

a walking stick, but they signed him fit for service & put him in the R.A.M.C.F., all our young men had been called up. He was sent to Blackpool for 3 mths training, indeed he always thought it helped his health a lot. After that he always had a soft spot for Blackpool. He was sent home for a few day leave, afterwards having to serve in France, I can't say he disliked it as he liked his job which was to see to the food etc, he did not come home for 12 mths which was a difficult time for us all home. The boys were growing bigger & needed a Father's Care but they were good boys.

My brother was a great help & came up every day & saw to everything. My husband's Mother was very good when he was so ill & sent down nourishing things for him. Gertrude his sister had married but Muriel was teaching music. After a little time Grand Mrs Pratten was in Park St one day with her daughter Muriel & was taken ill with violent pain. They managed to get home to Staple Hill & send for the Doctor who was puzzled & thought a Specialist should be sent for. She grew rapidly worse & before the Specialist could arrive she died. We really did not know what it was but think it was Cancer. Then Muriel had to look after the house & her Father. He was a quiet man & took life very quietly. He lived a few years but when out for a walk with his dog one afternoon was found unconscious in Glen Hill Rd. was taken to the Hospital

looked life very quibly. He lived a few years but when out for a walk with his dog one afternoon was found unconscious in obern Hill Rd. was taken to the Hospital but found dead on arrival. My husband was terribly upset because the Army would not give him leave to come home to his Mother's funeral. He served 3 yrs in the Army in several jobs, Nursing, Stores, Clothes & food. His firm paid him a slight wage & we could get our groceries at Cost price. Harry used to call at Budgets warehouse for the parcel every Friday. it was a help & we managed. Grandpa Pratten's death made a great difference in our lives. I think he left about £5.000 which in those days was not a bad sum. One thing I was able to send Maurice to a good school, when we had our share. I forgot to mention Harry was at a very good school, being paid for by Cliff's Cousin May Pratten. She happened to call one day when he was having his tea & reading. She looked at his book & said, a boy who could read that should have a good education, until then he was still at St Marys. She saw to his going in for his exam to enter the school, which he passed & paid all bills, books etc until he left. He was always studious, so at last Maurice had his

chance to go to a good school at Redland, going by train  
Muriel had always wanted to be a missionary, but  
could never leave home, now this opening came & they  
sold the house & all furniture & she went to Yorkshire  
to college to pass her exam. Her heart was always in  
Chapel work. At first she was sent to Poplar, a very  
poor district. After a few years she volunteered for  
South Africa, & accepted. She had a very varied life  
very poor at first. Then she was sent to Rhodesia &  
had a bungalow & after years a car instead of bullocks to  
take them on journeys. She grew very fond of the blacks  
& they of her. Every 3 yrs she came home on furlough  
for 12 mths & always stayed with her eldest brother Eddy  
bringing home great packing cases one could sleep in.  
She was out there 26 yrs & I think did a lot of good.

There was a black girl she paid for her to go to boarding  
school & after learned as a nurse. She called Muriel  
always Mother, is married with children now but writes  
beautiful letters always. Muriel has been retired now some  
years, & at this present time is aged 82. 2 yrs ago she had a  
bad attack of Shingles & suffered since from intense pain  
she bought a nice bungalow in Bournemouth & has lived there  
since alone. A great many friends come to visit her now  
her eye sight is failing which is a great hardship for her  
as she was a great reader, & has a very cheerful & thankful

her eye sight is failing which is a great hardship for her as she was a great reader, & has a very cheerful & thankful spirit & is really looking forward to the life beyond, I only wish I had more of his faith, Eddy & Gerty were great sufferers from asthma, indeed Eddy died at the age of 70. her husband is still alive. She left 3 children, one Lesley Ely is still alive, Eric & Phyllis died, leaving 2 Grandchildren, one still alive, The other Margaret met a tragic death. I think in their lifetime they moved house 30 times, once they had a good Grocery business sold up & with 3 children went to Australia to some Cousins, Things did not turn out as anticipated & they returned home after staying there just 6 weeks, They even took out with them their Piano packed with crockery & it all came back without much being broken, Gerty's husband came from a large farm in Gloucestershire where his sisters & brothers worked hard, I have been there to lunch & his brother & sisters turned out by hand 90lb of lovely butter twice a week, They owned a chair they valued, A brother had been hanged & the chair was the one he used in Prison, He loved a dairy maid & one day he saw her courting some one else, he waited up a tree & shot

her dead & paid for it with his life. They were all hard working people & loved their work. One episode I have forgotten to mention, my wedding. We were married at Kingswood Wesleyan Chapel, by the Rev. Vincent. A simple wedding tho' many friends turned up at the Chapel. I had a pretty dove grey dress & a hat I made myself & we had a carriage & pair. I don't remember any motor cars then. Maurice, the one I mentioned was my bridesmaid & my brother Stanley best man. Cliff could only have 5 days holiday then & we went by tram to Ilfracombe. The weather was real summer weather, like we were used to then. It was a long hot journey, but a pleasant holiday. We had saved up enough money to pay for all our furniture. For all told, we were lucky to get it cost price as my brother was then still in the timber business. I was very excited buying it all. I had a very nice green carpet with a pink rose bud border. A silk tapestry suite 2 chairs & a nice settee, black Ebony fancy table & nice pictures for my little drawing room. A nice green leather suite for the dining room & we furnished 2 bedrooms with good furniture. Kitchens at that time only had just workable things. We had no gas stove to start with & had to cook on a coal range which I found difficult. A little oil stove I managed many days to cook a dinner. My husband was

Coal range which I found difficult, a little oil stove I managed many days to cook a dinner, my husband was very good & always helped, we also had oil lamps. There was no gas in the road. I remember a lovely

pink silk shade I had for my big lamp of which I was very proud. We could not afford a sideboard when we married but I was brought up to be careful & soon saved up enough to buy a very nice one, which I think was given away at the end being too large for the present day houses, also the bedroom suits were much too large.

By this time the boys were growing up, Harry was 14 & left school & went into an old established firm of Corn dealers, he worked hard & the head put him out as traveller when he was only 17. He travelled Cornwall & liked the life. He was always a good worker & eventually became the chief traveller, he was always interested in a girl at Freshponds & used to come home & tell me he had met her. Then she went into Hospital to train for a nurse & for a few years they didn't meet. One day a letter came from her to ask him if he would care to come to a dance they were giving. He wrote back to say he would be pleased. But the Friday

14  
night of the dance he was delayed in coming home  
by train being late, he said to me Ma! I don't think  
I will go now it's so late, but I said, you can't let her  
down Harry even if you are late, so he went & that  
was the beginning of their romance, just after this I  
was introduced to Grace Dove for the first time,

I loved her like a daughter, & when they married and  
everything I could do to help. Her mother & father died so  
we were brought closer together. They bought a new  
little house in Overdale Rd & lived there a few yrs.  
Grace had a sister Molly & a brother Philip.  
Her father was really well off, he owned 2 businesses  
Printing, The war was very bad at that time, & one  
night Bristol was heavily bombed. The 2 factories were  
burnt to the ground. It was a great loss & I think it  
was the real cause of his death, just after he had a  
bad stroke & did not live very long. Other property  
he owned as well was lost to the enemy. A great loss  
to the family who should have been all very well off.  
I would like to describe my son, he was 6 feet tall  
Fair, & a gentleman. They had their first baby  
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Graham arrived. I took Grace into the Nursing Home on  
Regent St. Clifton, & brought her back with the baby.  
I had a lot to do with them as they only lived about  
a mile away. it was a very happy time & we spent  
a great deal of time together.

Just about this time  
my Son's health was not so good & caused us all a great  
anxiety, he was very brave & never complained. The war  
was still on when he left Chamberlain & Pole, the Corn Merchants  
& decided to seek another living. Clifford was growing into  
a big lad & his Father & Brother decided to send him to

Colston Boarding School. I well remember the day  
he left with Harry driving him away, he looked so  
white & a bit frightened. we used to take him parcels of  
food & he was allowed home so often, he was quite able  
to take care of himself. It was a very good school &  
quite expensive & he had a good education. Graham  
was sent to a school at Fishponds, first in the nursery  
class, then to a school called Dr Belb's, he was studious  
& learned as much as he could. Then his parents decided  
to send him to Bristol Grammar School, that was costly  
but the pupils had a good education there. I went with

his brother several times to his prize giving, one year he had a prize for Maths which I think started him in his Career. From that time Mathematics was all he thought of. He always sat with pencil & paper working out problems, after going through the 6<sup>th</sup> form, he won a scholarship to Cambridge University. We were all so very proud of him, Harry was articled to a firm in Bristol about this time to become a Chartered Accountant & passed, he was a fully Chartered Accountant at 21, a very stiff Exam.

I think I must leave that side of the family for a while & tell about Maurice, He was apprenticed to the Wholesale Drapery for 3 yrs, he didn't care much for it really & wanted to go into the Police Force, He kept writing letters & he eventually had an offer from the Surrey Police, He was accepted & I well remember the day he left home, afterwards he told us when he was at a station he had great difficulty in not turning back. We missed him very much he liked the life & always came home when he had leave. About this time Uncle Oph had a bad stroke & as he had always told us we should inherit the bigger part of his money as he was so against Cliffs other

part of his money as he was so against Cliffs other  
brother & Sisters, they had never done anything for  
him, never went to see him, but one day he suddenly  
turned & said, This was when he was very ill, How  
can I meet my brother, (Cliffs Father) if I don't treat  
them all alike, & he altered his will, leaving  
Cliff only \$500 more than the others, It was a  
great blow to us as I had a great deal of unpleasantness  
always to put up with & we really had thought  
a little reward well deserved. However he  
died & they all had their share but for the \$500  
It was a great thing for Eddy, Gerdy & Muriel &  
made a great deal of difference in their lives, &  
I must say we have never felt bitter, they say  
what you don't have, you never miss, he was 88 yrs  
& was buried in Downend Baptist Chapel Churchyard with  
many of his relations, also Aunt Rose his Sister & Mother & Father.  
The Pratten family were amongst the oldest residents in  
Staple Hill & well respected. Gilbert Pratten, Cliffs Cousin  
who expected half of Uncle Oph's money was also disappointed at  
his altering his will, but he was wealthy himself & the loss  
made little difference to him as he had a large printing  
business in Portland Sq, Bristol. I think his 2 sons should

Carry on the business & they are wealthy. Eddy Cliff  
brother was very glad of the unexpected legacy &  
retired, he had 2 sons, Graham & Bert & his  
wife my sister-in-law was a very nice woman & we  
used to get on well together, but he suffered severely  
from asthma. They had an old servant by the name  
of Maud, at that time servants were paid very  
badly, she worked for them over 20 years & only paid  
5/6 wk. The cleanest woman I have ever met, nothing  
was too much trouble, she certainly was the old fashioned  
type, always (Yes Sir) & (No Mam) She often took my  
2 boys out for a bicycle ride. My Mother &  
Father lived until he was in his 90<sup>th</sup> yr & my Mother  
88. I don't remember him having an illness, he was  
very worried as my Mother began to lose her memory &  
imagine things, I used to go as often as possible to  
see & do what I could for them, in fact we all did,  
I well remember, after the were better off we bought a  
car & I learnt to drive, it was a very proud moment the  
first time I was able to take them out for a drive,  
They were so pleased & when ever possible I gave  
them treats, My husband never learnt to drive, but always  
knew if I made any mistakes in driving, he was so careful  
over the car & cleaned & polished it every time we went  
out. I was driving 26 yrs & never had an accident.

When I was young my father was a car mechanic. He was so careful  
over the car & cleaned & polished it every time we went  
out. I was driving 26 yrs & never had an accident.  
My brother Oliver who had the boot factory for 8 years  
took us away to Devonshire for holidays paying all  
expenses. A little place called Shaldon we went  
every year. I drove always & enjoyed it. He was a  
very generous man & doing well in the factory. My  
brothers always called me Bob, & he would say if you  
want anything special let me know. He had a nice car of  
his own but preferred coming out with us. For years we  
took Oliver & his wife Nestor out every Saturday for a drive  
outing. I had to go with her to buy her clothes & he  
always bought her a nice coat as well if she had one.  
He paid mostly for the car expenses. He was drawing  
a good salary from the factory. We enjoyed our  
holidays with him. If I opened my purse, he would  
say put that away. A very generous man. A great  
pity, he too like my mother lost his memory at the end  
& it was very sad his wife also. Their daughter & son  
in-law inherited all her possessions. He lent me \$100 when  
we bought our house. I gave him an I.O.U. A few years  
before he died he said. Here is that I.O.U. Bob.

I gave it back to me. It was a good thing he did or we should have had to pay it back to his daughter Grace. They did not have any children & are still living at Hanham, Rd. Bristol. Maurice by this time had been in the Police Force some years, he married a very nice girl Kitty Mills. We came to Hastings to his wedding & Harry. The weather had been very cold & we were all wearing very thick under clothes, but the weather suddenly changed to very hot. Poor Cliff I so well remember coming home carrying a very heavy overcoat & said I would gladly toss this into the sea. Maurice was in the Surrey Police & we always came up in the car for holidays & so looked forward to them. Of course they were moved fairly often but always in Surrey. Maurice was always good to write us, twice a week we passed letters for a great many years. They were very happy together & had a little girl named Susan, she was a lovely baby & we were always so pleased to see her. I used to go into town especially Black Boy Hill to look for little dresses for her in the sales. Many pretty frocks I managed to buy & send up for her. Kitty worked in the war as Clerk in the Police Station & looked very smart in uniform. Then they had a little boy Malcolm. Both of them were sent to a Catholic School & made good progress. It was expensive but they were both very happy there.

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About this time Maurice was promoted to Sergeant & that  
was well deserved as his duties were arduous & it meant  
he had more men under him. The police were not  
paid so much then as now. It's a jolly good job now  
although quite dangerous. He was in good health &  
did not suffer like Harry, who by this time had made  
a living for himself. He had a good head for business  
& when the war was still on bought up flour bags &  
had them cleaned & unpicked by some neighbours who  
were glad to earn money. They were Calico & materials  
were very short then. I will remember one day he said  
I am going to Bath & see if I can sell some there.  
He had one Van then. My husband used to love to go  
out with him & help lift the parcels. This particular  
day he saw the buyers in a large shop & when he  
came out told his father, I have sold nearly all, £100  
worth, then sold the rest in another shop. He always  
seemed to know where he could make money & was  
successful. Another time he bought a lot of paper that  
had been soaked in a fire at Gullies-Prallens factory

They would bring huge parcels to my house & I had to dry out, then they would be repacked & sold like new. He did well with that. Again he bought bags & used to get handles put on & stitched, people would be only too glad to buy anything after the war as everything was so short. I was very glad to help & earned our \$100 for helping him. I know it paid for a wireless I had & several other things. One thing led to another & he persevered with the paper trade. There were 2 vans now, I went with him some days & watched him go into perhaps a dozen shops & come straight out, then go into another shop & come out with a good order. He sold paper bags, greaseproof, tissue paper & was doing very well, he had a gift for business when his health began to get worse. He could not lift anything & his breath was very bad. Now they were living in a nice big house at Kingswood & carried on business from there.

Cleff went up every day, he did the packing & went in the van, he was delighted to help. Grace always knew he was in a serious state, but I never thought he was so bad. He & Grace went to several specialists but they could give little hope. Then the great blow fell, we were staying there sleeping & he had to stay in bed, even though I did not know he was going to die. I shall

So bad, Next Grace went to several specialists but they  
could give little hope. Then the great blow fell, we were  
staying there sleeping & he had to stay in bed, even  
then I didn't realize he was going to die. That day I shall  
never forget, Graham had gone to school. The 2 Cliffs  
were taking the Van on a long journey delivering, Harry  
sat out in a chair trying hard to breathe. Grace sat  
in one chair & I in the other holding one hand, he  
said to me, Do you know the best thing you could do for  
me Ma, If you would go to the chemist & get a dose  
of poison. The windows & doors were open for air, The Dr.  
called about dinner time & said I will be in later.  
He came back about 5 PM, & Harry said to him, Can  
you give me something to help & he replied, I think I  
can & gave him his last dose. Just after he went into  
a deep sleep & never regained consciousness. About 6 PM he  
passed away. I sat with my arm around him for some  
time. I couldn't believe he was dead. Grace was very  
brave, I think being a nurse helped her. She said if  
the Doctor had not given him that special last dose  
he would have suffered much more. When the 2 Cliffs  
returned they couldn't believe it. We had rang up  
Maurice & he got leave immediately & reached Slape Hill  
about 7 PM. just too late to see him alive. He was

grieved & stayed to the funeral. Poor little Graham  
could hardly take it in that his father was dead,  
Grace's sister & brother-in-law came down. It was a very  
sad time for all. Its funny how we can all live  
through so much sorrow. Grace was very brave & her  
friends were a great help to her. I felt very upset &  
Grace made me up a bed in the sitting room & my  
husband & Maurice sat up all night with me.

It is some time since I wrote this last sad tale. I have  
not been well, the winter of 1988 was very severe & took its  
toll of old people, some how I survived it, several of  
my friends have died that I miss very much. Last  
summer I had a lovely holiday with Grace, but am  
not certain if I am well enough to go this year, I have  
found it more difficult to keep going since.

It is to please Graham I have started this story again,  
after Harry's death Grace kept on the business for a  
year or two but eventually sold it. Clifford & Graham  
got on remarkably well, their father would have been so  
very proud of them, Both passed well to go to  
university, married lovely women, Cliff has 3 boys &  
Graham a girl & a boy. I have worked a great  
many hours knitting for them, also it has given me  
a lot of pleasure to be able to do so much for them.

many hours knitting for them, also it has given me great pleasure, I keep wondering how much longer I shall be spared as I shall be 89 in October 5<sup>th</sup>.

All my own people have passed away, I am the last of 5, Aunt Muriel is still alive & will be 83 on May 23, a tragedy her eye sight is failing fast. I feel its a pity for people to live to a great age. There is not much one can do. When my husband died 3 Yrs ago, I came to live with my Son Maurice & his wife Kitty. They have a Son & daughter, Malcolm is at Leeds University & is 21, he is in Engineering & hopes to do very well after he has passed his exams, Susan works in a Bank & is being married on September 27 1969. She spent last year in Germany. She is 25 Yrs, Malcolm was married April, we were rather sorry as they are very young & would have been easier to have waited until he had left University, but the younger generation are very different to our Victorian age, indeed I have just remembered as a little girl having a holiday on Queen Victoria's Jubilee, we had lovely hot summers then. It seems true what the Bible says "we shall not be able to tell summers from winters, The weather has been truly shocking. My husband & I spent many happy

years after his retirement, at 80, he started to get less able to carry on, he had always been a strong man & it was a great trial to me when he began to give up, now I have come to the same, & just waiting for my last call to join my husband & Son, when I was able I did everything for his two boys & I am glad to say they are both in good positions & doing well their Father would have been so proud of them had he lived, Clifford passed his Chartered Accountant exam before he was 21 yrs., Their Mother is enjoying being able to pay them visits & seeing the Grand Children, at first when I gave up my car I felt the loss very much, I think I was about 15 but felt quite capable then but the traffic is very different now in 1969, Then giving up ones home is very hard, however kind any one is there is nothing like ones own little home, I have a great deal to be thankful for, as I don't think I should have been happy in an old Peoples Home, My brother-in-law, has been in one for over 12 yrs & is 92 & quite happy. There are so many old people living to a great age it is making things very difficult for our Country, I must say the old age pension is a great boon, in my young days there was no help for the aged, this great worry was having to go into the workhouse, this great worry was having to go into the workhouse, this great worry was having to go into the workhouse.

a great boon, in my young days there was no help for the aged, this great worry was having to go into the workhouse then & that was a right mare to face, we have progressed a great deal since 1880.

Uncle oph used to say, he hoped he would never have to go into the Gorham that was his feeling altho' he was very wealthy & made his money chiefly by being careful over the pennies. We have a shawl here which belonged to my grandma over 100 years old & in quite good condition, that could not be said of today's clothing. My mother kept 5 children & a good house on £2-15<sup>0</sup> wk. & was never short of a sh. never over spent. I was always brought up to be very careful. If I had a fortune now I could not spend it & would only consider giving it away. Every thing now is so dear, it means just having to go without. When we were first married Bacon was 8 a pound & too fat needed to fry it in, lovely fat would run from it into the frying-pan & I well remember buying a lovely piece of beef steak enough for my husband's dinner for 9, a loaf of bread 2½, Milk 1½ pint, Eggs 18 for 1/- fruit was cheap. Raspberries for making jam 3 lb, also black currants 4 lb, we would order 1 doz lbs & make lovely jam. I can't remember ever buying anything in tins,

21  
How nearly all meals come out of time, I hardly  
ever bought a cake, everything was home made, & we  
never considered it trouble to cook. Even my first  
baby clothes was made by hand, not even machined  
altho' when I was 21 I bought a Sewing machine \$5.00  
with my money & it is still working well & in use by  
my daughter-in-law, also my Grand-daughter. It was a  
Wheeler & Wilson, an American make, & a Marble Clock  
my husband gave me before we married. Graham  
tells me he has it in his office & still going well.