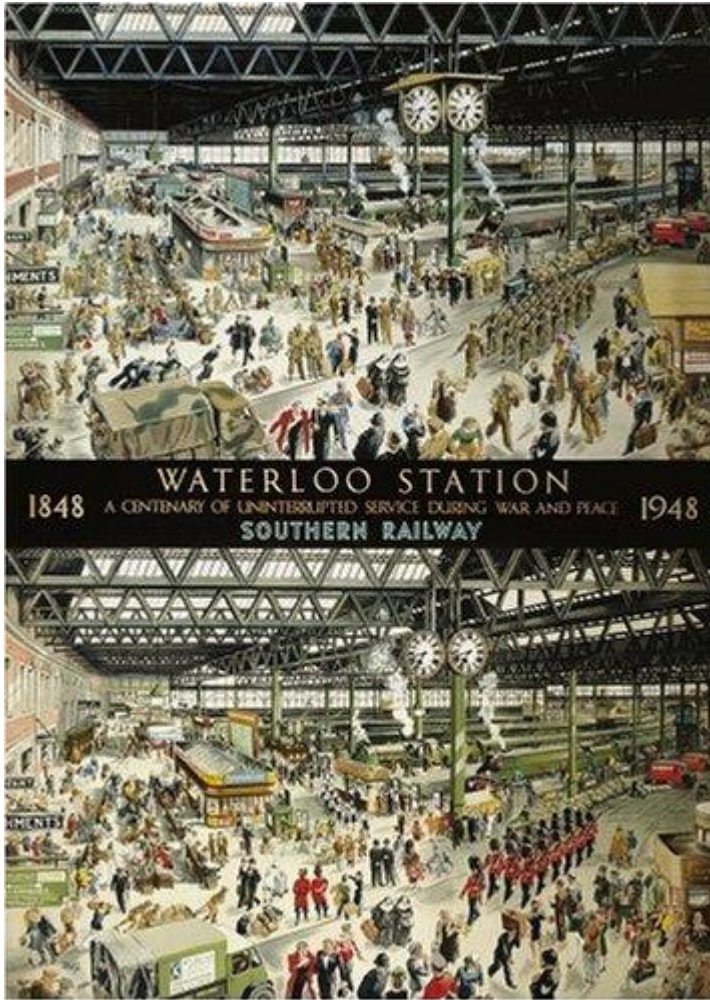


Figure 22 - Waterloo Station 1948 Centenary Poster (Helen McKie)

After our two hour ride on the boat train, we arrived at Waterloo Station in London <sup>[1]</sup>. What a busy place! And how very different from our own American Rail-road stations! It was with a heady feeling I looked forward to my holiday.

Mrs. Ellison (we had left Mrs. Walsh and Joan at Southampton) decided to find a porter and leave out luggage and then fortify ourselves with a cup of tea, and then change our money into English coin of the realm. Up to this point we had not found the missing trunk. The day was warm and clear. We had tea in a very cutlery place a not overly clean tea-room opposite the station. The tea was excellent but the sandwich was just nothing, oh how I was going to miss the good old American Hamburger!

After tending to our personal affairs, we once more looked for the missing trunk but never located it. Long after our visit after we were home, I inquired about the trunk in one of my letters, and learned that it was finally found but was in a wrecked condition. Poor Ham!

We arranged for a cab and she left me at Euston Station while I was bound for King's Cross. She was headed for Belfast Ireland, to visit her folks. At Euston we said our farewells and they were sad for both of us knew one would never see the other again. We still corresponded after two years.

#### Notes

[1] Waterloo Station opened on 11 July 1848 and was enjoying its centennial year when Elsa arrived.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Arriving at King's Cross station the taxi turned me over to a porter and charged him to look after me and to take care of me. He sure did! I told him I had no knowledge of English money and said I hoped he would be honest with me.

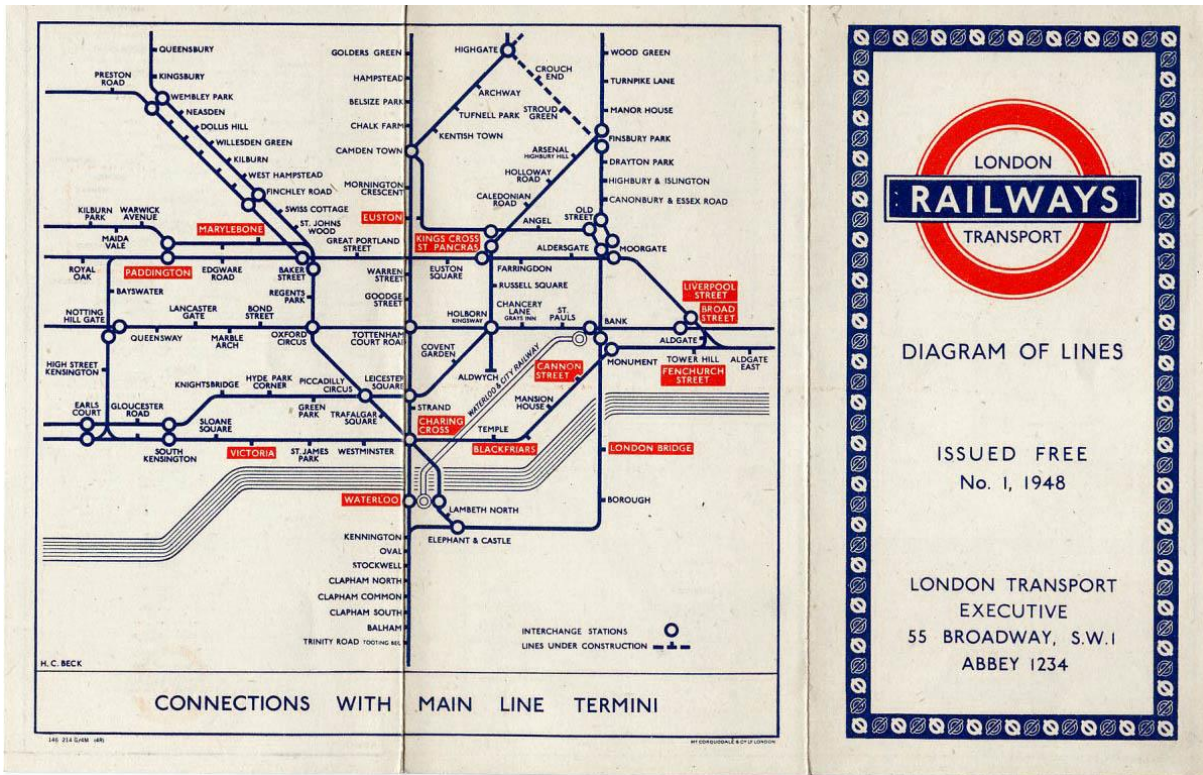


Figure 24 - 1948 First Issue London Railways Transport Map



Figure 23 - 1948 London Olympics Poster

I gave him a 10 shilling note and said I wished him to send a telegram and that I expected the right amount of change in return. In the telegram I explained I would carry a basket tied with pink ribbon. This was my identification.

Everything was now in order but I still had quite some time to wait the arrival of the train. In the meantime the porter hung around until I finally told him to go about his business and that he could return at train time. He disappeared but not for long. He inquired if I had any cigarettes? I told him they were in the bottom of my trunk.

### Notes

[1] Elsa doesn't ever mention them once, but London was hosting the 1948 Olympics – they began the day after she arrived on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1948. The games were called the “Austerity Games” because rationing was still in force – the athletes qualified for increased rations (up to 5467 calories a day as opposed to the normal 2600 – the same as Dockers and Miners!)



At long last the train came. The porter put me on after finding me a seat. Before boarding the train I saw to it that my luggage was aboard. For this service I tipped him a ½ crown like our 50cent piece. I had also tipped him that amount for the seat and sending the telegram. That was one dollar and a half and still he stood there. Finally I asked him if everything wasn't alright. He answered in his high cockney voice, he thot the services rendered were worth more. I was beginning to lose my temper. I knew I had given him plenty so I told him "now you listen to me, I know when I have been bled and just because I'm American is no reason I'm a fool. Now you get going or I'll see that you do for you have received more than enough from me and that's all you'll get". He went. When I told the folks of my little tipping spree, they were horrified and said most any one ever tips in England is 6 pence! This is six cents and the size of our dime <sup>[1]</sup>.



Figure 25 - First Class Train Compartment c. 1950

I was riding in a compartment with 8 young soldiers and sailors all very young men and myself the only woman. A compartment in an English train has two seats facing one another each seat holding four people. These compartments are enclosed in glass with two glass windows and in the centre a glass door. The English can do with the least air of any folk I have met. The youngsters were all smoking. Those who were not, were asleep. It was a very hot day, and with 8 in the compartment we were or I was about to suffocate. At last we were on the way. The boys said the weather was unusual but I called it boiling. They were a happy lot and tried their best to keep me talking. They love our American accent. I was very uncomfortable, and after riding almost ½ the distance, I took a look at my ticket. I then discovered I had a first class ticket and was riding 3<sup>rd</sup> class. At that moment a young English women with whom I had travelled on the boat passed by. I watched for her return and hailed as she

came back and showed her my ticket. She immediately saw I was in the wrong coach and hailed a porter. He transferred me to the head coach which was luxurious and more comfortable than the one I had left but also full of males.

Notes

[1] In 1948 a British Pound consisted of 20 shillings (each made up of 12 old pennies) and was worth about four US Dollars. The 10 shilling note (50p in decimal) would have been worth about 2 dollars and the ½ crown (2½ shillings) about 50 cents.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

But this time they were all Scotch and English officers, very attentive and helped me settle in my new surroundings. Again there was hot air and the coach was very stuffy and hot <sup>[1]</sup>. Finally, one of the Scotch lads no doubt feeling sorry for me, and seeing my red face asked, if I was warm? I said “dreadfully” for by this time I too was picking up some of their expressions. He made a long sort of funnel of news-paper and really opened a window placing the funnel in the opening. This caused a draft and felt heavenly. These officers were very talkative and asked many questions about the different states and their government and ways of speaking; their sizes and the various nationalities living together. I noticed they kept me talking but I didn’t have much opportunity to question them in my turn.

The country we were passing thru was very beautiful. I have never seen grass have such vivid colours. I especially noticed the gorgeous poppies growing wild in the fields. England has a most beautiful variety of wild flowers. Leaving London the country seemed rather flat for many miles and then as we went along gradually began to change. The farther north we travelled, the cooler the air became and the landscape ever more lovely. Many small hills and vales appeared and rose higher and higher. At this phase in the journey, the men were talkative. Then I, in turn asked many questions. They were very kind and answered all I asked. Then they wanted to know all about the cow-boys and Indians. They were all very much in favour of President Truman. Then, too, they cannot understand having so much money over here. No rationing and permitted to purchase what-so-ever our fancy dictates.

After 5 ½ hours off riding. One of the officers said “next station is Darlington” my heart gave a flip. This then was journeys end! In a short time they should see me and I should see them I wondered what first impressions would really be like oh George, my dear, how I wish you were here with me.

### Notes

[1] This evening would see the warmest night time temperature ever recorded in Britain (73.4°F, in London)!

[2] President Truman was keeping his own diary too in 1948 - <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hst/a.htm>. It was in this year that he won what is often regarded as the greatest Presidential election upset in US History – beating Republican Thomas E. Dewey on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Chicago Tribune famously printed the headline “Dewey Defeats Truman” based on the opinion polls before the result was know – a grinning Truman was photographed with it the next day. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_presidential\\_election,\\_1948](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1948)

The porter is now coming thru and calling "Next stop Darlington". After the long ride here I am at here at last! My baggage is in a neat pile on the station platform. The little English friend I met came to spend a few moments with me. I was so grateful for her presence. I see no-one that looks like my folks. The train give its high shrill whistle and my English lady gives me "Cheerio and God-speed" hopes they'll find and away they go<sup>[1]</sup>. I stood quietly among my baggage and just wondered what to do next. Presently a porter came along and saw at once what the trouble was and told me not to worry and that everything would be alright. I told him I had sent a telegram advising them just when I should arrive, but something must have gone wrong. I asked whether the station had a loud speaker system? He said it had. Then I requested him to announce my arrival over the speaker. "By Jove" he said "I shall do so at once". Soon I head the loud voice coming thru. "Will Mr & Mrs Paxton please come to the information desk". Then presently – there they were – six of them walking abreast, waving and calling and laughing. Luther tossing his hat in the air! Then I looked down and saw the basket that was to be my identification and still wrapped in paper. I hadn't even taken the paper off, much less how could they see the pink ribbon? I carried my hat in my hand, the package in my arms and was rooted to the spot. With tears coursing down my cheeks I greeted each one of



Figure 26 - Darlington Station

them and finally some one gathered the luggage and we all went to the car that was waiting. They had hired a cab for the occasion and 7 of us started for home. Each time I attempted to say something the tears would start once again. So I sat listening to them talking about me. Telling me I looked just as they expected I would; telling me how sorry they were to meet me alone without their brother Geordie coming too.

Oh! My dear, my dear, how I missed you and how lonely I felt! They talked on and on telling me how very tired I must be, and I just sat and said nothing. It was an evening with twi-lite coming on; the country looked very beautiful with the setting sun just sinking. English twi-lite lasts for hours and it was the time of day I liked and learned to love the best of all. We passed through several small towns all lovely and peaceful and so quaintly built of stone and cobbles. The car was full of chatter but I just sat there with my thots drinking in the beauty of the evening, listening to these folks whom I had just met for the first time, and whose language was so familiar after writing it all these years. It was as though I were listening in on the radio or inside of a beautiful <word missing?><sup>[2]</sup>. I felt like pinching myself to find out if it was a dream. Luther was the brother that impressed me the most as being like his brother George. He had the same twinkle in his eye, the same walk, the same way of speaking, with the same curly hair.

#### Notes

[1] This sentence doesn't seem to make sense – but I've left it as written – perhaps "hope they'll find the trunk" ?

[2] A missing word here I think. A beautiful what Elsa? Dream perhaps?

One of the strangest sights and one I shall never forget, were the chimney pots topping off the houses; these homes were many of them called detached or semi-detached homes. These chimney pots are definitely England.

We reached the home town of Richmond in the dim twilight. I had my first glimpse of the River Swale and old Richmond Castle, standing high over the town, keeping watch and dreaming of centuries long past. It was this castle that George talked most about; it was here that so much of his happy boy-hood and boyish pranks were played. We often wearied of hearing tales of the old castle and talked about mostly at Christmas time. These same tales became a ritual as the years passed by. Had I known what I know now, I should never have tired of listening. Looking back over the years, he was very conservative in the telling. How his heart must have ached for the beauty of his country!



Figure 27 - Richmond Castle and Richmond Town at dusk ([www.allenbrindle.co.uk](http://www.allenbrindle.co.uk))

We arrived at the home on Castle Hill soon to be my home, and I saw a quaint old home of 3 stories all of old grey stone (everything is grey and ancient in this town) and I was thrilled at the sight. The roofs too are all of grey slate; no wonder they stand for centuries!





Figure 28 - 17 Castle Hill, Richmond (2011) [1]

Many of the homes I visited have stone floors; Luther's had lovely oak floors. He is what we in this country call a plumber and has his own business. Over hear he is called a Sanitary Engineer and Heat Expert. His show rooms were on the first floor. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor carried the Living or drawing room, with a fireplace, a small dining room, and a kitchen. There was running water which came from the hills and was crystal clear.

Notes

[1] Elsa's bedroom window must have been top right. The windows on the left hand side look towards the market place.

There were electric lights and the bathroom was a work of art. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor were two very lovely bedrooms; looking out over the town and mine, overlooking the rolling hills, saw nothing of the town only the country and the funny chimney pots on the homes of the neighbours below.

Far away I saw the ruins of an old abbey, the tower the only remaining part of the building. Rolling hills, green fields, lovely sunsets, all these were mine. Each day I went downstairs to the living rooms below, I stood on the landing and looked my fill at grand old Richmond Castle. It was almost in the back yard of their home. In English homes the bathroom proper is in a room alone with the toilet seat in a room of its own. This appealed to me and I wondered why we Americans had not thot of this? But then, I should know it takes too much time to do things and we are all too much in a hurry to accomplish things in the least possible time.

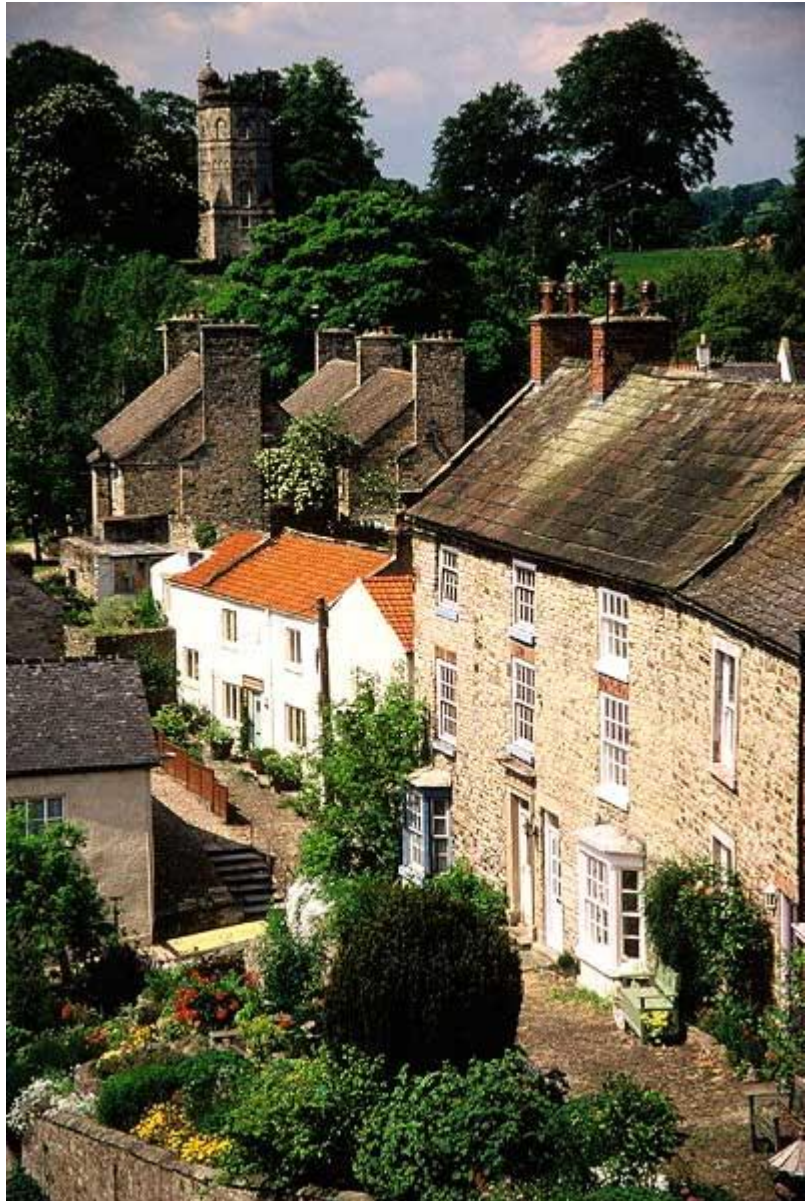


Figure 29 - Culloden Tower from Castle Walk

Notes

[1] This is Culloden Tower (built in 1746 by John Yorke, MP for Richmond, to mark the final establishment of Hanoverian rule after the Battle of Culloden. It stands in the park of his long-demolished house) or more likely the ruins of Grey Friars which was established in 1257 and fell into ruins in 1538 following Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries(the northernmost Grey Friar site in England).



## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

We sat down to supper at 7.30 in the drawing room. They had moved the table close to the window overlooking the busy town square which is a terminal for bus lines. It was interesting to watch the traffic and the activities of the town.

Our first supper that nite was rabbit pie, peas, potatoes and a fruit and custard pudding which I learned to love and still do to this day.

Here is as good a place as any to say I had sent 22½ lbs. of food across for almost 5 months. This was an assurance on my part making me feel that I was not dependant on their tightly rationed food. Many times in the days that followed, it gave me a good feeling to be able to offer and not to take. This fruit and custard was a simple dish of canned or fresh fruit with custard poured over it. I loved it and still do.

After supper Amy insisted I see the castle walk. So we left the dishes and started off. We turned the corner of the house and walked only a few feet down hill and steep too, and then we were on Castle Walk.



Figure 30 - The path along Castle Hill, leading to Castle Walk

This walk is a regular cement walk all round the castle and takes in about 2 blocks of square territory. Benches are placed along the work at intervals and on the sunny side facing the river, some very beautiful scenery may be enjoyed. Here I came of a morning and wrote my diary sitting in the sun-lite and listening to the river far below.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

The moon had risen and my first impression of Richmond Castle and the River Swale was a very impressive and beautiful one. Standing high over the river in the moon-lite on this my first evening in George's old home town, my feelings were such that I am unable to express them. We stood there, quietly gazing and saying nothing but each one knowing what the other was thinking. If there is a life after death, I'm sure George was with us there on that unforgettable evening. It being 9.30, we walked slowly home in silence. My journey was ended. My visit begun and I knew I was in the right place. Dear, dear Amy and Luther, how well you understood and how perfect you made my welcome and my stay!



Figure 31 – The River Swale and Green Bridge from Castle Walk

*Notes*

[1]



## 29 July 1948 (Thursday) – Richmond & Rationing!

My first morning and a lovely cup of tea in bed! Amy insisted I stay in bed and have my breakfast and I needed no coaxing. The weather was cool and I had slept under an eider down comforter and vowed when I reached home that I would purchase one at once. All English use eider down and they are warm! I was propped high in bed and could see out of the window and far out to the high terraces. These are high sloping hills with homes built upon them and at the back of these terraces are the moors. The word “moors” always brings to mind the tales of Sherlock Holmes. I decided then and there it would be one of my first jaunts to visit the moors.

Amy and I talked all morning and Luther is so much like George, I am startled by the close resemblance. He is full of fun and good humor.



Figure 32 - Richmond Market Place (c.1960)

Later in the morning we went marketing. Everyone carries a small leather shopping bag, wear hats, carry baskets and wear suits or costumes as they call them. It being cold up there so far up North, a suit is most comfortable. Everyone looks neat and right at all times.

Bread is carried un-wrapped. Butter, lard and fats are all rationed and are wrapped in a small piece of paper, for paper is hard to get. One egg per person per week, one pint of milk, one eighth of a lb. of butter, ¼ lb. of margarine, one tablespoon of fat, ¼ lb. of sugar and all sweets and candies are rationed. These amounts mentioned are all per person per week. Bread and all bakery were taken off rationing just before we landed <sup>[1]</sup>. Meat only once a week and it is bot and accepted like a pig and a poke. Amy and I made a game of it. We would close our eyes, open the parcel and hope for the best. We found beef three-quarters of the time. On one occasion we found ox tails! I asked “Does everyone get ox tails today?” and Amy said “most certainly!”. I asked “Royalty too?” and she said “why yes!”. Then I asked “where in the world does the rest of the cow go?” and Amy said “well fancy that, where does it go?”. No complaints, no centuring, just stolid acceptance and no questions asked. That’s England.

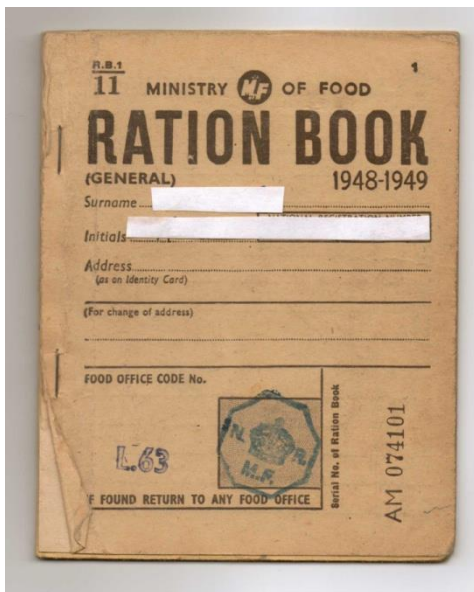


Figure 33 - 1948 Ministry of Food Ration Book

I have a ration and a clothing book and on leaving town I apply for an emergency card. In this way, it helps the family too as they may use my card while I am gone. Each time I went visiting I carried some food with me from my stock I had sent across. Some of our packaged and ready made puddings were strange to them but they soon became acquainted with them and were fond of it. Especially the canned chicken which they liked very much.

The food here is very reasonable, with bread 4 cents a loaf and meat a shilling a lb. Sugar is very scarce and so is soap due to the shortage of fats. Fish is plentiful and I never tired of it. I loved Fish & Chips. These shops are all over England and Scotland.

Notes

[1] Bread was rationed from 1946 and came “off the ration” in July 1948 as Elsa mentions. Jam followed in December. Tea stayed rationed until 1952, sweets, sugar, eggs and cream until 1953 and meat and fats until 1954.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Today I met Amy's sister, Gladys Collishaw and fell in love with her. She has an 18 year old son in the Army. He is very mature for his years and so many young folks are very serious looking. The war has certainly done something to these young folk who should be merry and happy.

For a country so closely rationed, it seems we eat all the time! Tea in bed, then breakfast, then elevenses and dinner at 12.30. I don't like English coffee. So one day I suggested making an American cup. I made it but I was the only one who drank it. It went down the drain. Tea again at 4.30 and supper at 8pm. There is a high tea and a low tea. High tea includes cold meats, cheese, jams & bread and butter. Low tea is bread and butter, scones and cookies. It took some time to get it all straight in my mind.

After tea, Luther and I walked over to see dear old Tom. I met Tom's wife Ina and their daughter Ella. All fine homely folks and they made me feel very welcome. We spent a very fine evening and on the way home went by the way of the high terrace. Again a lovely moon-lite shining softly over the town far below us.



Figure 34 - Castle Walk, Richmond



Richmond has a population of 10,000 <sup>[1]</sup> and was built piece meal. A long time ago this was a walled city. There are still parts of the wall standing with 4 gates which were entrances thru the wall. There are still parts of the wall standing with 4 gates which were entrances thru the wall.



Figure 35 - Bar Gate - One of Richmond's original town gates

This town fairly reeks of history <sup>[2]</sup>, and is a well know city of battles between the Scots and the English, centuries ago. Odd small walks curving and climbing up to the terraces, cobblestone streets, old stone houses with their slate roofs and in the center of the town the old Grey Friars Monastery built by these same monks with their lovely flowers and gardens behind a high spiked fence. Over all, and seen from all parts of the town, rises old Richmond Castle, majestic in its ruins and loneliness, dreaming of days long past when once it was in its height and splendour. And so ends my first day in the ancient town of old Richmond, Yorkshire.

Notes

[1] The population is still around 10000 in 2011

[2] More on the history of Richmond can be found here;

<http://www.richmond.org/index.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richmond,\\_North\\_Yorkshire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richmond,_North_Yorkshire)

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64711>

## 30 July 1948 (Friday) – Richmond – Shopping and a Walk

I took a walk around the castle this morning alone; took some pictures and wrote my diary, then home to dinner. Luther will not be home so Amy and I shall have dinner alone. Gladys and a friend, Mary Cherry, came to call and we all went shopping. We visited Woolworths and I felt very much at



Figure 36 - Former Post Office, Queens Road, Richmond

home until I tried to read the price tags. From there we went to the “Drapers” or dry goods stores. Then we stopped in at the Post Office<sup>[1]</sup>, a place I was to frequent in days to come. We ended up buying an ice cream sandwich and then crossed the road and into the Friary Gardens where we rested. Rioutous color just ran over everywhere. The sandwich tasted like our sherbert. Because of the shortage of milk and cream it isn't ice cream.



Figure 37 - Friary Gardens, Richmond (opposite the old Post Office)

### Notes

[1] The old Post Office on Queen's Road is now a Public House – The Ralph Fitz Randal (founder of the Friary)



## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

After our 5 o'clock tea, Luther, Amy and I walked the banks of the river. The banks are called Billy Banks <sup>[1]</sup> with great stones and boulders and high hills rising on either side. Here the river sings its songs and all is very quiet and peaceful. We took some pictures and Amy bathed her feet in the cold water.

Luther and I sat and talked and ate an apple for it makes no difference where one goes in England the lunch is always in evidence. It has always amazed me the folks over here can do so many things in the evening after the sun has set. I keep forgetting the long twi-lites which gives them so much more time to enjoy themselves.

We walked home and I showed the slides I had brot with me. They were Gordon's colored slides and he had given me a small viewer to take with me. Pictures of Audrey, Gordon, Pam, Bill and myself. Then, too, there were some of George in his garden, in our home and they never tired of looking at these. There were also a few of our sky scrapers. They called our homes "posh" which means super-duper. Another lovely day ended.



Figure 38 - George & Elsa's House, Walworth WI, USA (c.1930)

### Notes

[1] Billy Bank Wood & Round Howe Wood are located on the far side of the town, over Green Bridge.

## 31 July 1948 (Saturday) – Easby Abbey & the Great Storm

Saturday, and Saturday is a very busy day at # 17. Frances calls for cakes at Catterick Camp<sup>[1]</sup> purchased by Amy; Glad calls; Frances in turn has had sausages ordered by Amy for herself; it is all very confusing and a lot of money changing and strange figures and odd counting of pence, lbs and shillings goes on and finally after all is settled and is peaceful, cocoa is served and everyone is happy and satisfied. All except Amy who each week is a nervous wreck!



Figure 39 - Joyce, Jack and Frances Warner (c.1954)

Frances is the daughter of brother Joe and has a small daughter age 10; this Saturday being our first meeting, I noticed she never took her eyes off me and finally she sidled up to me and shyly asked, "Auntie, Elsa, are all Americans black?" Only she pronounced it "Blek".

After assuring her we all have the same coloring as the folks over here, the mystery was solved. A contingent of American GI's were stationed at the camp and they were from the South and negroes. She, hearing they were Americans naturally that they were a sample of what we Americans looked like. She surely must have been looking forward to seeing me!

I met Michael Collishaw today. A tall serious and altogether charming young man. He is Amy's nephew and just 18, also in the army at present. Amy, Michael and I are going pick-nicking this afternoon altho Amy is rather dubious about the whole affair. But Michael was persistent and won the two old ladies over. We carried a lunch in Michael's haversack as we expected to have tea in the open. Followed a series of fence climbing, rail-road walking, stile climbing and there are always stiles to climb, many fields to cross and much talk as to whether we should turn back or not as it looked very threatening and it felt as if a storm were brewing. But young Michael was optimistic, so, on we climbed.

### Notes

[1] Established during the First World War, Catterick Camp was (and still is) one of the largest military barracks in the UK and is about 3 miles from Richmond.

We located a lovely spot on the banks of the river and decided a good place to eat. An ominous roll of thunder changed our minds and up we scurried with no place to scurry to. It started to rain and how it rained! We took shelter in a pig sty which was a sort of cement like tunnel and was also used for a cattle pass. One end had a door which was closed and the whole affair was on a hill the highest part toward the front facing the road. This end was open and thru this end we ran. The natural hill made a nice water-fall and down this hill the water teemed and streamed. We hugged the dirty side-walls covered with spider webs; it turned cold and the thunder & lightning and wind were terrific.

Thus we stood not knowing what to do when Michael said, "let's make a dash for it". Michael and Amy without coats. I had a shory coat over my shoulders. We stood there just wondering how long it would be before we were flooded out. But where to dash to? We stood marooned; water filling the pass! I suggested opening the door at the other end. This caused a draft and the wind nearly blew us out. After a good one and a half hours of this, we decided to chance it over to Easby Abbey <sup>[1]</sup> which happened to be a goodly piece down the road.



Figure 40 - Easby Abbey

Notes

[1] Easby Abbey is a Premonstratensian ("White Canons") Abbey founded in 1152. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easby\\_Abbey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easby_Abbey)



Off we went running and getting very wet but reached the porch laughing, that is Michael and I were laughing, but Amy was thoroly disgusted and just would not see the funny side at all. Michael suggested eating but it was wet and cold so I said, "let's eat in the church" <sup>[1]</sup>, Michael agreed but Amy was horrified!



Figure 41 - St. Agatha's Church, Easby

We proceeded to do that: and as we were getting comfortable, and had found a nice pew to eat, in walks the rector! So again we proceeded to pack up our lunch while Amy kept the rector entertained out on the porch. Then, nonchalantly, I walked out and joined them. He and his wife came over to see just how much damage the storm had done and to mop up the water that had seeped in thru doors and windows. I was introduced and remarked about the beauties of the church (which up to this time I had not seen) and so no

lunch again. Re-entering the church again I did look around and found it to be the most beautiful I had seen. The Abbey dates back to 1170. Great grey stone arches wonderful murals all hand done centuries ago <sup>[2]</sup>.



Figure 42 - 13th Century Murals - St Agatha's, Easby

Notes

[1] St Agatha's Church stands within the precinct of Easby Abbey

[2] The murals within the Church date from around 1250 and were covered over during the Reformation.

One especially interesting object, was a great stone cross <sup>[1]</sup>; the cross piece of which pictured Christ and his eleven disciples. It was a most magnificent piece of work.



Figure 43 - The Easby Cross (Wikimedia Commons)

The door leading into the church was the original one, and was time worn and of solid black oak studded with nail-heads and heavy iron hinges in the style of that long ago day. Almost all of the old churches and cathedrals I visited had the same kind of doors with the long heavy hinges. There was an inscription on the door done in brass and Michael read it to me as I wrote it:

*Here a man shall be free from the  
hurrying of this life.  
God give you peace beneath the  
shadow of this house of prayer.  
God give you rest; and make your  
heart the subject of his care.  
God give you Love, a gift without  
compare.  
God keep you Friend.*

The storm continued. The rector mopped and mopped and finally at long last we had our lunch on the porch. We spent until 8 PM there, wondering what Luther would think when finally a man in a car came by and took us back to town.

The storm continued and we found out after we reached the town that they had had the worst storm in years. Trees had blown down, water everywhere and even in the drawing room of the house where Luther had left a window open and everything was soaked including the heavy velvet table cloth. That didn't make Amy feel any better or happier. She said we should have turned back when the sky was turning dark. I sided with Michael and I said the whole episode was worth it and it did give me an excellent opportunity to see Easby Abbey. They still hold Sunday services there. This was a very busy day, so after a bath I went to bed.

#### Notes

[1] This is the famous Anglo-Saxon Easby Cross dating to around 820AD. The original is now held within the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (with a replica in the church) and is made of sandstone, probably from Whitby. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easby\\_Cross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easby_Cross)

## 1 Aug 1948 (Sunday) – Richmond – Church & Spiritualism

This is Sunday morning and Luther has just brot a grand cup of tea. On Sunday mornings he usually takes it upon himself to bring Amy and myself a cup.

Yesterday while helping Amy in the kitchen, I discovered that Amy, Glad, Michael and Luther and a Mrs. Gravely also, were all Spiritualists. Churches were held on Sundays in Luther's home at 7:30 PM. Mary Cherry is the medium for the group. Amy told me that the rest of the family attended the 'High Church of St. Mary's and if I so chose, I could go with them. I said, it made no difference to me and that I should attend church right here. So, on this particular Sunday I sat in and listened and it was all very interesting. Michael received a message from George thru a guide. This was a surprise and a shock as well.

Before the sitting, Michael took me around the town square and we visited old Trinity Church. George and his brothers attended this church. It was built in 1710. It was in this church that George sang in the choir and pumped the organ of a Sunday, each boy taking his turn. George had told so many tales about the church the old town clock I felt as if I had really come home.



Figure 44 - Old Trinity Church & Town Clock, Richmond

After, Amy and I called on a Mrs. Gravely who at one time had been a famous actress in London<sup>[1]</sup>. She had also been a very well known medium in spiritualism. She and her step-mother lived alone in the old Paxton homestead<sup>[2]</sup>. It was a fine old grey stone home and my memories crowd around me as I remember all the tales told me. I saw the lovely bed-room where George's mother had passed away.

We had a very enjoyable visit with Mrs. Gravely whom I was to learn and to know and to love very dearly. Her mother, too, was a fine character, by the name of Mrs Spence. Then home and to bed.

### Notes

[1] I'm still trying to find out just how famous Mrs Gravely was ?! Possibly the step-daughter of Mr W L Spence (85 Frenchgate?)

[2] The old homestead would most likely have been 8 Flints Yard in the town (now no longer there, but next to what is now called Young's Yard behind Frenchgate, (where Luther had a Cobbler's shop in the past). This is where the Paxton family are shown in the 1911 Census and where (I believe) George's Mother – Fanny Paxton – passed away in 1921.



## 2 Aug 1948 (Monday) – Richmond – Bank Holiday

Today is the English Bank Holiday. Everyone is off work. A lot of entertaining will be going on all week, in the Castle grounds. We walked over there this morning and watched the judging of the characters portrayed by the children and then went home to dinner. In the afternoon altho it looked like rain we went to the sport's field and watched a cricket match.

Tom, Ina, young Tom, Nancy <sup>[1]</sup>, Luther, Amy and myself sat together, and while we were singing all the old songs, before the games, I thot of that old song that Dad used to sing "Oh! My father had a rabbit and he thot it was a buck" and I decided to sing it to Tom, which I did and he laughed so hard that everyone looked his way and we were really afraid he would have a stroke. He never did get over that one. The weather has turned very cold so we only stayed to watch the children's race and then went home. We had our tea and then on to the Market Hall where there was to be more celebration. As usual the Paxton Clan sat together and we all sang again. We watched the home talent perform, and it was very good too. I knew so many songs of old and enjoyed the day so much. Another day gone home and to bed.



Figure 45 - Richmond Green and the Castle

### Notes

[1] This is Thomas Paxton, one of George's older brothers, his wife Georgina (Ina) and their Son Thomas (born 1909) – I think Nancy may have been a nickname for their daughter, Ella.



### 3 Aug 1948 (Tuesday) – Swaledale and Grinton Abbey

Luther and I visited Swaledale this afternoon <sup>[1]</sup>. The country is so called because it follows the river Swale. Richmond is really the capital of this country of hills and dales as it lies up at the top where this country begins. It is all hilly and rolling land and the farmers raise sheep. These moors stretch for miles and miles, lone and majestic, and among them flows the beautiful Swale. The day was cool and misty, making the country look mysterious and beautiful. The farms there are, are all surrounded by stone walls and on this day everything did look grey except the grass. Strange how up in this bleak north of England everything is always grey and cold looking; while down in the south all the homes are like ours - colorful, the hedgerows are always green. But the hospitality of the North Country far surpasses that of the south in spite of the grey coldness of the scenery and moors. The sun came thru the clouds on this late afternoon and shown only on parts of hill and dale while others were in shadow. How beautiful. So vast and stretching away in the distance only the everlasting hills. We left the car to stand and admire the scenery and I thought of that lovely psalm "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from which cometh my help". And I thought of Mother.



Figure 46 - Reeth Road leaving Richmond

#### Notes

[1] Luther must have driven out of Richmond via Reeth Road – leading up Swaledale, past Marrick to Grinton

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Luther and I had tea way up at the top of a hill in a tea room in a building of which was covered with roses. We sat at a window and the scenery spread there was something out of this world. We had



the inevitable scones, tea cakes and grand tea (no one makes tea quite like the English). We left this rugged, beautiful height and turned for home where on the way we stopped to enter Grinton Abbey with its old church yard beside it. Luther says he never came this way but what he must stop a while. Never have I felt the solemnity of the hour as I felt it that day at sunset out in this moorland country.

Figure 47 - Grinton Church

How I wished that I had a color camera! I took some pictures and they were lovely. The atmosphere was clean, cold, and pure and it felt good to be alive! This remains as one of the outstanding afternoons of my visit. We drove home in the early twilight and in the evening I attended a quiz program held at the market hall.

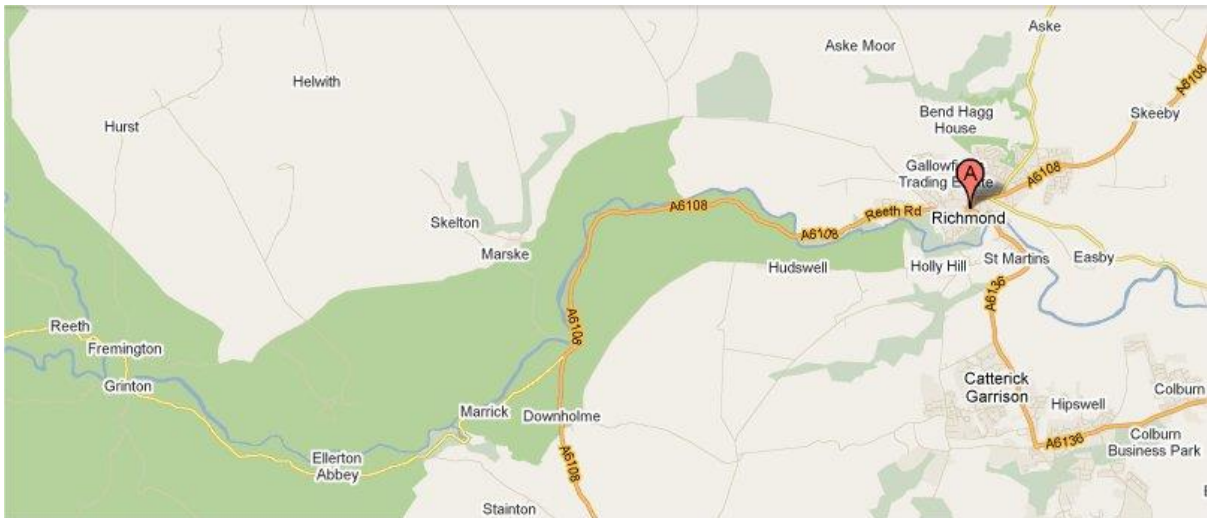


Figure 48 - Map of Swaledale as far as Reeth (GoogleMaps)

### Notes

[1] See also: <http://www.swaledale.net/> and [http://www.reeth.org/essential\\_history.htm](http://www.reeth.org/essential_history.htm) for more information

## 4 Aug 1948 (Wednesday) – Richmond – Wash Day & The Beauty Contest

This is Amy's wash day and washing clothes in this country is not easy! They do have modern appliances, but they are very expensive. So we scrubbed and scrubbed the clothes on a flat table, then put them in a copper tub filled with hot water which acts as a boiler; everything is then wrung out by hand wringer and when one gets thru one knows that one has really washed! I fixed lunch today and it consisted of ham and eggs. Luther is not too fond of Spam but one cannot be choosy with conditions as they are. After the noon chores were over, we three attended the carnival and there we met Glad. Amy is a sport with the real gambling spirit and went in for just everything. She even took pot shots at the black babies <sup>[1]</sup> and most of the time we had to look for her whereabouts.



Figure 49 - Boiler Washing Machine and Mangle

Presently we went home to tea as we were again returning in the evening for the beauty contest. They were to choose the "Lass of Richmond" which is a tradition from centuries ago. The evening was cool and clear and quite a crowd was gathered. The choice fell upon a very beautiful little girl about 18 years of age and I am sure most everyone voted for her for Amy said she was as sweet as she was pre pretty. Her Mother had had a very tragic life.

### Notes

[1] I believe this was basically throwing wooden balls at what might be better known as "golly wog" dolls.

## 5 & 6 Aug 1948 (Thursday, Friday) – MISSING PAGES!

<These pages appear to be missing from the diary>



## 7 Aug 1948 (Saturday) – Richmond - the Pictures (part missing)

<missing>... but that is a regular Saturday ritual and when it is over the cocoa is served and all is well. I might mention here that Mrs. G, as they call her, was once a great actress on the London stage and afterwards became a medium. She and her aged mother lived in the Paxton home and I spent many pleasant times with them. Mrs. Spence has since passed on and Luther has bought the old home with Mrs. G still living there. Fish and chips for dinner and how I love them. Luther said when I got home to think of them as having there fish and chips on Saturday at noon as that is always they're Saturday dinner. During the afternoon we had company; a Polish refugee <sup>[1]</sup>. He was very interesting and we exchanged news on all sides. He stayed to tea and afterwards we attended the cinema and saw the "Unfaithful!" <sup>[2]</sup>. I do love English pictures so much better than our own. They seem to have so much more sense and depth, which our pictures lack. After the show the young man left and we played three handed bridge until bedtime. Right here I'd like to say a bit about folk attending the pictures. Both men and women smoke during the picture, and those who are not smoking are lunching. The English carry lunches whenever travelling. At 12 noon on the train everyone starts opening lunches and without further ado proceeds to eat. I have an idea about this and that is due to the crowded conditions of the corridors and all coaches in general, it is too much of a chore to tear and push and pull to get thru to the dining car. I know from experience.



Figure 50 - A Postman near Green Bridge (1938) - Billy Bank Wood is at the top of the picture ([www.postalheritage.wordpress.com](http://www.postalheritage.wordpress.com))

### Notes

[1] I'm guessing this is someone I heard referred to as "Uncle Zenon" – the story goes that he had come from Poland and lost most of his family (to the Russians and/or Germans) and that he got out to England, where Luther found him in a terrible depression, about to throw himself off Castle Walk and managed to befriend him. He was sort of adopted thereafter.

[2] Unfaithful (1931) - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0022520/>



## 8 Aug 1948 (Sunday) – Stokesley (in an open top car!)

Luther and I are going to visit Amy and Sep in Stokesley today. Amy is not going with us as Luther's



car is small and old and an open air style <sup>[1]</sup>. While getting started rather early, we just woke up the neighborhood with all these snorts, puffs and wheezing. The convertible top won't convert any more, and is all in tatters. For two years now Luther has been trying to get a new one, but all in vain. It is truly a fresh air car; so I was told to wrap up well which I did and off we went but not without the usual lunch of cookies and apples.

Figure 51 - Austin 7 2-seater (1930s)  
(Wikimedia Commons)

The town of Stokesley is 35 miles from Richmond and we sincerely hoped we would get there and home again. It was a cold dreary day all gray looking as if it might rain. We were very comfortable and started off in good spirits. Amy was happy to have the whole day to herself, to do as she pleased. The country-side was very lovely, and every-where the flaming color of poppies covered the fields. To the right the black outline of the Cleveland Hills soon appeared to be with us all the way to Stokesley.



Figure 52 - Stokesley High Street ([www.visit-stokesley.com](http://www.visit-stokesley.com))

Notes

[1] Luther's car was most likely of pre-war vintage – something like an Austin 7 2-seater (produced from 1929)

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

We saw lovely homes beautiful farms and lovely flowers everywhere. We entered the town of Stokesley by way of high hills and cobbled streets and its quaintness and picturesque inns won my heart at once. Stokesley appears to be about the size of Richmond with the usual town square, shops and bank built around it. Suddenly we saw the S.Paxton, Ironmongers sign, with 5 petrol pumps and I knew we had reached our destination. This brother is Sep or Septimus, the 7th brother. We entered the shop. Luther led the way but we saw no one until we reached a sort of down stairs kitchen, and there they were, the two of them. Again I was stricken dumb and could only weep. So there we stood with arms around each other in front of the fireplace and Sep saying "Oh my dear, my dear, how good to see you at last. If only our Geordie were here it would complete".



Figure 53 - Pack Horse Bridge over River Leven at Stokesley ([www.yorkshiremoors.co.uk](http://www.yorkshiremoors.co.uk))

Sep is short and plump and not a gray hair in his head. He is 62 years of age. Ame is very buxom, blond and pretty and the motherly type. Neither one of these dear people are well. She has an ailment of the gall-bladder and he has a chronic heart ailment that he has had for years. They enquired after Amy and wondered why she hadn't come but Luther said there was no room. Then Ame immediately said, "Never, never, Luther did you bring this girl in that contraption". I said he did and that I enjoyed the ride so very much more than if we had come by bus.

We had a most sumptuous dinner in spite of the rationing as Ame is rated as a very fine cook. After dinner we went up to the living room and as the day was cool enjoyed sitting in front of the fire getting acquainted.



Ame and Sep have a very fine home; five bed-rooms, sitting room and a large living room. There was a most mysterious black and white marble staircase winding like a serpent from the lower regions right up to the top floor.

I told Ame I should die of fright if I had to spend the night alone in this large house. The staircase is in the middle of the building and in a sort of hall. It fascinated me. Their home is very comfortable and luxurious with the living room two steps above the floor level of the other rooms <sup>[1]</sup>.

I met a Mr. Hebron who makes his home with them; a most charming man. As usual I showed my pictures and slides and they all agreed they were lovely and I'm sure they all enjoyed them. As we wanted to get home before dark, we had a high tea and then left.



Figure 54 – Sep's Ironmongers and fuel pumps – in 1940s and in 2010.

They have informed me that they have arranged for me to spend their holiday with them at Red-car on the North Sea. What an adventure to look forward to! Amy said she had had a lovely day and after telling her all about the visit we had supper, talked a while and then went to bed.

Another grand day to add to my collection.

## 9 Aug 1948 (Monday) – Richmond – Wash Day & Walks in the Rain

This being Monday, Amy washed and I wrote letters. After dinner Gladys came to visit and to see the pictures and slides. The day is cold and rainy. We took a long walk in the rain. No one seems to mind the rain in England and wherever and whenever you go out, you always wear a “mack” as they call it or rain coat. That and a walking stick are essentials. I had my own stick assigned me and found it a great help in tramping the country and climbing hills. Five or six miles in a stretch for a walk means nothing and often I walked that after tea in an evening.

One never seems to tire or lose one's pep due to the sea air surrounding the country. I never felt better in my life than in the three months I visited England.

After our walk we came home, had supper, played three handed bridge, and then went to bed.



Figure 55 - Aerial View of Richmond c1950

Notes

[1]



## 10 Aug 1948 (Tuesday) – Barnard Castle - Bowes Museum

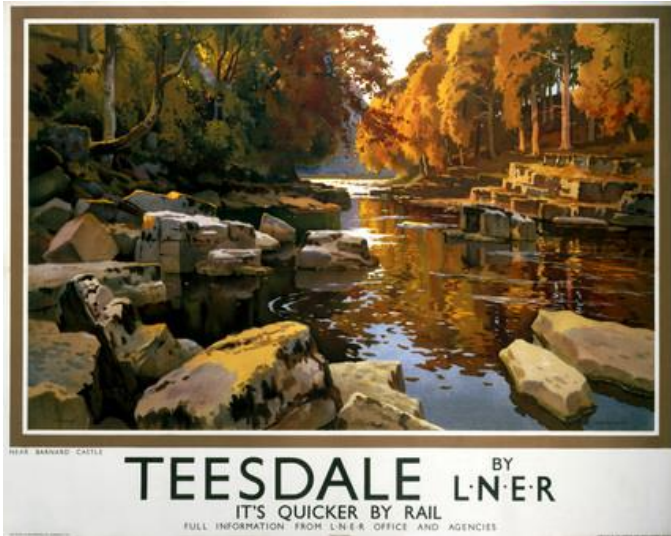


Figure 56 - The River Tees, Near Barnard Castle (LNER Poster)

The morning was spent in shopping and writing letters. After dinner Amy, Glad, and I caught the 12:30 bus and went to visit the beautiful museum at Barnard Castle. This building at one time belonged to the Bowes-Lyon family <sup>[1]</sup> and was donated by them to be used as a museum. It was a most beautiful ride thru lovely country in a very old bus that rattled so that we could hardly hear one another talk.

The museum was crowded with paintings, tapestries, china, and furniture from numerous periods. It was a large massive building with colorful, sunken gardens and marble stairways leading down to these gardens <sup>[2]</sup>.



Figure 57 - Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

### Notes

[1] Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon was the Mother of Queen Elizabeth II and was married to King George VI

[2] The museum was purpose built in the style of a large French Chateau and opened in 1892. <http://www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk/>

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Everything in these gardens was in most beautiful order, in fact, in England everything is in order, no paper or rubbish is seen in the streets. There parks, towns, and all public places are always neat looking. The people look the same way; from Grandpa down to baby. We had tea cakes and scones in a quaint tea room in town and they were delicious too. Most all bakeries have a tea room a joining them. We rode back on the rattling old bus toward evening, very tired but happy and had supper.

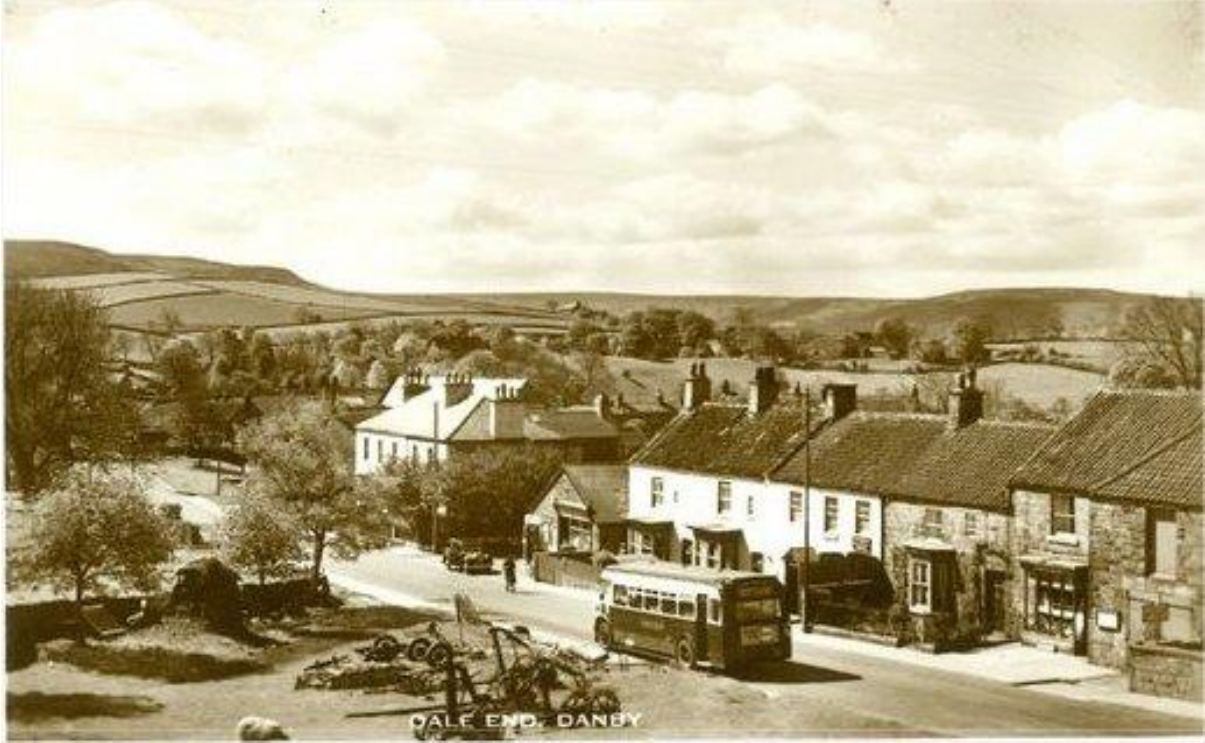


Figure 58 - Single Decker Bus making its way through Danby, near Whitby

Sometime later Mary Cherry came over to ask Amy and Luther to accompany her home, as Jeff <sup>[1]</sup> (Glad's husband) was causing a scene and was threatening her with violence. Jeff was a heavy drinker and went into these tantrums every once in a while. It was always Luther they called on to reason with him and during the time I spent there, Glad had ever so many trials of this kind to put up with; and I wondered how she stood it. It was quite beyond my understanding.

So tonight I am alone waiting for news. I forgot to mention that earlier this evening I attended my first real cricket match. I must say I liked it very much and Amy is a very enthusiastic fan. There is never the hub-bub or noise we create over here. Everything is more orderly and quiet and taken seriously, where we are boisterous and noisy. I looked around and wondered if they were really having fun. Amy and Luther came home late after giving the usual lecture until the next time.

Notes

[1] This was Geoffrey H Collishaw who was married to Gladys New (Amy's sister and Luther's sister-in-law). Michael Collishaw was their son.

## 11 Aug 1948 (Wednesday) – Catterick Camp – Frances, Jack & Joyce



Figure 59 - Jack, Frances & Joyce Warner c1948

Today was the usual round. Tea in bed, then breakfast and then the usual chores with dinner promptly as Luther is always on time. Then after dinner Amy and I had a sitting at 2:30 P.M. as that is a regular at this time each Wednesday. After the sitting we went to Catterick Camp as we were invited there for tea. This is where Frances lives. She is Joe's daughter. Daughter Joyce was so excited and still asked if all Americans were really or white? In fact, I had to pull up my sleeve to show her my arm. She had been so impressed by that contingent of colored soldiers stationed at the barracks. The tea Frances served was delicious. She is a marvellous cook and the food was the nearest to what I was used to, of any I had so far tasted.

Catterick Camp is a large training camp and a very fine one and Jack lives in the camp as the army is his profession. We had a grand time and had to promise to come again soon. I shall.

I attended another cricket match and as usual the Paxton clan sat together. They are always well represented at all these functions. The evening is misty and cold and this seems to be the prevailing weather now. The English say this is an unusual summer but one thing I do know I'm not warm any more.

Notes

[1]



## 12 Aug 1948 (Thursday) – Richmond – A visit from the Undertaker

Cold, wind, rain and the fire feels good. I spent the morning doing the usual chores including the everyday letter writing. Luther has taken the afternoon off and we listened to a hockey match broad-cast from India. I am crocheting a bed jacket that I started on the boat and that I thought I could finish and wear while here (suffice it to say I never did finish it until long after I got home). We talked and visited until tea time and it was a real pleasure to talk with and listen to Luther. He seems so American and sometimes I have to almost pinch myself to make myself think otherwise. He calls me "Buddy" now and every night when we say goodnight he says "Good-night Buddy" and I say "Cheerio!" and so we get along famously.

He has a nice way of saying "Yes" and "No". In the north country so near Scotland they are apt to use the words "Aye" and "Nay". And he does just that and is the only one of the clan that has those dear expressions. But for those small words one would think he was an American.



Figure 60 - Amy Ethel Paxton (c1925)

Amy comes from Worcestershire and her English is just perfect.

This evening we had a most remarkable character visit us, a Mr. Harrison, an undertaker by profession and an old friend of Luther's. He is called a joiner and undertaker and Luther asked him over to view the slides and see the pictures as he is very much interested in photography.

He missed being a comedian and most certainly is in a queer profession as undertaker with that droll sense of humor. I was so pleased and surprised at his funny exclamations. Somehow I guess I didn't give the English much credit for having a sense of humor or in other words a funny bone; but he spoke so spontaneously and as if there was no one in the room but himself and this to each picture, it really was amusing.

On leaving he asked permission to bring his wife and kept repeating that he had had such a great time he hated to go home. Very interesting!

### Notes

[1] Amy's was Amy New before marrying and came from Upton-on-Severn in Worcestershire. She seems to have been working as a servant – a sewing maid - in 1911 (living at Bolton Crofts in Richmond) – with 3 others from Upton-on-Severn (I have no idea why so many young people all the way from Worcestershire should be working in Yorkshire!), but she met Luther while out for a stroll and Luther opened a gate for her. They married in Upton in 1919. Amy's younger sister, Gladys, also came to live in Richmond at some point.



### 13 Aug 1948 (Friday) – Richmond & Easby

One very nice break in the day and I looked forward to, was the visit from Gladys Collishaw, Amy's sister. She came each day and brought so much happiness and sunshine with her in spite of all her troubles. She had a very brazy way of talking and always managed a smile. "Glad" is an appropriate name for her. Amy went to market, I was ironing, and Glad and I were visiting. They do have electric irons but so different from ours. The plugs and outlets are so strange and I don't doubt but what the current itself is different from ours too. We had dinner and afterwards visited with Mrs. Gravely & and Mrs. Spence, her stepmother. In a room upstairs Mrs. Gravely occasionally she held séances with just the same, small circle of friends. It was always interesting for me to sit by and be a silent listener to all the remarkable messages they received and how they absolutely believed in these messages from their individual guides. This day I was made welcome by Mrs. Gravely's guide and received a beautiful message of welcome and an invitation to join the circle. We walked home, Amy and I pondering on these things.

After tea we walked to Easby Abbey and visited the church yard. Monks used this church as their home in Norman times and it is still used at the present time. Standing in the quiet of the evening I thought of so many things while looking at these old headstones; centuries old and falling in decay. The sun was falling and an occasional bird voice was heard but thruout all was peaceful stillness of those asleep; some for centuries; while storms and wars passed in succession over their heads. What would they have said to see such a world as ours at the present time?



Figure 61 - Easby Church - St Agathas

The twilight seemed sacred there in that old church yard and I was reluctant to leave. We had supper and our 3 handed bridge. Luther won and was so funny and cheerful about it all. He is a dear and I love him very much. "Goodnight Buddy", "Cheerio", Brother" and so to bed.

## 14 Aug 1948 (Saturday) – Richmond - Willance's Leap & George's Old Flame

Just received a letter from Harry inviting me to Pontefract on Monday.

This morning was dark and dreary. We drove to Willance's Leap this afternoon.



It is one of the most beautiful spots I have seen so far. This is a vivid memory of the tales George used to tell and has historical value. High up above the River Swale, about 10 miles from Richmond, this hill makes a sheer drop of almost perpendicular steepness. Down this hill a man and a horse fell on a very foggy day. The man was in a fox hunt and because of the fog lost his way, the horse his footing, and fell taking the man with him; the horse was killed and his rider suffered a broken leg.

Figure 62 - Willance's Leap

Knowing no one would find him for some time, Mr Willance slit the animal's stomach and placed his leg inside to keep it warm. He was found in two days and his leg was saved<sup>[1]</sup>. He lived many years after that and on the peak of this hill-top, he had a monument erected thanking God for his deliverance and for saving his life. The monument was re-erected in 1700 and stands on the fatal spot surrounded by an iron fence and is tall with its thank you to God on the face of it and may be seen from around about the surrounding country for miles. It is well preserved and in fine condition in spite of the elements beating down upon it. From this height one sees the low hills, farms, and the moors which always look so desolate and lonely. This is one of the high lights of my trip. We ate our lunch here sitting high amongst all this beauty drinking it in and were sorry to leave.

### Notes

*[1] These events happened in November 1606 and Willance survived a fall of some 212 feet. Some accounts say that the leg was lost but the life was saved! The inscription on the stone reads "Hear us – Glory be to our Merciful God, who Miraculously Preserved me from the Dangers so Great". In September 2006, the Town of Richmond celebrated the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Willance's Leap and a new stone was placed at the spot.*

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

I almost forgot a very important episode of this morning. I was crocheting when Amy startled me by announcing that Poppy Bell was visiting neighbors next door.

Now Poppy happened to be George's old child-hood sweet heart. Amy asked me would I like to meet her? I said indeed I would, that is if it would not embarrass her. So away went Amy to get Poppy. George and Poppy were the same age, attended the same school, christened the same day and altogether had many things in common. She is the daughter of a man in town who owned a fishery or fish business and did a lot of exporting there by leaving her very wealthy when he died. There was a sort of standing joke between George and myself, he saying, if I didn't treat him right, he would go back to the fish-mongers daughter. I found her to be a very sweet little old lady and her looks told one that she must have been very pretty in her youth.

Amy left us alone and so we had a very interesting visit, knowing that George had asked her to return to America with him on a return visit.

### Notes

*[1] Poppy appears to have been Mary Ann Bell – the 1901 census shows her as an 19 year old fish merchants daughter living at 4 Bridge Street, Richmond and the 1911 census shows her as still un-married, now 29. By 1948 she would have been 67 Poor Poppy Bell!*



## 15 Aug 1948 (Sunday) – Richmond - St Mary's Church

Glad and I visited St. Mary's Parish Church today. The church where all the Paxton's attended when the boys were small and where most of the family still belong. Here all the boys sang in the choir and on Sundays took their turns at pumping the organ. A very beautiful building, it stands in a commanding position on a hillside overlooking the Swale, with its beautiful garden of sleep. The oldest part of the church dates back to the 15th century. The interior is like most English churches, stone arches, high ceilings and hand carvings. There is a grave cover made of stone in the North Porch which dates back to 1175 and was discovered during some digging in 1841. The tower was built in 1399 is 80 feet high and up in the battlements is the coat of arms of Ralph Neville builder of the tower. The long history of this church as a parish church of a town which was the capitol of one of the wealthiest parishes and this gives it special importance. The service was an Episcopal service, and was very impressive although some of it being in Latin, I didn't understand all of it. Then home to dinner and then rested a bit for I was going to Tom's for tea. I enjoyed the young folks very much and Ella and Tom are engaged to be married soon. They taught me to play whist and it was fun. Tom saw me home after which I washed my hair and then finally to bed.



Figure 63 - St Mary Church, Richmond, from the Castle.



## 16 Aug 1948 (Monday) – Pontefract – Harry & Mrs Tate.

I'm on my way to Pontefract to spend 10 days with Harry and Mrs. Tate his house-keeper. Harry is Harry Octavius and was the 8th son. He never married and is in the law business as a barrister as they call a lawyer over here. Mrs Tate is a widow. Harry has made his home with the Tate's for 22 years.

Pontefract at last and there running toward me was Harry, a good looking gentleman followed by a lady. This then was the meeting with Harry. "So happy to see you my dear, we were quite concerned about your travelling alone. Did it seem a tedious journey?"

To the chauffer who was waiting "Hurry now Henry, and let us get under way". Mrs Tate was duly introduced and we made our way to the car. Driving thru the streets of Pontefract was like driving thru any large city.



Figure 64 - Marshall Field's Department Store, Chicago (c. 1950)

This is a manufacturing town and a very busy one; it is here the famous Pontefract Cakes are made. They are a small wafer of licorice and are sold in Marshall Fields in Chicago, as I learned later.

The town also boasts a mine, the Prince of Wales Mine, of which no-one is very proud. I had hoped to go down into this mine some day, but never did, as no one was allowed to go into it.



Figure 65 - Prince of Wales Mine, Pontefract

We arrived home in time for tea. Harry excused himself, and said he had to go back to the office; but would return for dinner. Mrs. Tate and I had tea in a very cheery sitting room with the table all ready and laid. Everything was so home like and cozy I knew at once I should like it here. We talked and visited and got acquainted and each knew the other had found a friend.

She insisted I rest, and tucked me in on the davenport in the drawing room where there was another good fire turning and I had a nap. Dear Motherly Mrs. Tate, your droll speech and kindly ways, shall never be forgotten.

Notes

[1] The Prince of Wales mine opened in 1860 and closed in Aug 2002 when it was the oldest working mine in Britain

Harry arrived in due time and we had a lovely and delicious dinner. Mrs. Tate is the kind of person who though rationed, manages always to find something and everything for a meal without worry, complaints, and manages beautifully.



Figure 66 - Pontefract Cakes

After dinner we looked at the slides and snaps and Harry marvelled at the pictures. He has a very hearty laugh just like his brother Sep's and so many of his mannerisms are so much like George's I get a surprise every once in a while. His eyes are so blue as to be almost black; all the Paxton brothers have blue eyes but the one most like George is brother Luther; with the same sense of humor, grey hair and very blue eyes. Harry said he hadn't laughed so much in years as I told incidents of the trip especially the tipping spree. We spent a most enjoyable evening and ended my first meeting with Harry Otavius.

Notes

[1] For more information about Pontefract see: <http://www.pontefractus.co.uk/>

## 17 Aug 1948 (Tuesday) – Pontefract – The Race Track

Again tea in bed and then my breakfast down-stairs with Harry. This became a ritual as he asked me to have breakfast with him each morning. It is a rainy cold dreary day. Mrs. Tate and I spent the day talking and visiting before the fire and all is comfortable, cheery and cozy. Harry came home for the noon meal which is dinner and then we visited some more.

After tea we (Harry and I) went to the town park and the race track beautifully kept with green lawns and gorgeous flowers.



Figure 67 - Pontefract Racecourse c.1950

Harry has an Edinburgh trip all planned in fact, the itinerary is all made out, and I have nothing to say except I'd be delighted at the prospect of going to Scotland.

### Notes

[1] Pontefract is about 65 miles South of Richmond , down the A1

[2] Pontefract was one of only two Northern racecourses allowed to hold meetings during the Second World War. The other was Stockton (Teesside Park).



## 18 Aug 1948 (Wednesday) – Pontefract – St Giles Church



Figure 68 - St Giles Church Pontefract

We visited old St. Giles Church <sup>[1]</sup> in Pontefract today, built in the days of Oliver Cromwell and part of it destroyed by him.

Received a letter from London, and Connie <sup>[2]</sup> writes saying they will expect me down there soon. Also received one from Audrey.

After Harry gets home to dinner, we shall tour the town. I like Harry very much; he is such fun and loves to tease.

### Notes

*[1] St Giles church was built around 1106 on or adjacent to the original site of the preaching cross of St Oswald, named after one of the first Christian kings of Northumbria. The octagonal clock tower stands as a distinguishing landmark above Pontefract. In 1789, the Chapel of St Giles, as it was known, became the official Parish Church of Pontefract. Previously it had been operating as such since the other main church "All Saints" was severely damaged during the English Civil War.*

*[2] Connie was Constance Bowler – of the Bowler hat family. She was the cousin of one of Elsa's friends back in Walworth and, as we will see later, Elsa was to visit her in Walton-on-Thames, near London*

## 19 Aug 1948 (Thursday) – York



Figure 69 - York Minster and Monkgate

Today we are visiting the old town of York. York is a walled city built Romans centuries ago. This is the home of the famous York Minster one England's most beautiful Cathedrals, with its gorgeous architecture and hand carvings. The building was started in the year 1220 in the reign of Henry the 8th and was not finished until 1472 during the reign of Edward 4th. Nine Kings occupied the throne of England in this time. Other great churches of this country were built in much less time, but this is the largest of them all <sup>[1]</sup>. It is the 5th church on this site. The first three were built before the Norman Conquest. It was finally completed in 1607.

We walked around part of the walls of the city seeing much of the surrounding country from this high point. After having lunch in a very lovely restaurant, we resumed our sightseeing.

### Notes

[1] York Minster isn't as big as St Pauls in London but it is one of the largest Gothic Cathedrals in Europe. See: <http://www.yorkminster.org/> and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York\\_Minster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York_Minster)

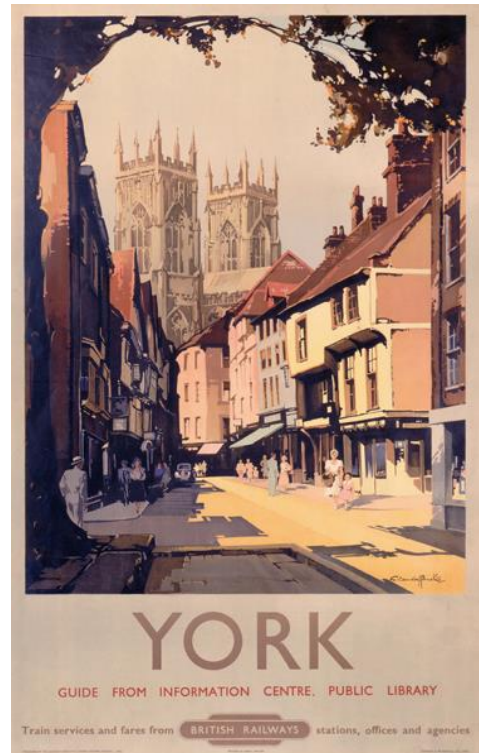


Figure 70 - British Railways Poster for York c1930

Visiting the old museum in town <sup>[1]</sup>, we saw replicas of England's old streets, many oil paintings and ancient tapestries made by Flemish folk which with their soft colorings and blendings were very beautiful.



What with window shopping and seeing the most wonderful gardens running through the center of the town, our day was complete and this day too will ever live as an outstanding one in my memory.

Figure 71 - York Castle Museum - the Victorian Street "Kirkgate"



After supper, it having been a hard day, I wanted to rest, but Harry insisted we take a walk; so we walked out into the open country and visited the King's own York Guard <sup>[2]</sup> and the soldier's barracks <sup>[3]</sup>. It was so very orderly and clean beyond words. We walked six miles that evening after our long tramping in the city of York; so I was very happy to see my bed that night.

*Notes*

[1] This would have been York Castle Museum which has a famous replica of a Victorian street with over 30 shops <http://www.yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk/>

[2] The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

[3] The barracks are called the Imphal Barracks (named after the campaign against the Japanese in WW2) and are located on Fulford Road about a mile out from York centre.

Figure 72 - Imphal Barracks York (picture by Stanley Howe, [www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk))



## 20 Aug 1948 (Friday) – Pontefract – Sight-Seeing

Mrs. Tate and I spent the day sight-seeing in the town.  
Nothing out of the ordinary.

We expect to visit Leeds tomorrow.



Figure 73 - The Counting House Pontefract ([www.geograph.co.uk](http://www.geograph.co.uk) (c) Bill Henderson)

### Notes

[1] See this link for more information about Pontefract along with a collection of photographs  
[http://ridings.info/index.php?p=1\\_11\\_Pontefract](http://ridings.info/index.php?p=1_11_Pontefract)

[2] The Counting House Pub is reputedly the oldest building in Pontefract.

## 21 Aug 1948 (Saturday) - Leeds - a Tram Ride



Figure 74 - Leeds Paramount Theatre

The city of Leeds closely resembles our own large cities. There were no sky-scrapers and the highest building I saw was just four stories high.

Seeing the large Paramount Theater <sup>[1]</sup> on one corner, gave me a homesick feeling.

It was in this city I had my first tram ride. A tram looks very much like a double-decker bus and rides very smoothly; in fact, all their transportation runs so smoothly and I noticed it especially on the trains. When I spoke of this, I was told it was because of the careful laying of the road bed. The crowds and all the traffic was stimulating and I felt as if I could window shop all day. It was here I purchased the funny teapots with the crooked spouts one of which I gave to Aunt Olga.



Figure 75 - Early Leeds Tram

We had lunch in a restaurant in Leeds at a very or one of the largest in the city. But for the money and some of the food served, one would think they were eating at Fields <sup>[2]</sup>.

It was a bright and sunny day and a day like this is rare so we made the most of it, returning home tired but full of "beans". After supper Mrs. Tate and I went to the cinema and saw Rudyard Kipling's "Jungle Book" in technicolor and it proved to be a very good picture <sup>[3]</sup>. Harry doesn't care for the cinema, so we had a snack with him when we arrived home. A grand day!

### Notes

[1] Now Primark store, 20 The Headrow, Leeds, LS1 6PT

[2] Marshall Field's Department Store, Chicago was a famous landmark store founded in 1852. It was bought by Macy's in 2005.

[3] The 1942 version starred Sabu as Mowgli and was nominated for 4 Academy Awards

## 22 Aug 1948 (Sunday) – Pontefract – Roundhay Park

This is Sunday and I am writing my diary in bed. The day is cool and sunny. It is a sort of gold fish sort of day, everything looks green and misty the sun comes out and then it rains; reminds one of an aquarium. Mrs. Tate brought the usual cup of tea; she babies me and I like it. After we took a trip to Round-hay Park with its lovely lake and rocky shores. There were many people milling about and having picnics. We found a seat and watched the races for a while and then started climbing hills on the lake shore.



Figure 76 - Roundhay Park

We had lunch in a restaurant in the park where I sat in some fish and chips grease and spotted my coat! After which we visited the gardens in the park where the dahlias were especially lovely in all their brilliant colors both the large and small varieties. George would have loved them as they were a special hobby of his at home. Harry was very gay and happy and quite the walker. In front, he had Mrs. Tate and myself all tired out always taking the longest way around and laughing about it. I don't think I shall ever walk as much as I have walked in this country but the salt air is so invigorating one doesn't tire easily.



## 23 Aug 1948 (Monday) – Pontefract – Washing, Ironing & Airing!

Monday, and I have done a small washing and hung my undies in a small secret closet away from the public eye (Harry's). After clothes are ironed, they must always be "aired"; this process means placing the clothes in an oven connected with the fire-place. "Are you going to bake the clothes?" I asked. They must never be put away after ironing until completely aired, that is an unwritten law. We had loads of fun shopping this afternoon, mostly window shopping.

## 24 Aug 1948 (Tuesday) – Harrogate

Harry is certainly taking time off these days and so today we start off for Harrowgate <sup>[1]</sup> a smart watering spa. We took the bus to Leeds and then took another to Harrowgate. We travelled on top of the bus which gave us a fine view of the country and an occasional mine. This is a healing spa and Queen Mary is known to do her shopping here and the shops are filled with antiques. The flowers in the gardens through the center of the town were a riot of color everywhere.



Figure 78 - Queen Victoria Statue, Harrogate

Many retired wealthy folk make Harrogate their home, and there are many elderly people seen round about the town.

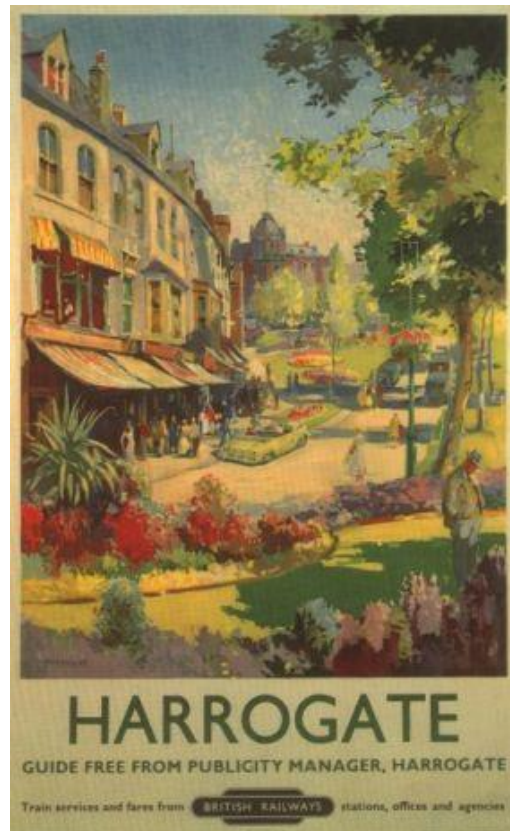


Figure 77 – British Railways Poster for Harrogate

We had a lovely chicken dinner in a cafe here and afterwards I purchased a doll for Pam with dark hair. Harry called it a queer purchase because it had no clothes and was so small, I said I wanted her to have it for her doll collection. In the center of the town stands an old statue of the old Queen Victoria <sup>[2]</sup>. I took a fine picture and it was good. This day was spent enjoying the gardens and shops.

### Notes

[1] Elsa always spells it Harrowgate although the actual spelling has no "w".

[2] The Queen Victoria Statue is in Station Square and was erected in 1887 to mark her Golden Jubilee.

## 25 Aug 1948 (Wednesday) – Doncaster – The Tate Sisters

Mrs. Tate has two sisters <sup>[1]</sup> in this town and one is bed-ridden and the other sister (Ruth) takes care of her. Spinsters both and with a lovely home and all comforts. But before we paid our call, we visited a tropical sunken garden and the plants grown there were lucious with all sorts of tropical fish, small mirrors and lakes and the ever brilliant flowers. I could have stayed there all day. Meeting the two sisters was a nice experience and I liked them at once. Ruth was devoted and spent all her mature life looking after her sister Jane. They are both cheerful and look life straight in the eye. Both Ruth and Jane asked me to spend a week with them. How very fortunate I am to find so many friends along the way. I should so have loved to visit them, and to have learned to know them better.



Figure 79 - Doncaster Skyline (Wikimedia Commons - Harleyamber)

### Notes

[1] I am in the process of trying to track down the Tate sisters through genealogical research. Not much luck yet !

## 26 Aug 1948 (Thursday) - Richmond - Back 'Home'

Harry and Mrs. Tate saw me off and Mrs. Tate will see me into Darlington. Dear Harry's so worried about me travelling about alone! We are looking forward to the trip to Edinburgh. Leaving Mrs. Tate at Darlington, I looked up the train for Richmond. After boarding it, I sat and thought over my lovely trip. A young officer shared the compartment with me and we enjoyed an interesting talk and visit into Catterick Camp which was his destination<sup>[1]</sup>.

After he left, it seemed lonely, but Richmond came at last and there was Luther waiting. There is always Luther; he never failed to meet the bus whenever or where-ever I happened to come home after a visit. He was so happy to see me, and wondered when he really was to have a real visit with me as I was forever running off somewhere.

Nice to get back to my own room. I leave again in the morning for Stokesley.

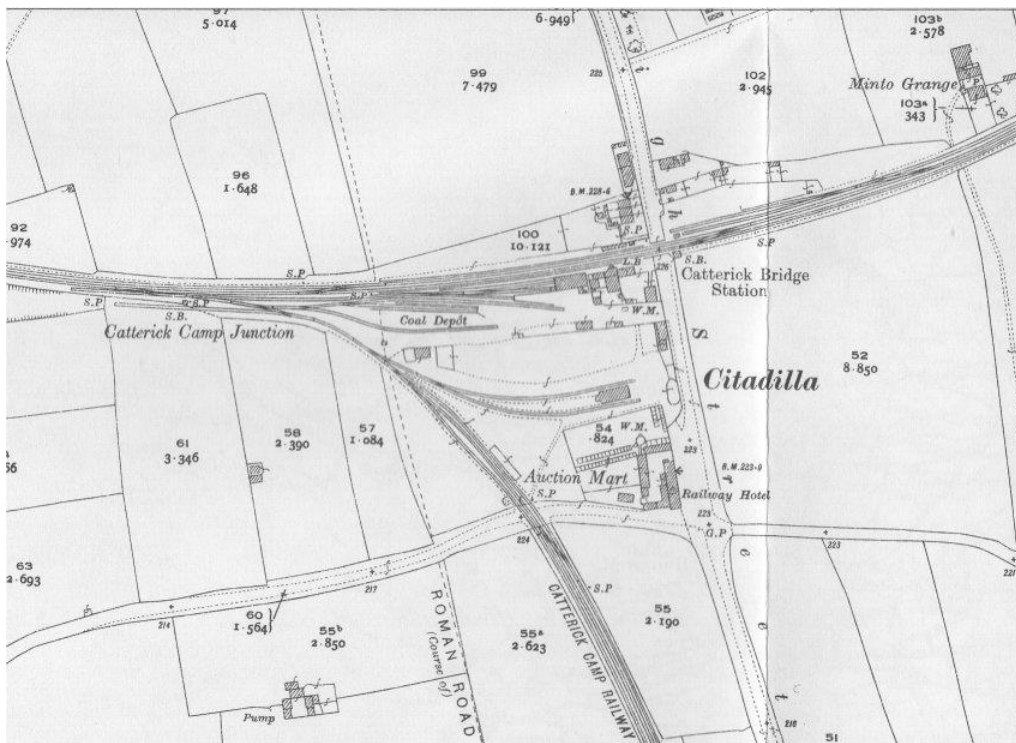


Figure 80 - Catterick Bridge Station Map (c.1910)

### Notes

[1] Soldiers bound for Catterick Camp tended to alight at Catterick Bridge Station and change for trains heading to the military base.

There are some fantastic old photographs of these stations here:

[http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/c/catterick\\_bridge/index.shtml](http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/c/catterick_bridge/index.shtml)

<http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/r/richmond/index.shtml>

Catterick Bridge was the scene of terrible destruction in 1944 when an ammunition train packed with explosives for the D-Day landings exploded. See Northern Echo:

[http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/8220176.Tossing\\_explosives\\_around\\_and\\_going\\_out\\_with\\_a\\_bang/](http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/8220176.Tossing_explosives_around_and_going_out_with_a_bang/)



## 27 Aug 1948 (Friday) – Stokesley

Arrived by bus at Stokesley about noon. Ame, Sep and I had dinner and spent the afternoon and evening getting ready to leave for Red-Car in the morning. We have decided to leave tomorrow, Saturday afternoon and Mr. Hebron has offered to drive us there in his car.

## 28 Aug 1948 (Saturday) – Redcar – Mrs Osbourne’s Boarding House



About 25 miles of beautiful country was enjoyed from Stokesley to Red-Car! <sup>[1]</sup> The day was perfect and the little car hummed right along. English high ways are about like ours and in very good condition. They have a super high way that runs all the way from the South of England to the top of Scotland and is called “The Great North Road”. It was the “Great Forth Road” in the old coaching days <sup>[2]</sup>.

Figure 81 - British Railways Poster - Redcar

The dark forbidding Cleveland Hills followed us all the way into Red-Car. Today they looked almost happy in the sun-shine, altho most of the time they are very black and sombre looking.

We arrived at about 2:30 PM and there I met the owner of the boarding house where we were to spend our holiday. A young, gay and very energetic person <sup>[3]</sup> and has as many as 8 roomers at a time. The meals she served were delicious! Sep and Ame had been coming there for many years even before she was the owner. Mr. Osbourne is head waiter at the great Savoy hotel in London. They have a small daughter of about 10 and her name is Patricia and we soon became fast friends.

### Notes

[1] Elsa always spells it Red-Car although its Redcar and the locals pronounce it Redcuh – you get accused of being “posh” if you say Red-Car as if its two words!

[2] I’m not quite sure where Elsa heard this – I can’t find any historical references to the Great Forth Road!

[3] A Mrs Osborne

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

My room faced the sea and was only a stones thro away and I could hear the waves all thru the night and the air was always heavenly and made one feel full of zip and ginger. Sep went back to business after the week-end and as Ame didn't rise until late, I often walked down to the shore when the tide was out and sit inside the glass enclosed places for resting. I never tired of watching the waves come and go. It was on a trip of this kind, I met two sisters one of whom was blind. They were also on holiday and we had a most interesting visit. Altho the sightless one could not see the waves she could hear them and her description was perfect as she related as to what she heard. She was always knitting and the most complicated patterns; patterns I couldn't knit with my eyesight. She asked many questions about America, all of which I tried to answer as accurately as I could. Looking at her one would not have known she was blind and neither one told me only from the sister explaining this and that did I even guess what was wrong.

After dinner Ame and I took a walk and went sight-seeing in the town of Red-Car. Saturday is market day and the side-walks were crowded with all sorts of wares, dishes, food clothes and almost everything and anything. I purchased two pairs of cotton stockings for tramping around the country. They were only a shilling a pair equal to our quarter.

Ame doesn't care for walking; tires easily and would rather stay at home and knit. So Sep and I took a long walk along the beach this evening. We had an ice-cream sandwich but it was gritty and watery – Oh! That War!



Figure 82 - A 35ft beached sperm whale on Recar Beach (31-May-11)

## 29 Aug 1948 (Sunday) – Redcar – The Scottish Sisters

Two ladies arrived from Falkirk last night, Scotland. Two sisters, Miss Polly Olliphant and Mrs. MacGuinlay <sup>[1]</sup>. Mrs. MacGuinlay is the mother of a Major MacGuinlay who makes this his home when stationed here. He has a sweetheart in town whom he is to marry soon. The two ladies, his mother, and aunt came down for the wedding. They are to be married tomorrow and we are invited to the wedding.

But Ame says she will not attend the reception but will attend the church, for my sake, so I may attend an English wedding. We pleaded & we begged, both Sep and I, all to no avail; she was adamant. Finally it came out. The natty Major owes Sep 60 pounds <sup>[2]</sup> and has made no effort to pay any of it back; so Ame says he is an out and out scamp and refuses to purchase a wedding gift. Sep is easy and it takes Ame to hold him down.



Figure 83 - Redcar Beach dressed as Dunkirk for the film "Atonement" in 2007

This morning the Scotch ladies and I took a walk and also to get acquainted. We still correspond. This afternoon Sep and I watched the amusements along the beach; carnivals, side-shows, and all sorts of amusements. We listened to a chorus of miners sing and they could sing!. A grand experience!

Then home to tea; just like two children home from a holiday. After tea we watched a tennis match in Zetland Gardens and a skilful match it was too. Here close by, they were also bowling on the green, the turf is like a beautiful green carpet; not a spot to mar its beauty, and greener than green.

### Notes

[1] Elsa was to meet up with Mrs MacGuinlay again later in Scotland (and her daughter Mrs Mollie Nelson).

[2] Well over a thousand pounds at 2011 prices!



### 30 Aug 1948 (Monday) - Redcar - The Wedding

We are going to attend the wedding this afternoon and I have my camera ready. The Major insists we attend the reception and says he will send a cab for us; but our little Ame still insists on not going. What can poor Sep and I do? The Major is a tall, not too good looking chap - sandy hair and to my notion has done plenty of knocking about the country; his bride is small, dark, and very pretty. Very much in love and has never been outside the town she was born in namely Red-car. In other words it looks like the lion and the mouse!



Figure 84 - Redcar High Street (c1950)

The wedding was lovely with four bridesmaids and much the same as our weddings. It was an Episcopalian service and all military wedding; all soldiers very neat and dapper in their uniforms; the bride wore the traditional long wedding veil and carried yellow glads. They are to live in Chelsea. We left the wedding and shopped around in the lovely afternoon sunshine.

#### Notes

[1] More old pictures of Redcar are available here: <http://www.communicate.co.uk/ne/aroundredcar/page9.phtml>

## 31 Aug 1948 (Tuesday) – Whitby-on-the-Sea

Altho Sep has no car, he has a chauffeur, a Mr. Yaeger, who is in the taxi-cab business and serves him any time he wishes to drive anywhere. Today he brought the car and Ame, Sep, Mrs. Osborne, Patricia and I went to another seaside resort – Whitby-on-the-Sea.



Figure 85 - Whitby Rail Poster c 1930

Whitby is an old fishing village in country that is rugged and rough. They have a dialect all their own and is very difficult to understand. The fishwives wear bright colored bonnets like a sun-bonnet and they look very quaint and picturesque. I tried to get a picture of one of the little women but she answered and said "Tis very warm today and I just had my dinner" and I couldn't for the life of me see what this had had to do with picture taking!

The streets are very hilly and narrow, in fact so narrow that one can shake hands across them. Looking through small doorways one sees old stone stairs either up or down. Many of the homes of the fishermen are built right in the rocky hillsides high on the hills. The fishing fleet was in; and we watched them landing the last catch. The air was filled with the cry of the many seagulls that were looking for a free meal and the odor of the fish was over all. I could have spent the greater part of the day there at the wharf just watching all the activity. We had dinner in an old time village restaurant which was the "Cuddy Sark", the name of an old fishing smack.



Figure 86 - Whitby Harbour

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

After dinner we walked around the shore and I saw the largest crabs and lobsters I have ever seen; old fisherman mending their nets all along the shore. These fishing smacks were a picture in themselves, with their high masts and white sails. We walked up 199 steps to visit Whitby Abbey, an old church overlooking the country and the sea.



Figure 88 - 199 steps to Whitby Abbey

It was built in 1122 and services are still held there. The pews have wooded doors with many generations of carvings made by small boys' knives keeping themselves busy during the tedious ritual of the long service. There is a brisk business of jet mining in this town and I have a piece of jet modeling an old Abbey and one of a small jet cross, belongs to Audrey.



Figure 87 - Whitby Abbey

It rained this afternoon but I took pictures and they turned out as well as the best. One especially good one was of the fishing smacks in the harbor taken in the pouring rain. Sep and I picked an armful of heather out on the moors sent it to Audrey tying the stems with clothes soaked in olive oil.

scenery!

What a day! And what

Notes

[1] For more information about Whitby see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitby> and <http://www.whitby.co.uk>





## 1 Sep 1948 (Wednesday) – Redcar & Rest

Today was a day of rest and we spent it at home resting.



Figure 89 - Redcar Seafront 1930s ([www.thisisredcar.co.uk](http://www.thisisredcar.co.uk))

## 2 Sep 1948 (Thursday) – Redcar & Rain & the Cinema

It is raining today and Ame is not feeling well. Sep and I went to the cinema this evening and saw "My Brother Jonathan" <sup>[1]</sup>. A good picture.



Figure 90 - Regent Cinema Redcar Seafront (on a sunny day!) ([www.thisisredcar.co.uk](http://www.thisisredcar.co.uk))

Notes

[1] *My Brother Jonathan* (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0040623/>) starred Michael Dennison, Dulcie Gray and James Robertson Justice

### 3 Sep 1948 (Friday) – Kirkbymoorside & Ralph’s Cross



Figure 91 - 1940s Bus in Kirkbymoorside  
(c) John Martin Creative Commons

Today we visited the moors 4,000 feet above sea level, near the town of Kirkbymoorside. Mr. Hebron came down in his car and brot Sep with him and we four drove up here. We drove 50 miles thru hills covered with heather, both dark and light in color. English heather is more beautiful than the Scottish. We saw a crude stone cross erected many years ago named Ralph's Cross. Here all travellers rest and all wayfarers look for the coins left by others in passing that way. There is a hollow groove where the stone is worn away by fingers picking up the coins. This old cross is centuries old and can be seen for miles a-round.



Figure 92 - (Young) Ralph's Cross - Kirkbymoorside

#### Notes

[1] There are many standing stones and crosses in the area – including Old and Young Ralph’s cross and Fat Betty near Blakey Ridge (site of the highest pub in England – the Lion). See <http://www.alanheaton.co.uk/northyorkscrosses.html>



## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Standing with the everlasting wind blowing and the pungent smell of the heather in the air, along with the silence of the moors, it seemed a sacred and a beautiful spot. Sep says the wind never stops blowing up here, and the air is always pure and sweet.

We stopped at a quaint old tea room with its old world charm, old dishes, platters and pitchers and plates lined up against the wall and on the dresser. On the way back I saw my first thatched cottage. Exactly as the pictures I had seen of Ann Hathaway's cottage. All this hidden a way. An old Abbey always built near a stream by the monks. Beautiful scenery and plenty of trees to act as wind breaks. We came home again in my beloved twilight thru the hills and dales of this perfect dream country.



Figure 93 - Kirkbymoorside (1940s) [www.kirkbymoorside.com](http://www.kirkbymoorside.com)

Notes

[1] See also <http://www.kirkbymoorside.com/>

#### 4 Sep 1948 (Saturday) – Saltburn-by-the-Sea – Italian Gardens

Still cold and rainy Ame and I shopped this morning and we are going by bus to Saltburn-by-the-Sea. A seaside resort 10 miles from here. This village is set high up above the sea and is very rugged and wild; something out of a story book. The town is noted for its Italian gardens and we found them exquisite. Window shopped and said we would be back soon!



Figure 94 - Saltburn - Italian Gardens

Notes

[1] See also <http://www.saltburnbysea.com/>



## 5 Sep 1948 (Sunday) – Saltburn – Cliff Side Railway

A very beautiful Sunday and I attended church in town with the Saltburn Scotch ladies. A Presbyterian Church, every pew was filled and the sermon was very well spoken in the lovely soft burr of the Scotch dialect. This was the only church I attended that resembled our own churches in anyway and it felt so very much like home that on the home ward way I felt my first pang of homesickness. It lasted all the afternoon and try as I might I could not shake it off. Did the familiar surroundings of that church create that feeling? I wonder? Little did I think that we were to renew our visit to Saltburn so quickly, but we did, the Scotch ladies, Ame, Sep and I. Again we looked at the lovely gardens and found many new wonders. On the Main St. we discovered an elevator <sup>[1]</sup> and went up hi above the sea-shore level. Each car was encased in glass and was run just as our elevators over here. It was very convenient for those who were unable to climb the stairs. Sep and the Scotch ladies had to try it out while Ame and I waited. We arrived home in time for tea and spent the evening visiting.



Figure 95 - Saltburn Pier and Funicular Railway

### Notes

[1] The elevator Elsa refers to the Saltburn cliff side railway or funicular – which is water powered. Not long ago I had the pleasure of seeing another similar railway (in Pittsburgh, USA – the view is somewhat different!).



## 6 Sep 1948 (Monday) – Runswick Bay



Figure 96 - Runswick Bay

It was here I purchased a doll made of all percale for Pam in a quaint little shop high up on a rugged hill above shore. Polly came with me and together we had some climbing to do. The other folks looked like midgets far down below. It was a funny little shop and well worth the climb to see all the wares they had on display. We had tea on top of this hill in an open air tea room that is open on three sides looking out across the water. We also had visitors; beautiful little ducks, chickens and geese came and went making themselves perfectly at home among the guests. They were born pets.

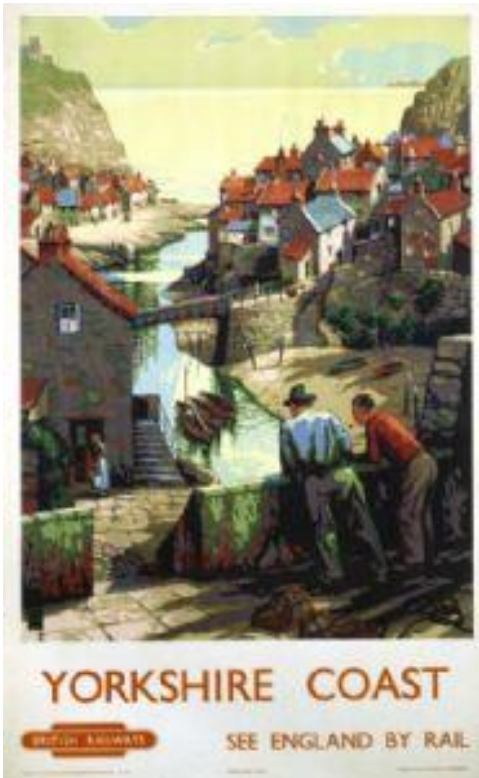


Figure 97 - British Rail Poster - Yorkshire Coast

Mr. Jaeger, chauffeur for Sep, took us home as we came by way of his taxi. It was a glorious experience and one not soon forgotten.

We leave for Stokesley tonight and before we left, young Mrs .Osbourne presented me with an exquisite all white minster jug as she called it. It is dated 1842 and was used as a christening jug in York Minster. It is white stone and resembles Wedgwood depicting small replicas of the windows of the minster, all hand carved.

## 7 Sep 1948 (Tuesday) – Stokesley – The Mystery of Airing Clothes

It is rainy and cool and Ame washed today. She uses a regular electric washer such as ours and has a nice laundry. She ironed too, and while she did this work she sent me upstairs to the drawing room to crochet and write in my diary.

I must tell you about the airing process over here. Each home has some sort of hidden cupboard or oven built in the fireplace or heating arrangement called an airing oven. Clothes that are washed, dried and ironed are never 'worn the same day. They must be carefully aired by placing them in this oven which is always warm, and left to air as they call it. My nitie being washed and ironed that day, I went to put it on that night but Ame nearly had a stroke. "Over my dead body do you put that on tonite!" I had to sit by the fire and wait for it to air as we had neglected to put it in the oven earlier. I sat there an hour and a half before I could go to bed! There are always clothes in the airing oven as it acts like a linen closet in my estimation. Airing machines are a regular appliance and are sold in all appliance shops. I wonder could it be possible it is on the same principle as our driers?



Figure 98 - S Paxton & Co - Stokesley c.1940 and today (See note 1)

### Notes

[1] I am deeply indebted to Joe of StokesleyPride ([www.stokesleypride.org.uk](http://www.stokesleypride.org.uk)) for the picture on the left which he searched Stokesley Library's Local History section to find. It shows Sep Paxton and his business in Stokesley possibly late 1930s or early 1940s. See Elsa's diary for 8<sup>th</sup> August – there are the five petrol pumps – just as she described along with the S.Paxton Ironmongers sign. Today a hairdressers.

## 8 Sep 1948 (Wednesday) – Stockton – Market Day

Stockton is a large city and about 3/4 <sup>[1]</sup> of a mile from Stokesley. This was Market Day and we had promised to meet Polly and Mrs. Guinlay, go sightseeing and have lunch. The wares all have their own booths <sup>[2]</sup>. All booths are covered against weather and one walks thru the center of the wide main thoro-fare with booths to right and left. Polly and I walked together and she was so much fun! Fish were scaled, gutted and cleaned; chickens were sold all ready for the pot. Vegetables are scarce or rather they don't have a variety. Anything and everything can be bought provided one has the coupons of course. We had lunch at one of the large shops at noon as I was to catch the 2 P.M. bus for Darlington.



Figure 99 - Stockton High Street & Market c1950 (by Jack Marriott - a well known Stockton photographer)

I wanted to purchase a tweed coat but prices were way beyond reason and common sense and I could buy one as good at home and for less money. I caught the bus and reached Richmond at 3.30. I was so happy to reach home again. We had tea and afterwards took a walk around my favorite castle walk and from there visited with dear old Mrs. Spence, then home to supper.

So good to be home with dear Amy and Luther.

### Notes

[1] I think Elsa must have meant 3 or 4 miles. Stockton High Street is reputedly the widest in England.

[2] Presumably Elsa is referring to market stalls when she says Booths



## 9 Sep 1948 (Thursday) - Richmond - The Artist



Figure 100 - Tom, Joseph and Luther Paxton (Richmond about 1960)

Amy brot my breakfast up to me in bed this morning. While having dinner today I noticed a woman sketching just outside the window sitting on a low wall. I told Luther she looked as if she were sketching the house but he said she was doing the street leading down to the Castle walk. He very nonchalantly took a walk out, took a peek, and came back telling us she was drawing the house. After a bit I went out and spoke to her and asked her if she willing to sell it to me. She was and was delighted, we struck a bargain and as a result I have a very fine pen & ink sketch of the home on No17 Castle Hill. But Luther was not to be outdone for after I returned from Edinburgh I discovered another sketch of his home, framed and hanging on the wall. I inquired if the artist lady had returned. He said, "So how do you like it?" I looked a bit closer and said, "That was done by a certain Luther Paxton" and he admitted it was, and now I have two of the house, and good his was, too!

We are expecting Glad but she didn't come till evening because of two girls who had cycled down from London way - Pat and Daphne. They are on holiday and spending it touring the country on their bicycles. England has hostels all thru the country for the convenience of cyclists just as we have hostels or motels where one can rest and get ready for the next days trip. After a walk about with the girls we went to our respective homes and called it a day.



## 10 Sep 1948 (Friday) – Swaledale & Muker



Figure 101 - Muker in Swaledale

We have arranged to have a party today and go to the town of Muker in the Swaledale country. Glad, Pat, Daphne, Amy, Luther and I started off in high spirits in the bus and after arriving tramped all over this lovely moorland, climbing stiles and taking pictures in spite of the gloomy day. They took one of me high up on a swinging bridge which turned out very fine.

We had tea in a cozy little tea-room in this desolate land and enjoyed a beautiful view. The girls took off their shoes and stockings and waded across the Swale amid laughing and chattering! We came home tired but happy!



### Notes

[1] Figure 102 – Pat, Glad, Elsa, Amy and Daphne: This is only photograph I possess that I know was taken by Elsa on this trip. Marked on the back with “Pat, Daphne, Myself, Amy, Gladys Swaledale on Moors”. It must have been taken by Luther on 10<sup>th</sup> Sep 1948 – somewhere near Muker.

Figure 102 – Pat, Glad, Elsa, Amy and Daphne (See Notes)

## 11 Sep 1948 (Saturday) – Richmond – Market Day & Rest

Nothing of importance today, except the usual exchange of money, wares & hub-bub and taking care of the marketing, then ending with the usual cup of cocoa. We rested in bed this afternoon <sup>[1]</sup> and in the evening went to the cinema to see "This was a Woman" <sup>[2]</sup> Good too!



Figure 103 - Richmond Market Place (c.1940s)

### Notes

[1] I always find it odd that its didn't seem unusual to rest "in bed" in the afternoon.

[2] This was a Woman (1948) <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0178061/>.



## 12 Sep 1948 (Sunday) - Richmond - Church

We had church with Michael attending, had dinner and then I went to visit Tom, my usual Sunday trip. I found them all well and in the mood for playing "Whist and Donkey" and so high tea, a nice visit and home again.



Figure 104 - Luther Paxton (Richmond Bowls Champion 1946)

### 13 Sep 1948 (Monday) – Richmond – Ships in Bottles

Everything is arranged to leave for Edinburgh on the 18th. I'm going to Darlington on the 15<sup>th</sup> and spend 3 days with Lizzie and Joe. This evening we visited Nancy and Tommy. This is Brother Tom's oldest son & his wife. They live close by Amy and it took all my ingenuity to draw him out as he is an unusually quiet sort of fellow, but once we got started on his hobbies he soon loosened up & we had an interesting visit. His hobby is building Small boats & placing them in bottles. He builds galleons, tables, chests of drawers and is a very talented young man. In other words he is hiding his light under a bushel. Both young folks were such shy, quiet people, but so lovable once they were drawn out and on a favorite topic of conversation.



Figure 105 - Thomas Paxton (junior) c. 1940

## 14 Sep 1948 (Tuesday) – Richmond & Catterick

Today I took a walk alone and went sit in the Old Friary Gardens, watching traffic and enjoying the flowers blooming in such profusion everywhere. I spent about two hours here and hated to leave and felt as if I could stay here all day but I knew I must get home for lunch so after posting my letters I found my way home.



Figure 106 - Grey Friars Tower  
([www.independant.co.uk](http://www.independant.co.uk) - Dave Heselhurst 2010)

One day an incident occurred in the post office as Amy came with me to buy some stamps. I asked for a three-cent stamp and the clerk looked at me as if I had lost my reasoning. Amy says she wants a tuppence and a pence, which is a 2 cent and 1 cent stamp. After that I always asked for a tuppence too.

We walked 2 miles to see Frances at Catterick today and Amy took the bus back while I continued on to Frances's home for tea.

She always serves the loveliest teas. I reached home at two and then we had the usual game of cards, supper and to bed.



Figure 107 - Joyce, Frances and Jack Warner (c1952)



## 15 Sep 1948 (Wednesday) – Darlington – Joe & Lizzie



Figure 108 - Thomas and Elizabeth Paxton with Joyce Warner (c. 1948)

### Notes

[1] Lizzie and Joe lived in Brunton Street in Darlington. Joe was the Richmond Golf Professional back in his younger days (and is noted as such in the 1901 Census – when he was 23)

After washing, ironing and mending, having lunch etc. I caught the 4.PM. bus for Darlington where Lizzie and Joe met me.

We had tea and afterwards Joe and I went to a large city park where they had a costume roller skating exhibition on a large rink. It was in a most beautiful setting of dark pines with the lake close by lit up by colored flood lights which were played on the skaters as they performed. Some of the fancy costume skating along with the music was perfect and Joe and I had a time keeping our feet still and he kept singing under his breath. Our feet got pretty cold so decided to go home much as we hated to do so. We beached home at 9 PM and Lizzie had tea ready so we had supper. Meanwhile Joe performed for her benefit the whole show. She didn't go with us because of a bad knee. We talked and visited until 11:30 and then to bed.

## 16 Sep 1948 (Thursday) - Darlington - Hats & Shoes



Figure 109 - Joe and Lizzie Paxton (c 1960)

Here comes Lizzie and tea. After breakfast I did a little washing preparatory to leaving for Scotland. Lizzie is such a dear and just like a sister would be, taking everything so easy and in a quiet manner with no fuss or excitement. I bought a hat today, a black tarn, pretty too. Also brown walking shoes. 1-9-3 for the hat and 4-15-2 for the shoes which equals \$17. in our money. Awful prices! The hat was about \$4.50 which wasn't too bad. We shopped around awhile and then went home and had tea, afterwards, sitting the fire, she crocheting and knitting.

We had supper and then up to bed and there in the bedroom was a lovely fire in the fireplace ,two hot water bottles in my bed, covers turned down, and all so comfortable. Oh! I shall never want to go home with this sort of care .A good book on the bedside table with the dim light of a lamp glowing and showing up the homey room.

Notes

[1]

## 17 Sep 1948 (Friday) – Darlington

I have just had my tea and am writing this in bed. Lizzie has just come up and is ready for a chat sitting on the bed. She has brot hot water up in an old large pitcher that sets in an old fashioned bowl as the bathroom is downstairs. Old marble topped tables, high poster black walnut beds, flowered carpeting, heavy gold frame family pictures one the wall, quaint little black and white fireplace. Can you picture it? Enchanting ! And a slender pretty grey haired lady flitting about trying to do so much and be so very kind. God bless her! If I ever come this way again I have promised to spend a long time with them; but I can't wait too long as most of them are in the sunset years and time waits for no man <sup>[1]</sup>.



Figure 110 - Joseph Paxton & Family (c. See Note 2) c.1908

### Notes

[1] Joe passed away in 1952 (aged 74) and I believe Lizzie in 1956 (age 81).

[2] Joe was first married in 1901 to Hannah Wardell with whom he had two children – Joseph (Joey) and Frances Hannah Paxton (who married Jack Warner). Tragically Joseph lost his wife in 1909 and then his son in 1915, before meeting and marrying Lizzie in 1918. Lizzie had also been married before and lost her husband.



## 18 Sep 1948 (Saturday) – Darlington to Edinburgh

We are to leave on the 10:15 train from Darlington today and Joe and Lizzie are taking me to the station where Harry and Mrs. Tate are to meet me. The day is very sunny for England. In fact I have found that most days during the latter part of my stay have been bright and warm. We are at the railroad depot and have met Harry and dear Mrs. Tate and still have some time before the train arrives. Here it comes and there are just crowds waiting to board the train and I'm wondering how we are all to get seated. Funny little English trains! I shall never cease to wonder at them. They seem more like a home to so many and lunches are always ready and someone is always eating, much to the disgust of Harry.

We arrived in Edinburgh at 3:15 and went directly to our hotel, which was The Royal Scottish Hotel on Abercrombie St. There we had our supper. Beautiful Edinburgh! We took a walk after settling our luggage and having our meal. This city is lovely with its Princess Street, the main thoroughfare and shops. On one side the busy tram line and buses and then across the street a most lovely park the length of the main street. Below the street a railroad is hidden from view by the gorgeous plantings in the park and then rising again far across are the homes built high up, and off to the right still higher on a rocky high still the stronghold of Edinburgh Castle, occupied now by Scottish troops. Rugged grey and sinister looking it can be seen from all directions with a sheer drop at the sides of grey, forbidding rock-an impenetrable fortress in days long gone. The shops of Edinburgh are all very high class and one feels just that on entering any store. The inevitable Woolworth's was of course well in evidence and but for the price sign are very much like our own.

This starts our holiday in Scotland with a very fine beginning.

*Notes*

[1]

## 19 Sep 1948 (Sunday) – Edinburgh – The Castle & Cathedral

This is Sunday and after breakfast we took a walk to the castle, arriving just in time to see the changing of the guard. Colorful in their bright kilts, white leggings and small cocked hats they made a pretty picture and I did get a good one of the regiment. Especially the one of the sentry in the sentry box, which I thought might interest Bill. Looking over the wall high up over the city, I looked down and directly below me on a ledge that protruded quite some distance out I saw the burial ground for the soldier's pets. Bright flowers were blooming on the tiny graves and all was in very neat order. One can see over the city from this vantage point and it was a grand sight.



Figure 111 - Edinburgh Castle (Wikimedia Commons)

Notes

[1]

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

After dinner we watched a parade from St.Giles Church <sup>[1]</sup> of the Army, Navy, Air Force and all the rest with bagpipes playing and all in native dress. The Scots do make a picturesque appearance, when wearing their outfits and plaids. We had tea at 4:30 and again went seeing the city. Everything is so clean and neat and it is a constant marvel to me this cleanliness. We came home tired, had supper and visited in the lounge awhile and then to bed. I have a cold today.



Figure 112 - St Giles Cathedral Edinburgh (Wikimedia Commons)

### Notes

[1] St Giles is also known as the High Kirk of Edinburgh and dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century although heavily restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Elsa also visited St Giles in Pontefract (18-Aug-48). <http://www.stgilescathedral.org.uk/>



## 20 Sep 1948 (Monday) -Edinburgh

Today is Monday and beautiful weather and we are expecting to take a tour around the city and started off by seeing Saltbury Crags, high and beautiful, many historical buildings and the lovely lake named Firth Loch.



At the old St. Giles Cathedral, on the side walk in front of the church, is a heart carved and built right in the stone of the pavement <sup>[1]</sup>. This was in the center of what they call Midlothian or the mile walk, meaning that it was a mile walk to the palace from that spot. Also under this walk, John Knox was buried and a brass plate marked the spot. His home was a very humble dwelling and very well preserved.

Figure 113 - Heart of Midlothian Mosaic

St.Giles is the cathedral where the King and the Lords have their own stalls with their own crest in which they worship. The carving in this cathedral is beyond description and all of it including the sculpture is carved by hand.

This afternoon we visited a Scottish zoo <sup>[2]</sup> and enjoyed it all so much, especially to funny penguins who always look as if they are in evening dress. We had tea at the zoo, rested and came back to the hotel. Supper and a short visit in the lounge and then to my room and my diary. Our room is a large one with twin beds and a nite table with a lamp between the beds. Mrs. Tate is a good partner and we have certainly managed very nicely and one would have that we had known each other for years. This is the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my marriage.

### Notes

*[1] Visitors to Edinburgh will often notice people spitting on the Heart. A prison stood on the site, where executions used to take place. The heart marks its doorway: the point of public execution. Although now sometimes said to be for good luck, this was originally simply a sign of historic disdain for the former prison. One popular legend says that by spitting on the heart, one is destined to one day return to Edinburgh*

*[2] Edinburgh Zoo was opened in 1913 and is famous for its penguins and the daily Penguin Parade.*

## 21 Sep 1948 (Tuesday) – Edinburgh

This is the day we are to visit Holyrood Castle <sup>[1]</sup> the home of Mary Queen of Scots. The weather is perfect and I will say the weather in Scotland is much more consistent than the temperamental weather in England. The Castle is not as imposing as some I have visited, but is very beautiful and the architecture is entirely different than the English architecture. We took a picture of Harry in front of the Scottish monument which stands just outside the castle and Harry in turn, took one of Mrs. Tate and myself. Both turned out well.



Figure 114 - Holyrood Palace (Wikimedia Commons)

We viewed all the rooms where all Kings and Queens held reign centuries ago and are still used by royalty at present time. Beautiful tapestries from the year 1132. The royal sitting room, the gorgeous Throne Room, the many many bed-rooms, inlaid desks, an old harpsicord from the year 1500 still in good condition. When fetes are held in the garden the royal family watches from the terrace.

### Notes

[1] The Royal Palace of Holyrood is the official residence of the monarch in Scotland. The palace was started in 1501 by James IV.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

We had our lunch at the hotel, and as much as Harry objected to going to Falkirk <sup>[1]</sup> to visit the Scotch ladies I met at Red-Car, nevertheless he consulted a cab driver and made a reservation for the afternoon bus leaving for that town. After telephoning Mollie (Mrs. Nelson) we were in the town, she came down to meet us. Harry wasn't too happy about it all, as he was shy about meeting these folks, and after reaching their home and meeting Mollie's Mother, Mrs MacGuinlay and Aunt Polly (Miss Olliphant) and seeing how they greeted us he began to thaw out and finally became very cordial and jolly. Presently Mr. Nelson came home and the family was complete even to the two children. We had high tea and it was a veritable banquet, Harry kept looking my way and I could see by the twinkle in his eye, that he was really enjoying himself. The children sang together and good they were too. Aunt Polly played the piano and she and Mrs MacGuinlay sang a duet and it was altogether a wonderful visit. But all good things come to an end and so we finally said goodbye. For me, it was forever. Then Mr Nelson took us to the bus and waited until we started off waving his hat as we left. I shall never forget that visit. Mrs. Tate said she had no idea they were such lovely folk while Harry admitted he had had the time of his life.

### Notes

*[1] Falkirk is about 23 miles North West of Edinburgh – and is famous for the Battle of Falkirk in 1291 when Edward I (“Longshanks”) defeated William Wallace – and in more modern times the Falkirk Wheel completed in 2002 – the world’s only rotary canal connector and a marvel of engineering.*



## 22 Sep 1948 (Wednesday) – Edinburgh

This is Wednesday and we decided to go shopping. We left but did mostly window shopping. I purchased all my Xmas cards at Woolworths. Also Dot some Scotch Castle Rock candy to take home. It doesn't have much taste and looks much like our own Rock Candy. In the afternoon we took a trip to the Forth Bridge on the River Firth <sup>[1]</sup>. This bridge took 7 years to build and they are continually painting it as it takes a year to complete one way. A most wonderful piece of work in bridge building and very beautiful to look at, it is 1¼ miles long.



Figure 115 - The Forth Rail Bridge (Wikimedia Commons)

We took a ferry across to the other side to Queenstown. We watched the loading of autos and trucks from the other side remaining on the ferry and returning on the loaded ferry for the home shore. Tea at our hotel, our usual walk, supper and to bed.

### Notes

[1] This is the Forth Rail Bridge, the Road Bridge not being completed until 1964.

## 23 Sep 1948 (Thursday) – Edinburgh - Trossachs



Today Harry had a tour into the Trossachs booked for us. What a lovely trip and what a day to start. We left by bus at 9.15 AM in high spirit and rarin' to go. Even Harry was "full of beans" and very chipper. On entering the Trossachs the weather changed became cold and gloomy and began to "spit" rain.

Figure 116 - The Trossachs

The mountains were high, some of the higher ones some 4,200 feet. above sea-level. The tops of some of the higher ones were wreathed in mist and at the foot of these huge hills were the many Lochs.



Figure 117 - The Trossachs Hotel

We had a tour on the famous Loch Lomond which was 2x3 miles long and 25 miles wide and followed the shore. Loch Katrine with its lovely hotel is also at the foot of these high mountains and all the hotels were in gorgeous settings.



Figure 118 - Highland Cattle (Wikimedia Commons)

Wild mountain sheep roamed the hills and they were covered with long wool. The cattle we saw were odd looking and their faces were covered with long hair and very long horns.

The many islands in the center of Loch Lomond were very beautiful, and one felt as if one could never leave this gorgeous bit of scenic splendor.



Figure 119 - Loch Lomond (Wikimedia Commons)

Perfectly beautiful, but the grand day ended as all things must, and so we were soon on our way back arriving at the hotel at 7:45.

I shall never forget the lovely, lonely Trossachs covered with their perfumed heather heather with the mists rising and falling making them visible and again invisible. Surely living among them one must absorb some of their mighty grandeur into their souls. They speak of the great might of God.

Notes

[1] The Trossachs are an area of wooded glens and lochs which came to popularity largely due to Sir Walter Scott's poem of 1810 entitled *The Lady of the Lake*.



## 24 Sep 1948 (Friday) – Edinburgh – Abbotsford House

This is Friday and Mrs. Tate and I really did some shopping this morning. It is a beautiful day, cool and sunny. We had lunch and then in the afternoon went on tour to visit Abbotsford House. This was the beautiful home of Sir Walter Scott and is located on the River Tweed.



Figure 120 - Abbotsford House (Wikimedia Commons)

It was a picture in itself with the sheep feeding on the river banks, everywhere and everything so peaceful and quiet making it hard to realize that so short a time ago the country round about was so filled with the rumors of the terrible war going on in England.

It was in Abbotsford House that I saw a most strange painting of Mary Queen of Scots. It was a painting of the head only, severed from the body and it bothered me very much as to just where the head was buried. In fact on my return to Edinburgh I inquired of a number of people as to just where the head was, but no one could give me a satisfactory answer. Later on I found out for myself on my visit to Westminster Abbey. In London her brother King Charles took pity and decided the head should be buried with the body which had been placed with honors in the abbey in a large, beautiful crypt of its own. So the head was located and given its rightful place which of course made me feel much better!

Melrose Abbey was another abbey we visited this day, but it was a ruin and no doubt the Scotch called it a lovely ruin meaning the preservation of it. I found an old headstone marking the grave of the rector of this church in the long distant past and the story goes that he requested the following to be carved on his tombstone;

The Earth goes to the Earth glistening like gold,  
The Earth goes to the Earth sooner than it wold,  
The Earth builds on the Earth castles and towers,  
The Earth says to the Earth "All shall be Ours".

Notes

[1]

<http://www.scottsabbotsford.co.uk/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melrose\\_Abbey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melrose_Abbey)

Dryberg Abbey was another lovely ruin visited and close by is a most modern hotel. In fact, on entering, it felt as though I were going to dine in some hotel in my-own country. It was so very modern with its long, beautiful hangings, the gorgeous lighting and carpeting.



Figure 121 - Dryburgh Abbey and Hotel

We had high tea there and a very high tea too. Of everything I found that Scotland seemed to have ever so much more in the way of food than England and I have often wondered since the reason for it. The long window over looked forest and valley and it was a dream place, this modern palace in this out of the way place.

We took the bus for home and reached there at 8:30PM, tired, but so happy feeling we had been in another world. This was our last night in lovely Edinburgh. We leave in the morning.

*Notes*

[1]

<http://www.dryburgh.co.uk/>

## 25 Sep 1948 (Saturday) – Edinburgh

Saturday morning and all packed to leave on the 10:15. How I hated to leave this grand old city. I shall never forget my first impression of it and in lonely times I shall go back again in my memories and review again the grandeurs of the Trossachs, the friendliness of the Scottish people, beautiful Princess Street and the old medieval castle keeping watch over all the lovely city of Edinburgh.



Figure 122 - Edinburgh Rail Poster 1934

We are on our way; the train is packed to capacity and the corridors, too, are crowded. Now, squeezing, panting, and puffing comes a lady of no light weight carrying a small terrier. One wonders where she is bound for pushing her way thru the dense crowds. To dinner most likely. I was fortunate. A gentleman going to dinner gave me his seat until he came back. He never did come back. Mrs. Tate was ill so refused dinner on the train, so, Harry and I pushed our way thru. We had a fine dinner.

We changed trains at Darlington for Northallerton. We expected to spend the weekend at Mrs Tate's sister's home, a Mrs. Willoughby. She is a widow and lives in a very lovely home. Her husband was a building contractor and left her in comfortable circumstances. Mrs Tate and Harry made it their week-end holiday retreat frequently. Mrs. Willoughby is a very fine distinguished looking person; so different from darling little Mrs. Tate. When we arrived, I was given a lovely room with private bath and everything very comfortable we had high tea and then spent some time in her garden. It is difficult to describe the quietness and peacefulness I experienced in that garden. In fact, all my stay in England had about it that something that made for peace which I find so hard to keep with me here at home. The homes, the people, the countryside all seem to pour out this certain peace and restfulness. We spent the week end here talking in the fire-light and it was another memory.



## 26 Sep 1948 (Sunday) – Northallerton



Figure 123 - Northallerton (c1950s)

Sunday morning and the sun is shining. 9:30 and I am still in bed. I had my breakfast and was told to stay there until tea time. I can't understand why everyone spoils me so.

I am certainly getting rested altho I am leaving for London on Wednesday. Stayed close in the house all day and it gave Harry and myself a real opportunity to get acquainted. In the evening a Miss Kitchen (they call her a dowager) called. She acted as a butler to the Royal Family at one time and oh how interesting her talk is. She was quite the grand Dame. After enjoying a cup of tea we all went along upstairs and to bed.

## 27 Sep 1948 (Monday) – Northallerton

This morning (Monday) was our last day here. It seems I am always looking forward to a visit and then it is time to leave. But I shall be happy to see my own room in Richmond and my dear Amy and Luther once again. We had our dinner and we had to make ready for me to leave. Harry saw me off on the afternoon bus I reached home at 4:55 P M and was I ever happy to get there. My mail had piled up so had a lot of reading which gave me news of home and was very interesting. Afterwards I had to explain my entire trip so my dear ones and we climbed into bed rather late that night.



Figure 124 - Frances Warner and Luther Paxton (1990)

## 28 Sep 1948 (Tuesday) – Richmond

Tuesday and getting ready for my London trip. I went to the bank, ironed a blouse and got my clothes ready for the trip to visit Mary Void's cousin in London. Spent the rest of the day visiting with Amy. Glad came as usual and we had such a fine visit. After the small chores around the house, and writing letters and also my diary, I went to Tom's shop <sup>[1]</sup>. He thot I was quite a gad-about and said he thot I should stay home and visit with the family. But I insisted I should be home in a short time and then we should continue our talks. We really had some heated talks on politics, religion etc.



Figure 125 - Richmond Castle - Painting by William Stuart Lloyd

### Notes

[1] Tom's shop was on Frenchgate in Richmond.



## 29 Sep 1948 (Wednesday) – London – Bowler Hats

This is the great day. I remembered my trip up north to Darlington. Again I am on my way to call on folks I have never met; in the oldest city in the world, to say nothing of it being the largest one, not knowing what I was coming into. The folks were to meet me at the train in London. I left Richmond on the 10:05 and was to change at Darlington for the train to London.

Before I left Richmond that day I watched them preparing to walk the boundary<sup>[1]</sup>. This is celebrated every seven years. As many residents as care to start off and walk the boundary of the town clear around the town. Many fall by the wayside but quite a few followed thru. I was sorry I had to leave but I didn't want to miss my train so away I went.



Figure 126 - Richmond Boundary Riding 2004  
([www.richmond.org](http://www.richmond.org))

### Notes

[1] The Richmond Septennial Boundary Riding is a tradition that dates back to the town's Royal Charter given by Queen Elizabeth I in 1576. The procession normally assembles around 8.30am (on the last Wednesday of August in recent times) and includes the Mayor, Civic Halberdiers, the Mace Bearers, the Pinder (who carries the Axe of a Pioneer), Bell Ringers (who make proclamations) and the Town Banner Bearer. The town boundary is approximately 14 miles and at various points crosses the River Swale by the town "Waterwader"! At various points freshly minted pennies are thrown to children and numerous other traditions are enacted including casting stones over buildings and charity races. Everyone who completes the walk is presented with a certificate.

For more information see <http://www.richmond.org/guide/boundary-riding.html>

NOTE: The next boundary riding will take place on 24th August 2011.

See <http://www.richmondtowncouncil.org.uk/boundaryriding2.htm>





We had just a simple low tea afterward going through the underground and catching a train for Walton-on-



Figure 128 - Two Famous Bowler Hat wearers

Thames. He does not use his car for business as facilities for parking are not as advanced as in our country. While waiting for Mr Bowler at his office I noticed the hat models and saw they were imports from France and other countries and all very expensive. Connie said before I returned I was to pick out a hat but it so happened that the opportunity did not come. The hat factory was on the third floor and many women were employed there <sup>[1]</sup>.

The underground railway we boarded runs under the Thames River and was crowded with commuters. Below this first underground was still another one also used by commuters. Our ride out to "The Birches" at Walton lasted about an hour during which time we were busy talking about many and various subjects. He also wore the inevitable bowler hat and carried an umbrella as all well dressed Britons do.



Figure 129 - Church St, Walton-on-Thames (c1940s)

Arriving at Walton we had to walk about 4 blocks in surroundings much like the Country Club. The home called The Birches was a dream house with beautiful surroundings of birch trees <sup>[2]</sup>. The house itself was of grey field stone with leaded casement windows, many gables and chimney pots covered with ivy and vivid colored flowers blooming all around. The house itself was a real country house with rooms everywhere and a wash basin in every room. They have 2 children, one 8 (Christine) and one 10 (John).

Connie and Christine met us on the porch and I shall never forget the lovely sight and first impression I had of both mother and daughter. Connie wore a lovely velvet princess style dress with small buttons all down the front. Christine, pretty with dark hair in braids, holding a black cat which offered an excuse for our opening conversation and endeared me to her as we afterwards became good friends.

Notes

[1] The Bowler hat was designed by London hatmakers Thomas and William Bowlers for hatters Lock & Co of St James's. The brief was to create a piece of headgear that could be worn by gamekeepers when they were out riding to protect their heads from low-hanging branches. It is thought that before accepting the hat Coke arrived at the shop in London and stamped on the crown twice to check its robustness. He paid 12 shillings for it.

[2] I'm desperately searching for this house today. Clearly it's not far from Walton-on-Thames railway station.

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Entering the house was as if I had stepped into one of our American living rooms. An immense room with a large fireplace, windows to the floor, tiny panes and curtained with heavy draw drapes. I was offered a cocktail but chose sherry and ever after was called "Sherry Elsa". My room was John's room, the son who was away at a Boys School in Surrey. Cherry red rug, flowered matching drapes on the leaded casement windows and twin beds with cherry colored bed-spreads, a dressing table and wash-basin - a very lovely cheery room.

We had a chicken dinner served in the old English dining-room with all the trimmings, but always tea instead of coffee. They had one maid who came by during the day, a gardener and a boy to clean the brass and silver once a week. Also in the garden was the bomb shelter and I had the opportunity of really entering one. This was frequently used when the alarm was given, neighbors joining with the Bowlers in sharing the shelter. Food and medical supplies were always on hand. The shelter was always well stocked. To go back to my first night in the Bowler house a hidden bar was placed in one corner of the huge drawing room which appeared on pressing a button and which carried all and everything in the way of liquor. We sat around the fireplace and talked until late and Christine asked immediately about cowboys and Indians. She intends to marry a cowboy and live in America. This is already decided.

One room in the home was used as a playroom entirely made of cement and also used in case of air-raids. Their entrance hall is called a lounge, then the lovely drawing room, the dining room with all its old brasses and silver, dark woodwork and lovely china. The master bedroom, the room belonging to Leslie and Connie was huge. John's room which I have already described, a billiard room, Christine's room and the chief bathroom, all very modern and very much as our homes are today. The kitchen was a model of up-to-date accessories. The sink of all-american steel was beautiful. Cabinets all around with small French doors. There was a room used as a dance hall and the house was centrally heated.

In the garden stood a lovely green house that provided the house with the ever-present flowers which the Englishman so loves. The furniture, especially in the dining room, was mostly antique and there was old pottery and much pewter in evidence. Just a grand comfortable English home with perfect hospitality generously given. After our first evening getting acquainted we retired rather late and I slept well in my comfortable bed and lovely room.

*Notes*

[1]



### 30 Sep 1948 (Thursday) – Hampton Palace

Visited the garden this morning and also the bomb shelter. We are going to lunch in town this noon and will visit Hampton Palace afterwards. At present am sitting in John's room with the sunshine pouring in the casement window and wondering whether or not I am the heroine of an English fairy tale writing in my diary.

Glancing up and out I see the beautiful front yard and quaint wooden gate for the entrance to the road. No sound, only birds singing in the nearby woods - what a Heaven to live in. Makes me homesick for dear old Country Club. I have taken a picture of the Bowler home and hope it will turn out perfect.

Left before noon and had lunch in a small cafe tenanted by many folks employed in the town. Of course the menu is limited and only a standard choice of food because of rationing. None the less we had a good meal of roast beef with the ever present custard and fruit pudding which I have learned to love very much. The beautiful Thames River runs right through the town and in the sunshine looked very innocent and rural, not at all like the mighty Thames that flows thru London-way past all the Parliament buildings and commercial buildings of a great city.



Figure 130 - Walton-on-Thames from the Air

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

After lunch we drove through Hampton Court Palace home of King Henry 8<sup>th</sup>, who took the palace from Cardinal Wolsey in 1511. The description and history of the palace is attached <sup>[1]</sup>.



Figure 131 - Hampton Court (Wikimedia Commons)



The beautiful flower gardens were exquisite and we saw the grapevine started in 1768 called the Hambro grape vine <sup>[2]</sup>, still growing vigorous and strong covering the top of the green house. They pick 600 bunches of grapes a year off this vine. The lovely old tapestries and oil paintings were beautiful and it was an afternoon well spent and one I wouldn't have missed.

We came home, had tea and visited with Connie and Christine. Connie prepared the dinner that night and when Leslie came home we had a most lovely evening sitting in front of the fire and chatting.

Figure 132 - Hampton Court Great Vine

### Notes

[1] See Hampton Court <http://www.hrp.org.uk/hamptoncourtpalace/>

[2] I cannot find any reference to the name 'Hambro' but this is undoubtedly the famous "Great Vine" - <http://www.hrp.org.uk/HamptonCourtPalace/stories/palacehighlights/TheGreatVine.aspx>



## 1 Oct 1948 (Friday) – London

This is the day. We started off bright and early with instructions to Christine that we would not be home for lunch, boarded the train and on to London. One old Crown was entirely made of silver. We had lunch with Leslie in a small French Restaurant where he is well known as everyone knew him. This eating place was located at the corner of Jermyn Street. After cocktails in the main bar, (I had my sherry) we went down to the Rathskellar and were served dinner. The old atmosphere was all around us and again wine was served by a French waiter wearing a leather apron carrying a wine keg on his shoulder pouring it very aptly from the wooden keg into our glasses from his shoulder. All these foreign customs intrigued me greatly and I enjoyed every minute of the meal. Fish salad, roast duckling, cooked well and very savory, followed by cake and ice-cream.

Afterwards Leslie boarded and went back to the office and we continued to sight-see. I never, never shall I forget this day! We walked to Piccadilly Circus, to Trafalgar Square and its very familiar lions, high up Lord Nelson's monument, swanky Regent St, Leicester Square and saw the clock on Regent St. with St. George slaying the Dragon. Threadneedle St. with the "Old Lady", the great Bank of England, Fleet St. the street of all London's Newspapers.



Figure 133 - Westminster Abbey (Wikimedia Commons)

Then on to Westminster Abbey! How to describe the Abbey! It is impossible to write about the solemnity that surrounds that historic and beautiful building. The tomb of their unknown soldier surrounded by silent sight-seers. It is utterly impossible to put on paper just what goes thru one's mind as one stands there. One experiences this great moment and hides it away in the heart as one of the privileged mile-stones in our earthy journey. This can also be said of great Kings and Royalty buried in this massive Cathedral. Incidentally, it was in the Abbey I discovered the burial place of Mary, Queen of Scots. I was also told that her brother King James, felt pity and so had her head placed with the body. She lies beside her cousin the Great Queen Elizabeth 1st, each one with their own iron high fence enclosure. York Minster and West Minister will always stand out in my memories as very special among all the churches I visited in England, Scotland and Wales.



Connie and I stood on West Minster Bridge looking at the mighty Thames and opposite were the Houses of Parliament. The Government Buildings were intact but many of the homes of officials were completely bombed and gutted.

Close by the Houses of Parliament, and in the shadow of Big Ben stands Gauden's Abraham Lincoln, as we call "the Chair Lincoln" <sup>[1]</sup>. Oh! What a thrill I got seeing that dear figure emblem of home. The statue faces Westminster listening to the sonorous tones of Big Ben telling the passage of time.

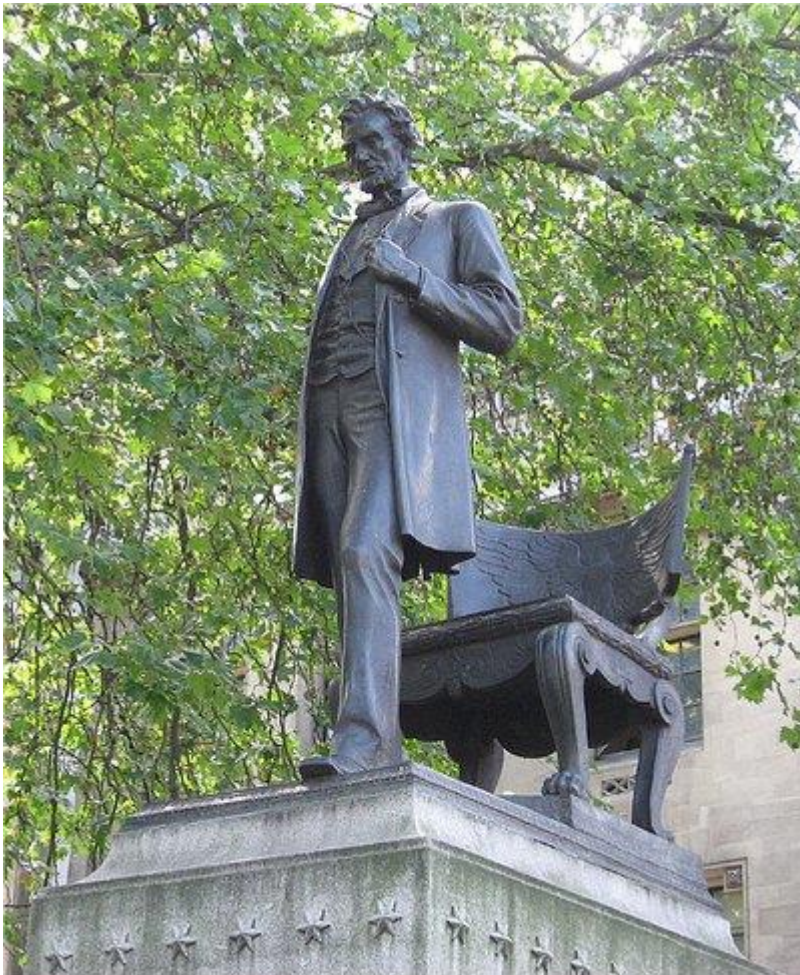


Figure 134 - Statue of Lincoln, Parliament Square

Connie and I were very tired so we hailed a cab and went by underground to Waterloo Station and on home. We had tea and talked and rested, as Leslie and Christine had gone to the Cinema we were alone and had a nice visit. We never went to bed until mid-nite and all I can say about Leslie Bowler is 'he is a peach'.

Notes

[1] The statue of Abraham Lincoln is by Augustus Saint Gaudens and stands in Parliament Square. It is a full size replica of the original which is in Chicago's Lincoln Park, where no doubt Elsa had seen it. It was a gift from the city of Chicago.

## 2 Oct 1948 (Saturday) – Walton-on-Thames & Windsor Castle.

This is a warm lazy morning and Leslie has asked me to accompany him for a visit to his parents who are 82 and 83 years of age <sup>[1]</sup>. They live alone in a typical old home and both are so chipper and well it is almost unbelievable. The elder reminded me of grandpa, and he talked on and on. His hair was long and snow white. He took me out to the garden and there showed me a boat he was building. This was his hobby. His wife was tall slender and a lot like our grandma. I loved them both and they wanted to keep me with them. I hated to leave this pleasant old couple and one would be apt to think we had known each other for years. Connie was expecting us for lunch, so we left and after lunch visited Windsor Castle.



Figure 135 - Windsor Castle (Wikimedia Commons)

We visited the state rooms, all the old armour, paintings, old tapestries, and all the very old furniture. It was one of the loveliest castles I had seen. The oil painting of Mary Queen of Scots was by far much more beautiful than the one of Queen Elizabeth. Our next call was at Eton College. Oh yes I mustn't forget the lovely old carpet made in India - the largest in the world with the most exquisite of colors and it was in excellent condition. We had tea at a funny little Inn at Windsor town with the old world atmosphere and all its old brasses and pewter.



Figure 136 - Eton Boys (1936) with some local children looking on in amusement

Then on to Eton, where we saw the boys in their funny frock coats with white starched collars and Eton hats. The little ones were so funny. Home to coffee and toasted cheese sandwiches. A grand day!!

### Notes

[1]Leslie's parents were Thomas William Bowler and Alice Gertrude ("Ghee") Turner. Thomas was the son of another Thomas Bowler who invented the Bowler hat with his brother William in 1847.



### 3 Oct 1948 (Sunday) – Cranleigh

We visited John at his school today. A school for boys and named “the Cranleigh School”. It is only 11:30 am and I have had my breakfast as I have had on all my visits in this country. At present I am writing my diary. It has been the habit formed by Christine, to come into my room each morning while she has her hair combed, and then to talk about America. She is such a sweet child and loves to hear my stories of home and vows she will marry an American Cowboy.

Well, I am again ready for the jaunt to John's school. We stopped at the Talbot Inn <sup>[1]</sup> which is centuries old and had drinks (me with my sherry). The ceiling was so low I was afraid to stand up-right. Old smoky heavy rafters, old iron hinges on the heavy oak door and out at the back a lovely very old English garden. All drinks such as ale, beer, etc., were served in pewter mugs. Again pewter and brass lined the shelves and walls. Fire-arms and an old notice from the postillion days were also on the walls back from the year 1300. This notice carried the price of foods. All furniture was hand-hewn, from the ancient hand-hewn bar, up to date drinks were served. Our dinner which was served there, which consisted of chicken, brown potatoes, a salad and a plum sweet served with coffee.



Figure 137 The Talbot Inn, Ripley, Woking, Sussex





Figure 138 - Cranleigh School

This is Sussex and the country is most beautiful hills and woods and finally arrived at Cranleigh. I met John a very handsome lad about 6 feet tall and just 16. He had dark curly hair and was a senior. He himself took me thru this fine old school which at one time had been an old barn. It had a very large stone fireplace and stone floors. Flowers were all about inside and out. We sat at tables in front of the huge fire-place and enjoyed our tea and sandwiches.

We took John with us and went for a ride in the country and the scenery was beautiful. We delivered John back at the school as he had to be back by 7pm and bid him goodbye and then drove slowly home in the lovely late evening.

Tonight we are invited out to visit friends of the Bowlers a Mr. and Mrs. Brothers. He had spent 25 years in the States so, I felt as if I met a kindred Spirit. Much of his time there was spent as an antique dealer. At the time of our visit he was a Major in the English Army and we just had a grand time. We had a corner to ourselves, and talked and talked. He knew all about Minnesota, Wisconsin and New York. He resided in Detroit so knew all about Michigan too. We were served coffee and cookies arrived home late but had our usual talk at the fire-place and then to bed.

These folk wanted to take us out to a very formal affair, but I had neglected to take my formal dress along with me to London and Connie's didn't fit so instead we went to visit Connie's Mother the next day.

## 4 Oct 1948 (Monday) – Wimbledon

After lunch we are planning a trip to the old antique shop at Eshamand <sup>[1]</sup> and then to Mrs. Booseys.

We changed our minds and went directly to Connie's mother. Mrs. Boosey is a young looking woman and has four daughters; Connie, Edith, Enid and Mildred (Bill) <sup>[2]</sup>. They were all there to tea except Enid who was unable to come as she lives at Brighton. Mrs. Boosey has a comfortable nice home and I liked her very much. Many questions were asked about Mary Vold and her sister in Walworth. Mrs. Boosey and the girls all smoked and seem to enjoy it very much.

We talked and talked and then had supper and then talked some more. Connie went home and left me with Edith and Mrs, Boosey . We stayed up quite late and then finally to bed. The weather here in the south of England is much warmer than in the north.



Figure 139 - London Transport in Wimbledon 1940s

### Notes

[1] I've no idea about this place name- help!

[2] Edith was born 1904, Mildred 1906, Connie 1908 and Enid 1910.

[3] Elsa may have been proud of compatriots at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships earlier that year – Bob Falkenburg of the USA took the Men's singles (an unpopular winner by some accounts due to his habit of not trying in sets where he fell behind – he later became a Brazilian citizen and made a fortune by introducing sales of whipped ice-cream and establishing "Bobs" chain of restaurants in that country) and Louise Brough Clapp of the USA took the Ladies' Singles (and she did that for the next three years).

## 5 Oct 1948 (Tuesday) – London – return to Richmond

Breakfast in bed as usual with Mrs. Boosey sitting on the bed and we talked and visited all morning. It is quite chilly this morning and my first experience with the traditional fog of London. I shall leave this afternoon for Waterloo station and felt sincerely sorry to leave. She wanted me to arrange my affairs in the States and come and live with her! Such a fine character and she also suffered two bombing attacks during the war. She evacuated her home and moved in with one of the daughters in the country. I noticed the cracks thru-out the house caused by repercussions and it amazed me continually as to the fortitude of these British people. Standing opposite St. Paul's Cathedral, and noticing the damage done by great bombs I marvelled at these folks who hide in shelters start cleaning up the wreckage only to await the next blow. Great long blocks had be obliterated in London and Southampton, and as I stood there the ready tears flowed nor could I stop them <sup>[1]</sup>.



Figure 140 - Damage around St Pauls Cathedral (1942)

My visit is ended. I reached Waterloo station and took a cab to King's Cross and boarded the train for Darlington. Mrs. Boosey left me with many lovely memories to take back; many nieces for her folks back here in America. Connie sent a pewter mug to Mary, one that was used by King Henry 8th.

### Notes

*[1] Although it escaped major damage, St Pauls Cathedral was not completely unscathed. The reconstruction and repairs, according to Wren's original plans, were not completed until 1962. Most of the buildings around it were severely damaged.*



## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

I changed at Darlington for the Richmond train and had as a travelling companion - a young officer who was returning to Catterick Camp. We soon exchanged news and he led me on to talk about my own dear country. I arrived at Richmond at 9:30PM and there was dear Luther to meet me!

He wondered when I should remain "home" long enough to have a nice long visit with them. I told him that from here on I would stay at home and give the rest of my stay to them. Amy was ready with tea and we talked until mid-nite. Oh! Its so good to be home in dear old Richmond.



Figure 141 - Castle Hill 1929 showing Luther's House (c) Francis Frith Collection

## 6 Oct 1948 (Wednesday) – Richmond

It is cold today. Glad came in this afternoon and wanted to hear about everything. We went to town and I purchased a coffee set I had in mind for Audrey. While visiting in London and other places, I had wanted to purchase a set but the shops had only white ones and I had to come back home to find just what I was looking for here at Richmond! We took a long walk and then spent an interesting evening at home.

The twilight lasts until 10pm and so walking and games take place in the evening hours. It seems as if we had moonlight every night during my stay and made it that much more enchanting.



Figure 142 - Richmond Marketplace Moonlight

## 7 Oct 1948 (Thursday) - Richmond

Today is George's birthday. How wonderful it might have been had he been able to be here with me, in the flesh. I'm sure he is with me in Spirit. As is my usual duty I shopped for rations and met Glad. We had lunch and walked down to the Swale there dangling our feet in the water. It was here I felt George and knew he was with me, just as he said he would be, to show "his girl" his old country. He promised to show me his old haunts; walk with me on the moors among the heather, and show me all the places of interest that were his so long ago. Glad and I had something very special that afternoon and it was very; precious to both of us. I love her, for she understood and that is a kindred spirit.



Figure 143 - River Swale, Billy Bank Wood, Richmond



## 8 Oct 1948 (Friday) – Richmond

The time has come. I received my sailing instructions today and have started to pack. Most of my packing is finished and Luther and Amy have decided to see me off at Southampton. Harry would so love to come too but that it best to say goodbye here. We are waiting for Glad's visit.



Figure 144 - Richmond Castle

## 9 Oct 1948 (Saturday) – Richmond

I have a cold in the chest and am not feeling too well. Shopped all morning and I am resting this afternoon. We had our tea and attended an operetta this evening, all amateurs but very good. The play was "The Gondoliers". The usual lunches were eaten, candy was passed around, and apples munched and the inevitable smoking of cigarettes. This goes on in all English cinemas I have attended.

On our home ward walk Amy wondered why I never sang "God Save the Queen" or "King".

I said I had no Queen or King, but that I would sing the "Star Spangled Banner" any time the occasion offered. Luther said "Bravo! Spoken like a true American".

*Notes*

[1]

## 10 Oct 1948 (Sunday) – Richmond

This being Sunday and Luther and Amy being Spiritualists, we all had a sitting. Michael was here and received a message from George for me. I am feeling much better and am going to Tom's for tea. Each Sunday afternoon I have spent here Richmond I have had tea at Tom's and Inas. They always look forward to this visit and I do too. We played a game called "Donkey". Jack Thistlethwaite, Ella's fiancé was calling on her. A fine chap, I learned to know and love Jack very much. It was raining hard, so Tom saw me home.



Figure 145 - Culloden Tower

## 11 Oct 1948 (Monday) – Richmond

I went to the railroad station to purchase tickets for Southampton and then called on Tom in his shop. I always felt so much better calling on Tom in this own environment. He was very much disturbed about my leaving for home and said he would see me off at the station. We talked of many topics and he wanted me to extend my visit to 6 months. But my small family calls me and I miss them. With Christmas coming on, I could not be away from them, I should miss them. I came home to dinner quite up-set and could hardly eat. Dear Glad stopped by, and together we had a walk and had a nice visit while Amy worked on Luther's books. We sat in the town square and ate ice-cream. Luther, Amy and I went to the cinema, in the evening and saw "Mark of Cain"<sup>[1]</sup>. It was a good picture and after reaching home Frances and Joyce paid us a visit and brought gifts for me.

Notes

[1] Mark of Cain – 1947 - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0039611/>

## 12 Oct 1948 (Tuesday) –Durham and Ferryhill by Bus

This is a very lovely day and Glad, Amy and I took a bus for Durham. We sat up on the high deck of the bus and so enjoyed the lovely country thoroly. We visited Durham Castle and the Abbey. The Castle stands high over the river and at present is being used as a University.

Covered with ivy, the old battlements look somber and forbidding yet have a certain grandeur and beauty. The town of Durham is ancient and the streets are very narrow and quaint. We had lunch in a queer little shop filled with students all clamoring for food.



Figure 146 - Durham Castle



## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Ferryhill being the home of Nance's family (she was George's sister<sup>[1]</sup>) we had a visit planned to visit her two sons and their families. This is an out and out mining town, rather a bleak place and not too pretty. We visited Fred's home and later his brother Harry and family came over and we had a fine visit together.

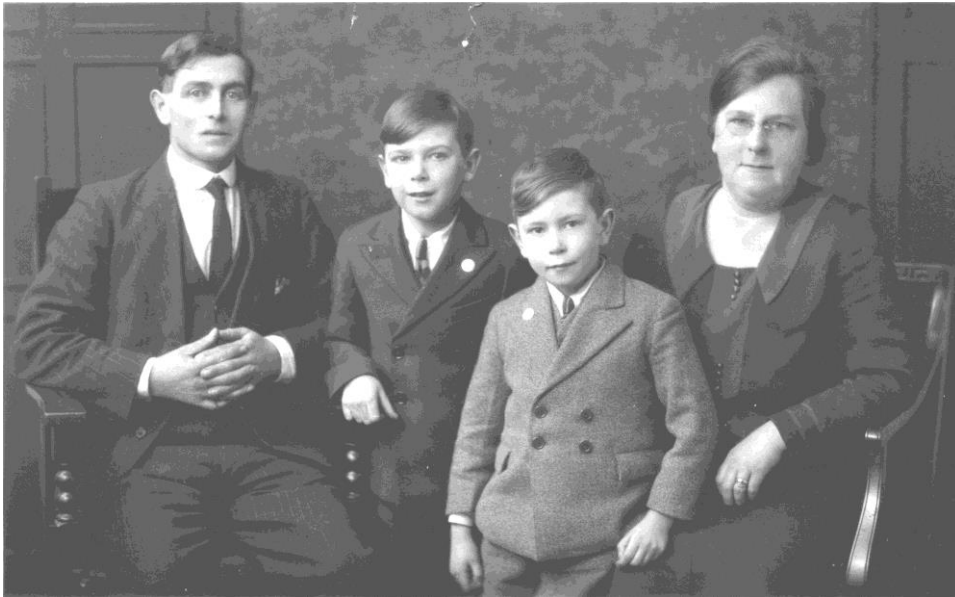


Figure 147 William and Annie (Paxton) Wilkinson with sons Harry and Fred (1920s)

Nance has a daughter but we failed to see her. We had tea at Fred's home and finally had to tear ourselves away and we were rather quiet on the drive home reviewing our recent visit. On arriving home we had supper played our usual game of bridge, and on to bed.



Figure 148 - Joan (left) & Fred Wilkinson with Fred's Wife Eva (right)

Notes

[1] Nance was Annie Hilda Paxton (Mrs Annie Wilkinson). Her sons – Harry and Fred both saw action in North Africa and Italy in the Second World War. Joan Wilkinson was the sister who was away on the day.

### 13 Oct 1948 (Wednesday) -Stokesley & The Masonic Dinner

I caught the 2:30 bus for Stokesley. Sep had called some time previously and invited me to a Masonic dinner and I was to spend the night.

This was the day I was to go under protest as I had packed my formal. In fact, I had wrapped my Minster Jug in it, and I had no idea where my evening slippers were at and also my small evening bag were packed.; but Amy made me find everything and I got packed after a fashion but in not a very happy mood.

They had it planned that Mr. Hebron was to be my escort. He lived with Sep and Amy. A fine good-looking and courtly gentleman. After I arrived at the place of festivities, I was happy to have come, and had a splendid time. The dinner was a gorgeous affair and all the elite of the town were there, dressed in furs and feathers. There was dancing which Mr. Hebron and I watched after which we had tea. Amy played whist and won a prize too.

We arrived home at 1AM had a cup of tea, and talked the evening over, Sep told me I looked like an angel. He sure is sweet!



F K WILSON & CO  
Fred Wilson with his son Maurice.  
Mr Paxton on the right with the petrol pump.

Figure 149 - Sep Paxton near his shop (with thanks to Stokesley Local History Society)

## 14 Oct 1948 (Thursday) – Stokesley and Return to Richmond

The day after the party I awoke with a bad headache, due to late hours no doubt. We had dinner at 1PM as I planned to catch the 3:15 bus. I arrived home sick - the only time I was bus sick the whole time I was in England. My two dear ones doctored me up and I felt better. We played bridge a while and to bed.



Figure 150 - Stokesley War Memorial

## 15 Oct 1948 (Friday) – Richmond

We are planning a big do on Saturday evening in my honor. The Clan will be there and I shall see them all before I leave. My luggage has gone to be shipped to the boat and now I really realize I am on my way home. We saved the large can of chicken for this party and it is to be an all American party with food I shipped over here. Glad came this afternoon and was her usual happy self. She feels so badly because our visit is nearly over.

*Notes*

[1]



## 16 Oct 1948 (Saturday) – Richmond – A Tearful Farewell Party

This is the big day of the Paxton's big farewell party. It is a lovely day and I stood for a long time at my bedroom window drinking in the beauty of the English landscape. I had enjoyed the morning and evening on retiring. Quiet, peaceful with the old ruin of the Abbey in the distance. Up above the High Terrace I can see the beginning of the moors. Lonely and covered with light and dark heather they roll away into the misty distance. That scene is ever with me and shall remain as one of my dearest memories of this "Old Country". I spent many hours looking out of that window and just thinking.



Figure 151 - Countryside beyond Richmond Marketplace

We had saved two cans of the chicken and I made a green American Salad. Fruit and Flowers were purchased and the nectarines are grown here are delicious. The day passed with everyone busy. We had decided to have only the oldsters – we were to have the young clan on Monday. Everyone came except Ame and Sep from Stokesley. They came to dinner on Tuesday night instead. Brother Joe was in fine fettle and as he was the comedian led the Clan in old songs that George had sung and that I also could sing. "Poor Old Horse" <sup>[1]</sup> was my favorite and with so many verses and all sung in order. With his hat pulled down over his eyes, his cane in his hand standing in front of the fire-place, he made a fine Master of Ceremonies. He was a funny clown too.

### Notes

[1] A useful early reference to the song can be found in Robert Bell's *Ancient Poems, Ballads and Songs of the Peasantry of England, 1857*, p184, under the title **The Mummers' Song; or The Poor Old Horse, As sung by the Mummers in the Neighbourhood of Richmond, Yorkshire, at the merrie time of Christmas**. The text is followed by the following note:- 'The rustic actor who sings the following song is dressed as an old horse, and at the end of every verse the jaws are snapped in chorus. It is a very old composition. The 'old horse' is probably of Scandinavian origin, a reminiscence of Odin's Sleipnor.'. Anyone who has seen this tradition in Richmond will know that a real horse's skull forms part of the costume and the threat of a nip from its snapping jaws tends to send most people running.

See <http://calendarcustoms.com/articles/poor/> and this YouTube Video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lvQfpFbe20>  
One version of the words are printed below if you want to sing along! :

## Mrs Columbus Goes to Sea

Poor Owd 'Oss:

1

*We have a poor owd horse  
And he's standing at your door,  
And if you wish to let him in  
He'll please you all I'm sure.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

2

*He once was a young horse  
And in his youthful prime;  
His master used to ride on him  
And he thought him very fine.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

3

*But now he's getting owd  
And his nature doth decay,  
He's forced to nab yon short grass  
That grows beneath yon way.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

4

*He's eaten all my hay  
And he's spoile'd all my straw;  
He's neither fit to ride upon,  
Nor e'en attempt to draw.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

5

*We'll whip him, hunt him, slash him  
And a-hunting let him go,  
Over hedges, over ditches,  
Over fancy gates and stiles.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

6

*I'll ride him to the huntsman;  
So freely I will give  
My body to the hounds then,  
I'd rather die than live.  
Poor owd horse, poor owd horse.*

7

*Thy poor owd bones,  
They shall lie beneath yon ground  
And never more be thought of  
By all the hunting round.  
Poor owd horse, thou must die.  
Spoken:- Get up, Bob.*



Figure 152 - Richmond Mummers - and the Poor Owd 'Oss ([www.calendarcustoms.com](http://www.calendarcustoms.com))



## Mrs. Columbus Goes to Sea!

Tom did the honors at the table. I sat between Tom and Harry. Harry at my right, was so touched, he had tears in his eyes all evening. The speech Tom made was wonderful. Telling how much they had looked forward to my coming, how proud and happy they were to welcome me, and again praised me for attempting the journey alone. That always surprised all of them. As a whole, it was a grand party and I felt very humble to have made such wonderful friends in my dear "Clan" including all of them. Another song sung by Joe was "The Little Tin Soldier" and I brot back the music for Audrey to play for Bill, it was so cute and Joe did it with all the dramatics.

I received a hot water bottle from Joe and Lizzie with a poem composed by him. "Hope this keeps you warm at night, then think of us with all your might!" From Harry a salt and pepper set and tea-knives for Audrey.

The table looked very festive and the speech made *by* Tom was dedicated to "Our Elsa". He should have been an orator or a minister. There were many tears shed. A brass antique dinner bell and a pair of brass shoes were his and Ina's gift to myself and Audrey.

Amy and Luther presented me with a lovely over-nite bag and I carry it always when I go to Chicago.

Sep and Ame gave me a sweet silver cream pitcher and a beautiful necklace for Audrey. Many other gifts from them and friends were given me among them a gold cross from Michael and Mary Cherry.

Saying goodbye to Harry was the most difficult. The tears ran down his face as he held both my arms and kissed me. I often wonder if he had a notion that he might not be here for long as he died the following January. He had been under doctor's care all of my stay in England. He was losing weight fast but promised me faithfully he would come across the following summer. I loved him very much and he was so very kind and considerate of me in every way.



Figure 153 - Luther Paxton –c 1917 recovering form wounds (centre seated)

## 17 Oct 1948 (Sunday) – Richmond

This is Sunday and tea at Toms, I have another cold and I think it is too much laughing and crying, A lovely doll and books were a gift from the Paxtons. The Circle met this evening and I received a message for my Gordy. It was from his brother Allan "Death hides, but never divides". This was an especially lovely day and evening. Closer and ever closer comes the time for parting. Each day I think of how soon I shall be leaving.

## 18 Oct 1948 (Monday) – Richmond, Low Row

This was a red letter day. We are going to board the bus and I have no idea where we are going!

Mary and Michael planned this day and we are to have lunch at a lovely old Inn together with Amy and Glad and Mrs. G (Gravelly) as she is lovingly called.

The Inn was called The Punch Bowl <sup>[1]</sup> and is located in the Swale-dale country called Low Row. How all these Inns are discovered by the public is more than I can see! They are all located in the wild moorland country. I was presented with a beautiful gold cross by Michael and Mary and a fine reminder of the beautiful hours spent together in the study of Truth. We had a delicious lunch, visited and then started for home thru magnificent scenery.



Figure 154 - Swaledale, near Low Row & Surrender Bridge

A nice long walk brot us to the bus, giving us a perfect opportunity to enjoy the Swale-dale country. I love this part of England the best of all. It has the ruggedness of the North Country so close to Scotland that the south lacks.

## Mrs. Columbus Goes to Sea!

On arriving home we had tea and as I had taught Amy and Luther the game of 500, we played a while. But my mind was on the lovely day just gone. Each one of these fine folks has an especial charm for me. How can I leave them? Writing to them for 24 years, then meeting them face to face, only to confirm what I had already discovered from my letters - that they are the "Salt of the Earth".

I feel I have been granted a great privilege in meeting and learning to know them all so well.

Michael stayed late that nite but finally left. Then to bed and rest

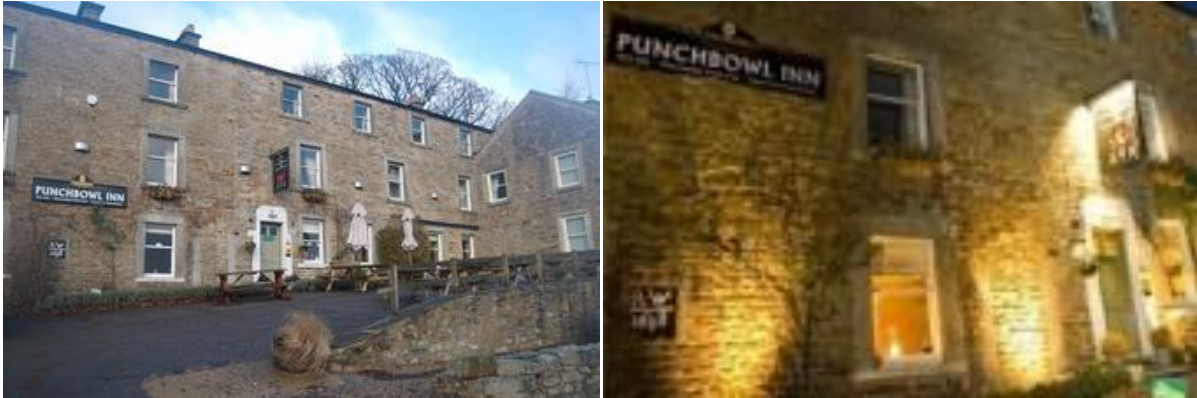


Figure 155 - The Punch Bowl Inn, Low Row

### Notes

[1] The Punch Bowl Inn is still there – thanks to a renovation in 2006 (having stood empty since 2003) – See <http://www.pbinn.co.uk> – its also interesting to compare the modern pub with photographs held by the Francis Frith collection - <http://www.francisfrith.com/low-row,north-yorkshire/>



## 19 Oct 1948 (Tuesday) - Richmond

Sep and Ame are coming to dinner today and they brot the necklace for Audrey. We had a nice chummy visit and Mr. Hebron called for them in the evening. Frances, Jack and Joyce also called and then Nance and young Tom called. We played "Switch" and had fun. They stayed quite late. Another day gone.

## 20 Oct 1948 (Wednesday) - Richmond

Last minute chores have kept me busy most of the day.

I visited Tom's shop where I had spent so many happy hours and so said goodbye in his very own environment. He said he could not see me off on the train and say what he wanted to say, "May the Lord watch between Thee and I while we are absent from one from the other". These were his last words and then he said "go now, and go quick, and do not look back", and so farewell to Tom - the Sage of the Paxton Clan.



Figure 156 - Luther Paxton (c. 1980)

I had bid Ina goodbye a short time before that and then took a small walk trying to imprint the scenes now so familiar on my memory. I reached home crying the whole way and on reaching home Amy and Luther cried along with me.

Sep called in the evening for a last goodbye and Harry sent a telegram of farewell. I also had dear Mrs. G. and Mrs. Spence on my list so bade them goodbye - two dear friends and then it was almost finished.

Notes

[1]

## 21 Oct 1948 (Thursday) - Richmond - London - Southampton

This day is Pam's first Birthday.

We are all ready to leave for Southampton and Amy and Luther have decided to see me off.

Luther is to meet us at Woking. We were met by Amy's niece Kathleen in London and she lives in a hostel where we spent the night. We had our tea and I was so done up they put me to bed. It was another interesting experience staying at the hostel. It makes a fine home for working girls. We left in the morning taking the 9:20 AM train and were met by Luther at Woking where he spent the night with relatives of Amy's. With tears flowing all the way to Southampton, we had little to say to one another.

Michael, Mary and Gladys saw us on the train for London at Darlington. Waving, cheering, crying they stayed with the train until it pulled out calling words of encouragement and love until we were out of sight and hearing.

The partings were doubly sad because of the loss of my dear one who might have been with me.

## 22 Oct 1948 (Friday) – Southampton

We met Luther at Woking and were happy to see him. Tears all the way to the sea-port where we arrived about noon. Had lunch and toured about the ruined and bombed city of Southampton.



Figure 157 - Southampton Bomb Damage (1940) - (c) National Maritime Museum

After leaving the rest of my luggage, we took a ferry and had a tour of inspection of the Queen Mary. She was docked close to the pier and was having her usual face wash before sailing. I wished I might have sailed home on her. She was a large magnificent boat.

The name of my ship was the steamer Washington, the same one I sailed over on. It was getting dusk and as we were sailing out with tide it was time to get to the docks. Far in the distance we saw her coming in all lighted and very impressive looking. She looked immense. "Seeing the boat almost made me want to sail to America with you", Amy said. Luther said, "Let's say goodbye without any tears quickly, be brave, don't look back but walk bravely up the gang plank as tho you were going on a short trip. Goodbye, my dear, Cheerio, Buddy, and God Bless." A kiss to each and I left, never glancing back, until I was ready to board; then I turned and there they were watching and waving and that was the farewell to two of the dearest people on earth. I shall never forget them. Buddy and Jo!

Also to make matters worse, it was my Audrey's birthday and I knew her thots were with me on that day for she also knew I was saying goodbye. After boarding I had to go thru immigration and customs. Then sat around for a while had supper and then to bed. We sailed at mid-nite but I had a good night and missed feeling the boat get under way.

Notes

[1]



### **23 Oct 1948 (Saturday) – On Board Ship**

I went to breakfast with two widows and a young English wife who was returning to the States after her visit home. We walked around the deck until dinner and then sat on deck in the sunshine. One of the widows and myself became good friends. The sea was calm but a storm was brewing. We watched the dancing in the lounge and then went to bed.

### **24 Oct 1948 (Sunday) – On Board Ship**

We had a storm during night and I am sick!

I managed to keep my lunch down . It was quite a blow during the night. Many passengers are sick . They served me tea and toast but I couldn't even keep that down. So the Sunday on the boat was a flop.

### **25 Oct 1948 (Monday) – On Board Ship**

I'm feeling some better but too rocky to get up. I had my breakfast but it came up. I kept my lunch down and am up on deck and feel some better. I hope for a better day tomorrow as it is my birthday! Went down to supper and kept that down. Everyone is so helpful and cheerful. After a bit I went to my berth,

### **26 Oct 1948 (Tuesday) – On Board Ship**

My Birthday and I am feeling better. I enjoyed my breakfast and managed to keep it.

I received a radio-gram from Sep and Ame and a birthday card from my ship-board friend Mrs. Schoeffell. She is a fine person and lives in New York. She went back to England, her home before she was married and wanted to see whether or not she could make it her future home, but she has decided to remain in the States. Her husband passed on about the same time George did.

After breakfast we went out on deck. The sea is beautiful this Indian summer day air is warm and lovely. Everyone is out on deck. The dinner table carried a lovely birthday cake at my place honoring my day.

We saw the afternoon movie but didn't like it. Watched the evening dancing and then to bed.

## 27 Oct 1948 (Wednesday) – On Board Ship

We spent the morning on deck. The sea is a deep blue calm and lovely. Each hour brings us nearer home.

My baggage is all arranged for, my landing cards taken care of and so each movement of the great ship means closer to home.

We got all dressed up and I wore my formal to attend the Captain's dinner.

Everything went very well until we stood in line for the dining room. Then I had to return to my state-room very sick. So I missed the fine turkey, steak and ham dinner. So this was the second time I missed out on the Captain's dinner. As Amy would have said "Isn't it a pity".

The sea has turned very rough and the ship began to pitch and roll and that is all I need in spite of all the sea-sick pills.

## 28 Oct 1948 (Thursday) – On Board Ship

The sea has calmed this morning and we are waiting to go to breakfast. During the nite we really hit a gale and everything started rolling about. Bright sunshine today. We enjoyed listening to the concert this afternoon. We took our regular walk around the deck and witnessed a most beautiful sun-set.. We land tomorrow and the luggage is being taken out of the Hold. The first sitting for breakfast is at 6:30am. I am again flying from New York to Chicago. Audrey, Gordon along with Bill and Pam had planned to meet me at the boat but the little rascal Pam took sick. Audrey was too concerned at leaving her in anyone's care so I shall fly.

The usual concert on deck and we watched the dancing for the last time.

*Notes*

[1]

## 29 Oct 1948 (Friday) – New York and Glen Ellyn

I was up at the crack of dawn but can see no land. It was a quarter to four.

The decks are crowded and everyone is looking for the statue of Liberty or land. I had breakfast and then again watched for the lady of the ocean. The Russian lad, who was my table pal, said he would call me if he saw her first. But again I missed her because of the fog as we drew near New York.

We docked at 9 A.M. and then I watched for my luggage and on to customs. All my luggage was piled up under the letter P and there I waited until I was cleared.

I was a little concerned because of the Pontefract Cakes Harry had sent home with me for the children. But they were safely in the bottom of the trunk and were missed. They were far more strict than they were on the other side.

A plate I had received from Mrs. Tate was broken and a vase of a pair Frances had given me was also broken. The coffee service I had purchased for Audrey was intact and I was happy for that. The brass wood basket I had brot for Gordy was dented due to commotion in the Hold during the storms. The coffee service was packed in this wood basket.

I caught a cab and on to Long island to see if I could catch a plane and so make a reservation. The driver of the cab was a fine fellow and a great help. He tried 3 plane companies and finally found a cancellation on a TWA. for 2PM. This I boarded in the nick of time after sending a telegram to the folks (which they never received) and then like a bird headed for home and those I loved.

I waited for nearly 3 hours at the Chicago Air port and finally had a young lady call up home to see what happened. Of course they never received the telegram and were having supper. They fairly flew and at long last, there they were.

The great holiday was over. An experience I shall never forget as long as life lasts.



## Mrs. Columbus Goes to Sea!

Only a memory now, but what a memory. Writing this Diary and completing it the 24th of July 1952, it has brot back all the lovely months spent with those charming people - George's people - the Paxton Clan of which I have so proudly become one.

We reached Glen Ellyn about 6P M and had an interrupted supper and then we talked and talked.



Figure 158 - Glen Ellyn ([www.glen-ellyn.com](http://www.glen-ellyn.com))

## Nov 1948 – Back Home - Walworth

On Nov 2nd we celebrated birthdays - Pam, Bill, Audrey, and mine. Bill's was on the 6<sup>th</sup>.



Figure 159 - Bill Hoff (Nov 1955)



Figure 160 - I think this is Pam Hoff on the left

The Hoff's Sr. were guests and on Saturday Merle had a party for me at Audrey's home. On Tuesday Herb, Olga and families came out and there was more party. On Wednesday Ann Carlson came to dinner and we had a nice visit and on Thursday I left for my own home in Walworth.

I attended Chapter on Thursday night as there was a party in honor of Vivien Blakeley I didn't want to miss.

On Friday I cleaned house and on Saturday lunch and dinner at the Lothrop's.

On Sunday Audrey and Gordon came up and brot my luggage. And on Monday back to my little job at the shop.

It's good to be home.

## Postscript

A Poem by Elsa Paxton

I stand alone on the Castle Walk,  
The moon shines o'er hill and dale,  
The Castle stands guard high on the hill,  
And below flows the River Swale.

I go back in memories of Richmond Town,  
To think of the tales told to me,  
By one so dear, and asleep far away,  
Of this beautiful land 'cross the sea.

The folk I have met,  
The scenes I have seen,  
Are familiar and very dear,  
And though I go home to that land far away,  
Some part of my heart remains here.

This poem was written one morning at day break at Darlington while on holiday at the home of Joe one of George's brothers. He must have it for he insisted I give one to him. He, too, was a real poet.



## A Second Visit (1955)

On a 6 months trip in 1955 this poem was added.

Once again I came back to that beautiful land across the rolling sea,  
Seven years had passed, and time rolled on,  
The heart longed for company.  
So once again I stood High over the Swale,  
On a beautiful moonlit night,  
And remembered the time when long ago  
My eyes met this lovely sight.

Again I repeat, while standing here,  
The folks I know and love,  
Are special and very dear to me,  
And some day we'll meet above,

Elsa M Paxton.

Written in Audrey's home on my 2nd return from a visit to England

## Appendix – Additional Information

### Events of 1948

Just to set Elsa's diary into some context, this appendix gives a chronology of events and a miscellany of facts from 1948.

1948	George Orwell writes "1984" which is published the following year.
1 Jan 1948	British Railways is created by the nationalization of "the Big Four" railway companies (GWR, LNER, LMS and SW)
4 Jan 1948	Burma becomes an independent republic (and does not join the Commonwealth).
26 Jan 1948	Indian pacifist leader, Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated by a Hindu extremist
4 Feb 1948	Ceylon becomes an independent dominion (now Sri Lanka).
21 Feb 1948	The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) is formed in the USA
17 Mar 1948	The Brussels Treaty is signed by Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. It leads to the creation of NATO and the Western European Union.
24 Mar 1948	Hamlet wins 4 Oscars, including Best Film and Best Actor (Lawrence Olivier)
1 Apr 1948	Inflation in the UK hits 6.6%. The average house price is £1,751.
7 Apr 1948	The United Nations creates the World Health Organization (WHO)
30 Apr 1948	The Land Rover Series 1 is launched at the Amsterdam Motor Show. It continues in production until 1985
10 Jun 1948	First Test – England vs Australia at Trent Bridge, Nottingham.
22 Jun 1948	The ship SS Empire Windrush arrives at Tilbury docks with carry 492 passengers from the West Indies wishing to start a new life in the United Kingdom.
24 Jun 1948	Soviet Union blockades Berlin and in response the Western Allies organize the Berlin airlift. The airlift is successful and the blockade is lifted in May 1949
5 Jul 1948	The National Health Service (NHS) is launched
19 Jul 1948	Howard Hughes features on the cover of TIME magazine.
20 July 1948	Elsa sets off from Chicago, USA
28 Jul 1948	Elsa arrives in Southampton, England and travels via London to Richmond, Yorkshire. The warmest night time temperature ever recorded in Britain (73.4°F, in London).
29 Jul 1948	Games of the XIV Olympiad open in London, England
18 Aug 1948	Fifth and final test of the Ashes tour. Australia won the series 4-0 with one match drawn. It was Don Bradman's last test innings & he was famously out for a duck.
6 Oct 1948	A 7.3 magnitude earthquake occurs in Turkmenistan, Russia killing over 100,000 people. It is considered to be the 6 <sup>th</sup> most deadly earthquake in history.
2 Nov 1948	Harry S. Truman defeats Thomas E. Dewey in the US Presidential election. Famously the Chicago Tribune ran the headline "Dewey Defeats Truman" trusting the polls instead of waiting for the result. The polls were wrong.
10 Dec 1948	The United Nations adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Additional Photos



Figure 161 - Elsa and George - 1944 - probably on a trip to Geneva Lake





Figure 162 - The Richmond Paxton's in about 1890

This photo is of Joseph (1850-1904) and Fanny Paxton (1848-1921) with 6 of the 11 children they would ultimately have. They were married in Apr 1871. Joseph was a Police Constable in Richmond (by 1881).

Their children were Unknown Child (died at birth, 1872), John (1874-1876), Thomas (1876-1960), Joseph (1878-1952), Robert (1880-1910), George (1881-1945), Septimus (1883-1959), Henry Octavious (1886-1950), Frederick (1889-1912?), Annie (1891-1939). Luther (1892-1986).

Joseph (junior) was my great-grandfather and was the Golf Professional for Richmond (ref: 1901 Census)

## Bowler Family Genealogy

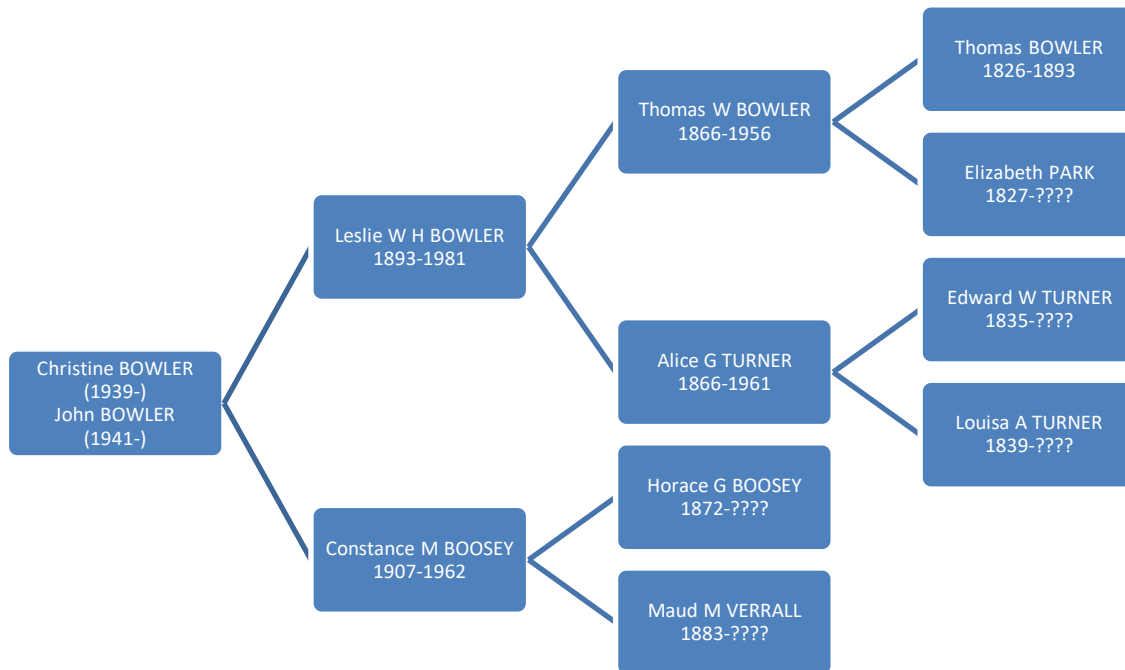


Figure 163 - BOWLER Family Tree

Leslie W H Bowler, who Elsa met at the end of September 1948 was the descendant of Thomas Bowler (b. 1826) who with his brother William invested the famous Bowler hat.

<http://www.rootschat.com/forum/index.php/topic,231110.0.html>

Bowler Wm. Hat Manufacturer, 25, Queen street, Southwark (1794 Directory)