Early years - Cambridge and Guy's

William Mayhew Mollison (1878-1967)

Edited from his MS notes, written in the 1960s – Denis Mollison, Jan 2022

Mollison family at 5 Cranmer Road, early 1900s: father, Margaret, mother, William, Elsa

On a visit to Winchester I visited the well known Booksellers more or less adjacent to the Close. On this occasion I was exceedingly fortunate in spotting the author's name F.A.Keynes, authoress of 'Gathering up the Threads', published in 1950, as I had known the Keynes family as a boy, and indeed we lived in the same road for a time in Cambridge; I bought the book and read it with the greatest pleasure. It gives a charming picture of the Cambridge of my boyhood; it portrays many of the Dons whose names were familiar.

It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery; I could not possibly imitate the delightful writing of Mrs Keynes but she certainly determined me to reminisce about my boyhood at Cambridge. I was fortunate being received by Mrs K in Cambridge in 1951 in her 89th year. She remembered me and my sisters, and talked animatedly for more than an hour. She died in her 96th year.

One paragraph in the book dealt with the old rules about the veto on Fellows of Colleges getting married. Alternatively if they did marry their fellowship was forfeited; this veto only ceased in 1882. This did not apply in my father's case: he was fortunate in being a Fellow of Clare, which together with Peterhouse had earlier changed their statutes to allow their fellows to marry. The Clerk who told me this, Baker, was Clerk to Dr Keynes when he was Registrary, and remembered my father, who was on the Council of the Senate (from 1892) at the same time as was Dr. K.

William Loudon Mollison (1851-1929)

My father, William Loudon Mollison, was from Aberdeen. His grandfather (James Mollison) kept a hotel in Aberdeen. His father William Mollison was manager of the Equitable Loan Co; in 1882 he was presented with a silver snuff box inscribed by his fellow workers. He married Margaret Whyte from Forfar, and had 5 children who survived childhood. They also brought up two grandchildren, one of whom, William Whyte Mollison, became a manufacturing chemist in Glasgow; his son Arthur is a well-known doctor in Aberdeen.

My father was at Aberdeen University (Marischal College), and won a Ferguson Scholarship to Clare College, Cambridge, where he was Second Wrangler in 1876 and Smith's Prizeman, and was elected Fellow. His Tutor was much annoyed that he failed to be Senior Wrangler; perhaps getting engaged during the days of the exam was responsible[1].

He married in 1877, and lived in Dorset Terrace where I was born in December 1878. We shortly moved to Pendeen House in Harvey Road, where my two sisters were born[2]. We moved to 5 Cranmer Road in 1891, to a house designed by J B Lock, bursar of Caius, for my father. Mr Lock was evidently a progressive (story about gas mains). On the death in 1915 of the Master (at the age of 95 he had been Master for 59 years[3]), my father became Master, and moved into the Lodge in 1916.

When an undergraduate my father had two friends who were to have a great influence on his life, and eventually on mine: one was Wynnard Hooper, son of a war correspondent (for the 1870 war) to the Times, who became Financial Editor of that paper; and was an Alpine climber of some repute. The other was Newton Pitt, who eventually studied medicine and became a Physician on the staff of Guy's Hospital; he was responsible for me becoming a student there. All took the Math. Tripos. Tradition has it that Hooper and Pitt were joint 'best men' at my father's wedding.

Ellen Mayhew (1846-1917)

It was through the Hooper family that my father had met his future wife. The Hoopers lived in West Kensington (Sumner Road), and my father often stayed with them; Miss Wynnard and Miss Craik had both written novels. Mr Hooper senior had been War Correspondent for the Times. I saw him on one occasion: a robust bearded man, kneeling in front of me - asked me to hit him as hard as I

[1] The truth is darker: papers in the National Archives of Scotland from the trial of his elder brother George for embezzlement reveal that it was anxieties over this trial that affected his studies

[2] They were still at Dorset Terrace for the 1881 census, so Margaret was actually born before the move

[3] MS understates this as 54 years. Remarkably, two Masters, Webb and Atkinson, covered the century 1815-1915

could, and he found me very feeble.

Mrs Hooper was somewhat frail-looking but died at the age of 89. Their daughter Margaret had as governess Miss Mayhew, who became my mother. She and Miss Hooper, always known as Maggie H, remained friends for life; to us children she was Aunt Margaret. I doubt if any event in the life of either of them was not known through weekly letters; I can remember my mother was quite sure that Maggie was ill if her letter did not arrive on Monday morning.

Aunt M knew Rudyard Kipling well and admired him - always spoke of him as Ruddy - and as his books were published sent a copy to my mother; several of these I still have in my collection of Kipling. She was an artist too and painted some members of my family (including myself at age 2, with golden hair). After the death of her mother and aunts she devoted herself to working for the FWA (as it is now called).

My first visit to France was due to her. A very old friend of my parents had been living in Switzerland under suspicion of phthisis. She suggested my father should meet her at Rheims and accompany her home. He was staying two nights with the Hoopers before going; when Miss H heard of this plan she was horrified and said my father must have a chaperone (this was in 1902), and therefore asked me to go with him. I was then Clerk to one of the Physicians at Guy's: on asking if I might go away for a week, he said he didn't care a damn if I went.

My mother was I suspect one of the unfortunates in that some doctor heard a murmur and condemned her to a quiet life; when we went for holidays she never walked more than short distances. As a result she became so skilled at knitting that she knitted while reading. She also made lovely tapestries to adorn walls and staircases; some of her work is still extant. She was seldom ill and died at 70 of a septic infection

My mother's grandfather Robert Mayhew farmed at Walpole in Suffolk. His father farmed at Redisham and Spexhall, and his brother (Elias) at Mendham. I have a copy of Robert's will made in 1831, in which he appoints his solicitor and wife Sarah as executors. I think his wife was Sarah Pearson[4]; the initials SP are engraved on 6 delicate silver teaspoons and on two tablespoons now in my possession, handed down through my mother.

My mother's father, also Robert Mayhew, at the age of 12 fell from an apple tree and broke his arm, which was amputated a few inches from the shoulder - this prevented him from following in his father's footsteps, and he was compelled to be content with clerical work. When I knew him was employed in a bank in East Dereham. As well as my mother, they had had a son who died of tuberculosis as far as I could gather[5].

[4]Wife was Sarah Ellett (1799-1874); her mother was Sarah Pierson (1772-1852)

[5]Robert Edward Mayhew, 1848-70

My earliest recollection is of staying with my maternal grandparents in their small house in Sandy Lane in East Dereham. I fancy that when my parents wanted me out of the way they sent me to the Mayhew grandparents. Both were kindness itself. The small house had a well and water from it was kept in an earthenware jug in the kitchen - no sanitation; a comparatively small garden, but lots of vegetables and flowers. To employ me my grandfather bought me a fretsaw with which I made several useless 'ornaments'. They also arranged for a farmer's boy to take me for walks over the countryside. One of his jobs was to scare birds for which he used bits of wood hinged with leather, called by him 'clappers' - his cry was 'Here come the clappers to knock you down backards'. He also taught me to make a 'corn dolly', but I regret I lost the art.

Harvey Road, 1882-91

We moved from Dorset Terrace in about 1882 to Pendeen House in Harvey Road - one of the ugliest houses in Cambridge. Three brothers built 2 houses exactly similar on either side of the road only separated from the main road, Hills Road, by about 15 yards. They lived in one, we in the other. Harvey Road led off Hills Road: beyond us towards Fenners cricket ground the houses were uniform and attractive, with about 7 steps leading up to the front door. Mrs Keynes, who lived in one of them, wrote Gathering up the Threads about the dons and others who lived there.

6 Harvey Road (Keynes's) and 7 Hills Road (twin of the demolished Pendeen House) in 2021

The complete separation of university circles from town circles was strict. It was unheard of for dinner parties to include townsfolk however eminent and delightful - all our childhood friends were dons' children. It was taken for granted that one would go to a college.

When I was about 6 or 7 my parents took me to stay with the Sickerts in Pembroke Gardens. Walter was in Paris then but Oswald and Leonard entertained me with a toy train - steam in those days. [Leonard was a King's College choir boy and used to come for meals at Cranmer Road.] The highlight of that visit was seeing the Drury Lane pantomime from a box - very long with an elaborate transformation scene, very tiring for a small boy.

Harvey Road led, past the Keyneses' house (Mr K with his stamp collection, and sons Maynard and Geoffrey), to an entrance to Fenners. Our house had a garden - down metal stairs from a back room - with a row of old fashioned roses, an apple tree and some limes; we also kept bantams. The house had no bathroom.

Pendeen House stood well back from Hills Road along which horse-drawn trams passed, from the station to a terminus opposite Christ's College; at Lensfield Road corner they crossed the line which went from the East end via Lensfield Road to King's Parade terminus opposite the Senate House. The horse-drawn trams were still in use when I was at King's in 1897. From the nursery windows one could see the street lamp lighter climb his ladder to light the gas.

A short distance from our house was a blacksmiths on the walk back from school: the glow and sparks were a constant snare and made one late getting home. In those days children had a Nurse and lived at the top of the house - my mother used to come up when we were having bread and butter sprinkled with brown sugar.

My mother was a good pianist, and also sang, accompanying herself, mainly classical songs - Schumann and Schubert. My earliest memory is sitting next to her while she played Beethoven sonatas - I must have been about 4 then. During my childhood there was a great admiration for German music and philosophy. The Wagnerian operas were looked on as tremendous: Miss Hooper was imbued with the admiration and insisted that my younger sister's names should include Brunhilde.

As children we were read to by my mother; Scott was one of the authors chosen, and we were familiar with Ivanhoe, The Talisman and others. Dickens also was read to us - Pickwick Papers, Nicholas Nickleby and Oliver Twist. Mr Hooper (and my father) could repeat word for word pages of the Pickwick Papers.

In the summer Cambridge often suffered from thunder storms with violent rain - perhaps from being told about the flood I feared we might be involved in a flood and felt tremendous relief when the promised rainbow appeared: this fear was probably in my mind since one year a man was killed by lightning on Coldham Common near the river.

I went to Mr Goodchild's prep school in Cintra Terrace, but moved to St Faith's in Trumpington Road. Mr G coached, and one of his pupils was Ranjitsinghi - he

was charming to us schoolboys and of course our cricket hero. My sisters went to the girls' Perse School.

The winter of 1889/90 was so severe that the Cam froze from Ely to Cambridge. I learned to skate on meadows near the upper river, specially flooded, and in charge of Miss Mary Bateson a friend and I were taken to Ely by train and skated the 16 miles back to Cambridge: quite a day as we had to circumvent a number of locks by climbing up the bank and down again onto the ice below.

We had dances in the Christmas holidays. At Easter we played mixed hockey, mostly out at Shelford with the Gaskell girls - Dr and Mrs G had a house and garden there. There were rival teams, Cambridge v. Shelford. There were two Gaskell girls; both of them became hockey internationals - K. took team to SA. Both teams were very keen and violent.

In summer there was occasionally mixed cricket and quite a lot of tennis on grass courts with no run back. The event in the summer was a holiday.

Holidays were always exciting, driving to the station in the four-wheeler with considerable luggage - the main feature of course being the family hip bath packed full of clothes, kept in place by its lid which was strapped on and padlocked. The drive to the station was only about half a mile; the platform reputed to be the longest in England - both up and down trains could stand at the one platform. Father's indecision re. place for holiday; arrived one time not having decided where we should go!

My father was an examiner for the Mathematical Tripos in 1890, and recommended I attend the announcement of results at the Senate House. After all the men's placings had been read out, they started on the women with 'Above the Senior Wrangler, Miss Philippa Fawcett'.

Cranmer Road,1891-97

During 1891[6] we moved to Cranmer Road, off Grange Road parallel to the university rifle range, to a new house built by JB Lock, the Bursar of Caius. Dr Dalton was the first, Alan Gray the organist of Trinity next, and then our house, no. 5. My sisters and I were taken each Sunday to see the progress of building - a hot summer and I had severe hay fever. The real thrill was that the new house had a telephone.

[6] Says 1890, but the family were still at 5 Hills Road in April 1891

5 Cranmer Road in 2021 - nos. 5 and 7 are now the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law

Not long after, several more houses were built, and were occupied by some of those who had lived in Harvey Road. Next to us at no. 7 lived Ludwig Strauss and his niece Miss Freund. Strauss had played the viola in the Joachim quartette, but was now much affected by rheumatism in the fingers. His chief pleasure was chess. He had charming manners and spoke with a marked german accent. Mother and father visited him and his niece, and after tea my mother persuaded him to play his violin. In spite of his crippled fingers he played quite wonderfully an unaccompanied theme of Paganini. On one occasion a lady asked him his opinion of her small girl's quite modern violin - he reluctantly agreed. When she returned to hear his verdict he most politely said 'It has a very beautiful case'.

Mr Strauss's niece Miss Freund was the Science Lecturer at Newnham and an admirable teacher as I was to find. In 1892 I went to Haileybury, and after 2 years was removed as I had made so little progress. My father, very rightly annoyed at this, decided to coach me in the holidays. The result distressed him even more and he then decided I should do Science. Miss Freund was consulted, and most kindly coached me; this she did most skilfully, and gave me a flying start in Science.

In the meanwhile I had to reach a standard to allow me to enter the university. My father had previously coached RWK Edwards for his Maths Tripos, so knew him for a first class mathematician; he also played the piano well (Bach). He and his brother CR Edwards, a classic, were Joint Masters at the Stevenage Grammar School. They took 2-3 private pupils to board and teach. Through their efforts after a year I passed Higher Certificate, and so qualified for Cambridge. RWK Edwards subsequently married, and his son is Jimmy Edwards of BBC fame.

While at Stevenage I used to see the Cambridge to London Mail Coach that changed horse often at one of the inns - this I fancy was the last mail coach to run (1894 or 5).

Studenthood

In 1896 I lived at home, was a member of the University and so could attend lectures and laboratories but was not a member of a college - I was what used to be called a 'Beast'. During this year I was coached in Biology by Mr Brimbley, in Chemistry by Mr Skinner, and for Physics attended Prof JJ Thomson's lectures and labs. As well as this work I got keen on all sorts of practical experiments and in a room at Cranmer Road I distilled coal tar (this was exciting when the less attractive smells resulted, leading my mother to decide the drains had gone wrong), made barometers, did some microphotography, and dabbled in electricity. All this taught one to use one's hands and develop accuracy.

Our near neighbour - an ex-RE officer - allowed me to join him in his workshop, so getting familiar with metal lathe-work, and in some of his experimenting with small accurate measurements of time - he had a Hipper's clock which could deal with fractions of a second. At his suggestion I made a small mortar with trunnions, with a worm and wheel gear for elevation and a touch-hole. This was of brass - cast from a wooden model - and boring it was interesting. It had a stout wooden carriage on wheels. It threw a $\frac{1}{2}$-inch ball and made quite an impression on our brick party wall.

At the end of what may be called my probationary year I entered King's in October 1897. My father was Senior Tutor at Clare but wisely refused to have me there. So started my 4 years at Cambridge, a wonderful time making friends of men who were to become famous in many different ways; even in these days the advantages of a residential university remain.

Natural sciences at Cambridge, 1897-1901

I took for the Tripos four subjects, Anatomy, Physiology, Chemistry and Physics, so that days were fairly filled by lectures and 'labs'. Three or four afternoons were free and were mostly devoted to exercise.

I was exceedingly lucky to have a fourth year, and while working for the second part of the Science Tripos I was privileged to be taught by a most distinguished group of men. At that time the Professor of Anatomy was Dr Macalister. The reputation of the Department of Physiology was world wide and it was exciting to be taught by men with such high reputations.

Michael Foster laid the foundation stone with his admirable 4 volume text book. In contrast his lectures were very dull. I attended the last course before his retirement: he seldom looked at his audience, and had a habit of frequently moving coloured chalks held in his right hand with his left, while he recited in a monotonous tone pages from his text book.

Prof Macalister was charming. I doubt if we appreciated his lectures, perhaps because his assistant was Barclay-Smith whose teaching was illuminated by beautiful coloured pictures which he drew on the blackboard. This impressed us, and indeed when I was faced with the teaching of Anatomy at Guy's I imitated his method of drawing before the class, tho' in my case much preparatory practice was needed.

The list of those researching is impressive: Langley and Anderson, and Barcroft, son-in-law of Sir Robert Ball the astronomer - a delightful Irish man, asked to give an example of an Irish bull he replied, 'If ye see 12 cows lying down in a field, the one standing up is a bull'.

Langley - an enthusiast - was stimulating to the efforts of his students in the Physiology lab. He was of average height but with singularly piercing blue eyes. As well as being a high class researcher, working with Anderson, he was a highly skilled skater.

Dr Gaskell must be remembered as the man who showed that the wave of contraction in the heart started in the auricle, and was in a sense the originator of modern cardiology. He demonstrated this wave to us in a Tortoise's heart. He gave a course of lectures announced as on the sympathetic nervous system, but after the first lecture this turned into his own theory of the development of vertebrates which were brilliant and enthralling to his audience. His house and garden at Great Shelford (cultivated special aquilegias) was most hospitable.

Gowland Hopkins, who had left Guy's in 1898 to become the first biochemist in Cambridge (and eventually PRS), was just proving the importance of certain substances in food essential to health. He had not at that time given them the name of vitamins. A charming modest genius.

Last, but far from least, Barcroft, a fellow of King's - a delightful and cheery person. When I was up he had recently carried out research on respiration at great heights; his observations were largely made during an expedition to Peru. Morley Fletcher was one of his team, though we recognised him even better as the well known 3 miler; he later became the first Secretary of the MRC.

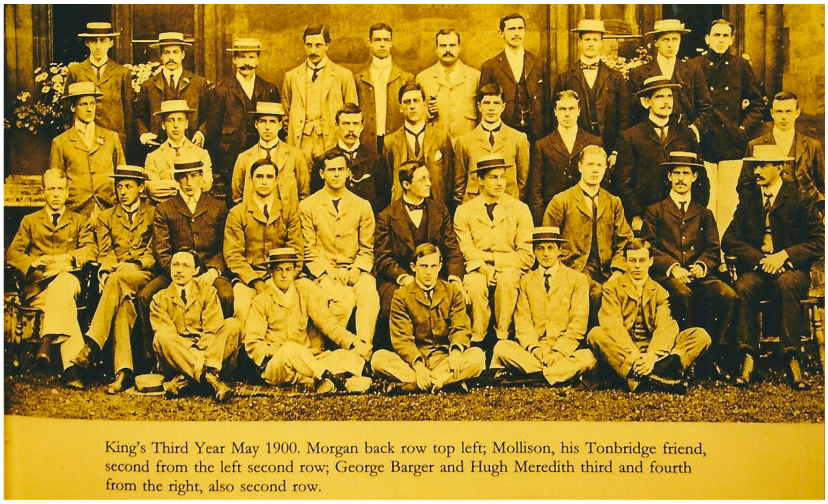
The Science tutors at King's were Sydney Harmer the zoologist and Charles Heycock, a chemist well known for his work with Neville on alloys. At my first interview with these two, Heycock was about to swat a mosquito when Harmer told him not to worry, as the mosquito being a female did not bite! Harmer's brother (WH) was to become the throat surgeon at Barts (he died in 1962 aged 89). Sydney Harmer later moved to London as in charge of the Natural History Museum.

Heycock was a very well known chemist; his most important work, with Nevill, was connected with alloys, especially aluminium. His lectures were extremely

popular, as he delivered them so forcefully and skilfully that the audience remembered them almost word for word.

Fellow students included Otto May, later Chief Medical Officer to Prudential Insurance. Though his friends never found him working, he was in the first class of the Science Tripos Part II. His hobby was piano playing.

EM Forster was in the same year at King's, and indeed had rooms in the same lodging house, and later on the same staircase in the then New Buildings next to the river. He had friends from Eton, reading classics, history and all subjects other than science. Musically EJ Dent stood out; urged on by Lawrence Haward he played 4 handed piano works at parties with him.



King's Third Year May 1900. Morgan back row top left; Mollison, his Tonbridge friend, second from the left second row; George Barger and Hugh Meredith third and fourth from the right, also second row.

WMM at King's, 1900 (The reference to Tonbridge is an error by EM Forster's biographer).

Medical training at Guy's, 1901-1905

After the exam for Part II of the Science Tripos it was necessary to choose a hospital: my father suggested that he and I should have a day in London to decide. The day was memorable for me as we travelled by the twopenny tube, then recently opened, and walked over Tower Bridge (ditto). We visited Barts, and Guy's where one of my father's contemporaries at Clare, Dr Newton Pitt, worked.

[Note: In 1901-2 when I was a student in London, the answer to a letter posted in the morning was received the same evening.]

I went to Guy's later that year, with Hertz from Oxford, FWM Palmer (tennis player) GW Nicholson (Jesus), EC Hughes, Frank Alcock, Ch. Cameron (?1902). After 4 years at Cambridge, with Wednesday recognised as a half-holiday, the active life at Hospital came as a shock.

I was first appointed Out Patient Surgical Clerk to Mr John Dunn. One sat by the surgeon and saw a great deal of venereal disease cases. Mercury and Pot:Iodide was the treatment - mercury was given by inunction or by mouth for primary and

secondary, and Pot:iodide for tertiary. Later[7], as dresser under Mr FJ Steward, I saw a case suffering from very painful ulceration of the pharynx; this was the first case to be treated with 606, with dramatic result. The man had been in such pain on swallowing that only soft foods could be taken. Within 48 hours after 606 had been given he ate toast without pain.

Phosphorous poisioning was still seen - as the result in children of eating or sucking 'lucifers' made with yellow phosphorous. Very soon (1904?) it was made illegal to use this form of phosphorous and the disease disappeared.

There was a remarkable man Morley - called the Janitor - his memory for faces was infallible; on my third day at the hospital he already knew my name. Among other duties he made a list of those present at lectures (then compulsory) and no-one ever questioned his list of names. The Dean was Dr Lauriston Shaw,one of the Physicians; his office was a room adjacent to the Dispensary.

During the first 3 months several of our year worked for the primary FRCS - Mr CH Fagge held classes - and his or the London standard of Anatomy was much higher than the Cambridge, as those of us from that university soon found. Mr Fagge's demand for accuracy was exacting - in spite of his teaching I failed to pass till my second effort. Anatomy was very different from that of today.

The first ward appointment in Jan 1902 was Surgical Ward Clerk to Mr Howse (later Sir Henry Howse and PRCS), who still used his Carbolic Spray for all operations; it was he who introduced antiseptic methods to Guy's and London in 1870.

There were 4 surgeons, each with a ward clerk, whose duties were to keep the reports on the patients in their surgeon's wards and to act as porters, bringing patients from wards to operating theatre - not to mention controlling their struggles during induction of anaesthesia. Ward clerks were under the direction of the Senior Registrar (Graham Simpson), who taught them going round new (and other) cases, and helped with reports.

On one occasion during the surgeon's 'take in' the HP asked for volunteers to transport a delirious case of pneumonia from Stephen (2nd floor Hunt's House) to the strong room on the top floor of the Surgeons' block. Fortunately my co-porter was the very strong Frank Killock, wing three-quarter in the rugger team. I persuaded him to take the heavy end of the stretcher; even so it was quite a journey - no lifts in the Medical Block.

The Surgery, in charge of the Assistant House Surgeon, was in the department later occupied by Surgical X-rays, when the Casualty department was moved to the present entrance. It was called the Front Surgery to distinguish it from the Back Surgery where patients seen in the Front Surgery were referred for further

[7] MS has 1906? in the margin, but I think this has to be in 1909 at earliest

treatment.

The main room had benches on which patients waited, and a good fireplace with a stone curb. A large old wooden chair was used for any treatment, such as opening an abscess or applying splints (never plaster). Two small rooms with couches were used if extended treatment was needed - accidents etc. In one of these rooms an experienced Nurse persuaded me to perform phlebotomy if I wanted the patient to be alive when being taken to a ward: the patient got to the ward - alive.

During take-in week the clerks helped in the Front Surgery. Above were 3 bedrooms, one for the Assistant Surgeon, who slept there during his week's duty, and the other two for the take-in dressers, who seldom went to bed before midnight. The night nurse called a dresser if an emergency came in to the Surgery, and incidentally gave him a cup of tea before he returned to bed.

On one occasion when I was take-in dresser I was called at 5.30 a.m. to a man who complained of a cough; asked how long he had had it, he replied 3 years. Not unnaturally, I asked him as politely as I could why he chose 5.30 a.m. to attend; he replied he was on his way to work and finding himself near Guy's he thought he would drop in.

The assistant HS had charge of the Surgery - men one end, women and children the other. On one occasion the Surgey was very busy and the AHS on duty very conscientious; a man complained of pain over his ribs, the AHS saw him, got him to undress, and dashed off to tackle the other cases. Two hours later I ventured to tell him that the man with bruised ribs was still waiting - he returned and said 'Ah, my man, I've been thinking about you', which pleased the patient, who up to then had been annoyed at having to wait 2 hours!

Another unusual privilege of ward clerks was the dressing of cases of Anthrax, to avoid the possibility of dressers carrying the infection to other patients. Lastly, the ward clerks acted as messengers when the hospital internal telephone failed - not infrequently.

The next appointment was in the Medical Wards. As clerks could apply for one of the 4 'firms', I was on Dr Newton Pitt's firm, and for the second 3 months on Sir Cooper Perry's. Dr Pitt was in many ways very progressive, but with all his knowledge lacked the ability of handing on his experience. This led to the frivolous remark by a colleague that 'Pitt ought to have a committee to run his brain'. All the same, Pitt was the first man at Guy's to perform diagnostic lumbar puncture while I was on his firm: looking back one wonders at the bravery of the physician, and - had he realised what was being done - of the patient.

In 1902 typhoid was comparatively common and indeed the number of patients with typhoid was limited to 3 in each division of the medical wards; they were easily known by the bowl of Lysol placed by their beds, in order that those

examining could wash their hands. Treatment was relatively simple, limited to thr prescriptions in the Guy's pharmacopeia. Though there were a very large number of formulae some of the younger generation used to insist that only about a dozen drugs were of any real use.

There was much Tuberculosis. Sir William Hale-White was the first Physician to keep phthisis cases on the balconies. Surgical Tb was common - mainly bony in origin. Abscess formation was common and sinuses resulted from opening them. There were often Psoas abscesses from spinal Tb.

Medical and Surgical Registrars conducted daily rounds and taught the clerks physical signs and interpretation of symptoms, examination of urines, etc.; Herbert French (as Registrar) was a very good teacher. My HP was Sir John Atkins, father of the present Prof Hedley Atkins.

Next I was Dresser to Jacobson (3 months) and Symonds (3 months, extension). Anaesthetics - elementary ACE or Clover's app. for ether - were generally given by HSs.

Dressings were always done by the Dressers, and might involve 4 hourly fomentations. The 6 doctors on a firm worked in pairs in rotation; take-in week for the 4 surgical firms in those days was from Thursday to Wednesday. One pair of dressers - take-in Dressers - were responsible for all cases taken in by the HS during the week, many into accident wards, Astley Cooper and Cornelius (now devoted to hospital administration).

Take-in 'cards' were an important feature, the four firms vying for the most artistic or realistic pictures. On the cards were a list of cases admitted. For our firm Sir Arthur Hurst drew recognisable figures of surgeon (WHA), dressers, ward clerks and sisters walking in the Colonade (published in the Gazette?). There was competition among Dressers to get an 'extension' - a further 3 months to a different firm was much sought after.

There followed appointments to Specialist Departments, Ears - Throats - Eyes and Extern, in those days generally to Externs each month. It was very rare for Externs to have seen a delivery, but a junior RO gave Instructions on the work.

During my month there were 5 operations with an average of 42 deliveries (I did 39). Conditions were delightfully primitive - very occasionally a Nurse happened along - but the area covered was divided into Students' and Nurses' districts. Externs arrived on foot or bicycle, occasionally tram.

Generally the grandmother helped, or a so-called midwife - who now and then did alarming things. If we got into difficulties we sent for the RO but this was not popular! In the rare occasion of postpartum haemorrhage the extern's card was smeared with blood and despatched to the College - showing the urgent help of the RO was needed.

Visiting was often most enjoyable tho' it often led to drinking stewed tea - off the hob. If by chance news of a 'Caesar' went round all who could flocked to Queen theatre to watch.

Subsequently there were attendance at Ops and ward rounds to prepare for the Finals - I qualified at Cambridge in 1904 (subsequently MRCS LRCP). The first much sought after appointment was 'Clinical', a 3-months appointment. Six 'Clinicals' were appointed; generally those chosen were just qualified tho' occasionally one about to take his final was included. Since AHSs and AHPs were chosen from the Clinicals, one almost automatically passed on to that next.

The building was in the Park opposite and a little to the right of the Colonade steps - in the old prints it is labelled 'for Lunatics'. It was pulled down about 1913 to make way for the Physiotherapy block. I remember Sir Cooper Perry telling me the estimate before the 1914 war was £3-4000, and this sum was trebled by the time it was finished (1919?).

It was highly exclusive - two wards of about 20 beds for women and 2 cots for men, a small operating theatre, with a combined sitting room and elementary laboratory. The wards were in the charge of a physician whose HP kept an eye on the patients and their treatment.

Each Clinical in turn was the 'Take-in Clinical' and had unusual privileges of being called to the Casualty Department with the take-in HP and indeed after examination of the patient the Clinical enjoying priority of admitting or refusing the case: the HP might decide to admit. It can be realised that this plan might redound to the acumen of the Clinical in admitting a case or the reverse. If he did not take the case and the HP admitted to his ward, he (the Clinical) would or might realise he had missed the diagnosis. If in ignorance the take-in Clinical admitted a 'chronic' his colleagues pulled his leg. Generally the cases were acute medical or surgical, or ones requiring a good deal of investigation. In short, it was a means of stimulating the newly qualified in making a diagnosis, and following through his mistakes.

Perhaps the most important person for a Clinical was the highly experienced Sister (Miss Strick), who always deferred to Clinicals but was most skilful in guiding their ignorant footsteps. Thus, the take-in Clinical admitted a man and was so busy that day that he forgot about him; Sister met him 3 or 4 hours after admission and said 'Mr —, you did not order any diet for that patient but I have ventured to give him sips of warm water, I hope that you approve'. Mr — didn't forget that point about diet again.

No students came into Clinical nor indeed other HPs or HSs unless invited. Indeed, its privileges were jealously guarded, and inside discussions and arguments on diagnosis, combined with consultation of text books of medicine and

pathology, not to mention the HP and the Physician, made it the most valuable 3 months' experience for the newly qualified.

One case of tetanus - not severe and recovered. The Physician (JF) was to us juniors much too cautious - he ordered Pot.Brom. gr.XV tds (i.e. 3 times a day) but rang up in the evening to suggest it should be reduced to gr.X.

The swimming pool in the Nurses Home was lent to those living in the College, on 2 mornings a week, 7-9 a.m. This privilege was greatly enjoyed and appreciated.

It had been the custom for Clinicals to pass to AHP or AHS but the post of OPO was instituted during our time as Clinicals, and two were chosen, Hurst and myself, so we neither had the advantage of doing AHP or AHS but went straight to HP and HS after 3 months as OPO.

In 1905 I was HS to Jacobson for 3 months, then Lane, that most brilliant of technicians. In October 1905 I was appointed Demonstrator of Anatomy (Ph. Turner, AR Thompson and self). Took FRCS and Cambridge MCh - to prepare for these exams I attended classes at Barts: Pathology with Andrewes, quite excellent of course.

In those days a Demonstratorship of Anatomy was the first step to surgery, just as a Demonstratorship of Physiology was the step to Medicine. Those holding demonstratorships were dubbed Junior Staff, and thus necessitated a frock coat and silk hat.

Most of our contemporaries went to General Practice. Some joined their fathers or uncles. Others bought a practice or a share of one; it was a great advantage to be apprenticed to a wise GP.

The MS ends here with his first staff post, though he clearly intended to write more, heading the second part '60 years at Guy's'.

While Will was studying at Guy's, his younger sister Elsa introduced him to her contemporary (1902-5) at Newnham, Marjory Walker (1883-1966). They married in December 1908, and went on to have 6 children: Joan (1910-2003), Celia (1912-21), Pat (1914-2011), John (1916-2003), Anne (1919-2016) and Keith (1925-79).

Will was associated with Guy's for over 60 years, from 1901 until he stepped down as Chair of the Medical School Governors in 1966 just 8 months before his death at the age of 88.

Marjory Walker with Elsa, probably at Cranmer Road. Marjory's older brother Keith is standing (left). Seated are WLM, Wynnard Hooper, MW, Margaret Hooper (?) and Ellen, with Elsa in front

Clare May Ball 1904. enlargement shows WMM and Keith Walker with (to left) Elsa and Marjory

MR. W. MOLLISON

AURAL AND THROAT SURGEON

Mr. William Mayhew Mollison, C.B.E., F.R.C.S., consultant Aural and Throat Surgeon, emeritus, to Guy's Hospital, died on Wednesday. He was 88.

His father, of whom he always spoke with affection and pride, was Master of Clare College, Cambridge. Mollison was educated at Haileybury College and later at King's College, Cambridge, where he became an exhibitioner and prizeman. He came to Guy's as a clinical student in October, 1901, in company with E. C. Hughes and A. F. Hurst, who later were to become his distinguished colleagues on the staff of Guy's and his lifelong friends. A successful career as a student marked him for advancement and he was chosen one of the first four out-patient officers to be appointed to the hospital. This was followed by the unique experience of being the last house surgeon to Mr. Jacobson and the first to Sir Arbuthnot Lane. A clinical assistantship in the Throat Department and his appointment as the surgeon in charge of the ear department in 1910 pointed the way, and when the combined Aural and Throat Department was set up in 1912 Mollison and Layton were the first chiefs.

From then on this department of Guy's has flourished and Mollison's ability, teaching and charm has inspired and helped to train many specialists who have held appointments in other London hospitals, the provinces, and in the Dominions. It is for his technical skill with out-patient or in the operating theatre, for his charm with patient and student, and for his unbounding energy and disguised generosity that his multitude of students and pupils will remember him.

He gave much time and thought to other forms of hospital and medical school service. For several years he was chairman of the medical committee who met at his house. He was also chairman of the school council and after his retirement became chairman of the medical school governors. In all he was in continuous association with Guy's Hospital and School for more than 60 years.

He was regarded highly in the specialities of Laryngology and Otology and had the unusual distinction of being elected president of both of these sections in the Royal Society of Medicine. His experience and integrity were of immense value to the London Medical Protection Society, of which he was a vice-president and its treasurer for more than 20 years.

by R. J. Cann.

W. M. MOLLISON, C.B.E., M.A., M.CH., F.R.C.S.

Mr. W. M. Mollison, emeritus consultant aural and throat surgeon to Guy's Hospital, London, died in hospital on 18 January. He was 88.

William Mayhew Mollison, son of W. L. Mollison, Master of Clare College, Cambridge, was born on 20 December 1878, and was educated at Haileybury College and King's College, Cambridge, where he was elected an exhibitioner after gaining a first class in the natural sciences tripos. For his clinical studies he went to Guy's Hospital, London, in 1901, graduating B.Ch. in 1904. He became a demonstrator in anatomy at Guy's, and in 1906 took both the M.Ch. and the F.R.C.S. Shortly after this he became warden of the college, and was appointed clinical assistant in the throat department. In 1910 he was elected surgeon in charge of the ear department, and spent six months in Vienna, Berlin, and Freiburg as Arthur Durham travelling student, and when in 1912 the ear and throat departments were combined Mr. Mollison and Mr. T. B. Layton became the first ear and throat surgeons to the hospital. He later also held the appointment of honorary aurist and laryngologist to the Bethlem Royal Hospital and to the Florence Nightingale Hospital, London.

[Barbara Davies-Colley

He was appointed C.B.E. in 1920 for voluntary services to St. Dunstan's. At the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association in 1921 he was secretary of the section of otology, vice-president in 1927, and president of the section of otorhinolaryngology in 1931. He retired from the staff of Guy's Hospital in 1938, and was elected to the council of governors of the medical and dental schools in 1940, of which he became chairman, and so continued to play an active part in the affairs of the hospital with which he was closely associated for over 60 years. After his retirement from the staff of Guy's he was appointed in 1939 consultant adviser to the Ministry of Health on the organization of hospitals in wartime.

P. R. writes: The death of W. M. Mollison at the age of 88 takes from us the last and perhaps the greatest of the old school of otolaryngologists which brought so great a lustre to English medicine in the years between the two world wars. He had all the qualities needed for success and there were not many like him.

His clinic was visited by surgeons from all parts of the world, and he was soon recognized as the foremost English otologist. The soirées at his London home after the Semon lecture were a feature of English otolaryngology, and one could be sure to see there most of the leaders of the specialty acknowledging Mollison as their doyen. He was modest in the extreme, and probably never thought of himself as a leader. The brisk manner, the sparing speech, the lean, furrowed, kindly face will live in the memory of all those who ever had the honour of working with him. He was president of the sections of otology and laryngology of the Royal Society of Medicine, and was one of the original members of the Visiting Association of Throat and Ear Surgeons, founded by Mr. Layton and Mr. Woodman.

The passage of time saw no diminution in his energies. Though he officially retired from his post at Guy's in 1938, the exigencies of war called him back first to his old hospital and then to the London Hospital for the latter part of the second world war. In spite of the demands made on his time by his hospital duties and his large private practice he was able to interest himself in the administration of Guy's Hospital and Medical School, being at one time chairman of the medical committee of the hospital and of the school council, and he continued chairman of the council of governors of the Medical School till eight months ago, when the inroads of old age forced him reluctantly to retire.

This recital of an active and industrious life should not blind us to his true qualities. Many surgeons are active, and many administrators busy, but in Mollison these attributes were secondary to his qualities as a man. He inspired loyalty and admiration in his junior colleagues. He took pains to develop their potential, and so wide was his reputation he had no trouble when their training was complete in placing them in consultant posts, so that there are few large otolaryngological centres in this country which do not, even today, have a staff where the name of "Molly" is remembered with respect and affection.

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A. W. F. writes: The accounts of William Mayhew Mollison (obituary, 28 January, p. 243) are seriously wanting if his work for the Invalid Children's Aid Association is not recorded. He took over the chairmanship of the executive committee in 1938 after his retirement from the active staff of Guy's, and for 12 difficult years gave the counsel of a man as wise and experienced in affairs as he was charitable and tolerant towards his fellows. His was the task of guiding the association through the wartime years of evacuation of children from urban centres and the equally laborious one of reorganizing and reconstructing in the first years of peace. Born in the high days of Victorian security and solid affluence, he showed in his life a practical responsibility towards the less fortunate, whether handicapped physically or financially embarrassed. He and his home were ever at the disposal of the association, and the executive met weekly in his dining-room. For himself he asked only to serve his fellow men.

Obituary

WILLIAM MAYHEW MOLLISON

C.B.E., M.A., M.Chir. Cantab., F.R.C.S.

Mr. Mollison, consulting aural and throat surgeon emeritus to Guy's Hospital, will be remembered by generations of students, staff, and patients as a fine surgeon and a wise counsellor. He died on Jan. 18 at the age of 88.

His father was master of Clare College, Cambridge, and Mollison went from Haileybury to King's, Cambridge, where he was elected exhibitioner after gaining a first in the natural sciences tripos. He began his clinical studies at Guy's in 1901, in the company of E. C. Hughes and Arthur Hurst, who were also to make a great contribution to the progress and prestige of the hospital. Mollison was Jacobson's last house-surgeon and Arbuthnot Lane's first—a unique experience. He was appointed surgeon in charge of the ear department at Guy's in 1910; and when the ear and throat departments were combined in 1912, Mollison and T. B. Layton were the first chiefs.

He was president of both the sections of laryngology and of otology of the Royal Society of Medicine. For many years he was chairman of the medical committee and school council at Guy's; and for twenty-five years he was treasurer of the Medical Protection Society. At the beginning of the 1939–45 war he advised the Government on the grading and allocation of specialists. After the war he annually entertained the Semon lecturer at his house in Devonshire Place and made this a memorable occasion for his friends and colleagues.

He retired from the Guy's staff in 1938 when the age for retirement was 60. During the war he helped in the ear and throat department of the London Hospital and later he was back at Guy's for a time.

In 1908 Mr. Mollison married Beatrice Marjory Walker and they have three sons and two daughters.

R. J. C. writes of Mollison's long association with Guy's:

"Mollison's appointment as specialist in charge of the ear department, and two years later of the combined ear and throat departments, marked the beginning of the Guy's department as we now know it. In this he was associated with T. B. Layton, and their striking contrasts made for a wonderful nursery and training ground for the future of the specialty. The junior staff under each surgeon was a part-time chief assistant and a house-surgeon. To be house-surgeon was a valuable experience, but to attain the post of chief assistant was success indeed and led invariably after some years to a specialist appointment elsewhere. I recall that Mollison's first chief assistant was A. M. Zamora, to be followed by C. Gill-Carey, E. H. Richards, R. D. Owen, and W. A. Mill; and C. S. Hallpike will acknowledge the inspiration he derived from being one of Mollison's house-surgeons.

"His skill in operating and in the examination of patients were striking features of his ability. He rarely omitted the deft and painless use of the eustachian catheter in his examination of all patients with deafness. His finesse in operating combined perfectly with his temperament to produce speed in all he did; yet speed in no way detracted from the success of his results. He lived and worked through the heyday of mastoid surgery, when acute mastoiditis was a surgical emergency and chronic suppurative ear disease was a menace. He was sometimes accused of being a lucky surgeon; but luck is not a feature of medicine or surgery, and seeming luck is evidence of that little more in skill and experience.

"In all that he did he revealed an artistic background and he was known for his fondness of music and art. Yet he could display the practical and inventive side of his nature when producing working models for student demonstrations—something made with pins and cardboard the previous evening—or creating some new instrument which was always an improvement on what already existed.

"His public speaking and his writing were always terse and to the point. Sometimes the absence of trimmings led one to overlook the significance of his message. But this was typical of his energy and his desire to lose no time. Always alert, always charming, he was never heard speaking an ill word of anyone.

"His eightieth birthday was the occasion for an enthusiastic gathering of his old assistants at the Athenæum. His students of all ages remember him with respect, admiration, and thanks."

F. H. S. writes:

"In 1929 the council of the Medical Protection Society gained the sagacity and thoughtful kindliness of W. M. Mollison. Some eight years later he became treasurer and held that office with invaluable effect upon the Society and its resources for twenty-five years. In 1962, when he retired from active office, the title of treasurer emeritus expressed the feelings of his friends on the council. His portrait, which they had commissioned, will recall to many the kindly, slightly quizzical, and distinguished appearance of one who contributed so much, sought no acknowledgement, and delighted always by that imperturbable charm and by his charity of outlook.

"During these nearly forty years the professions have grown greatly in numbers; but the treasurer's contribution to the continued financial health of the Society and its growth in membership from 17,000 to its present 47,000 cannot be measured. He first conceived the idea of extending membership, organised through their own professional bodies, to colleagues in the Commonwealth, so that now in both hemispheres the large majority of those who look to this country for professional medicolegal protection have reason to be grateful to him."

Our portrait is reproduced from the painting by A. C. Davidson-Houston.

We all hated this portrait—he never looked like this.