

# ***LIVES and TIMES:***

***John Baldwinson, Teresa  
Duffy and family***



**Minnie at 90**



Christmas 2014

## **LIVES AND TIMES:**

### **John Baldwinson, Teresa Duffy and family**

My mother, Teresa Duffy, and father, John Baldwinson, met in London as young writers in the 1950s. They were married in Harwich on 4 May 1957. John's uncle Jack Wallace was his best man. Teresa's bridesmaid was her best friend Brenda Ling.

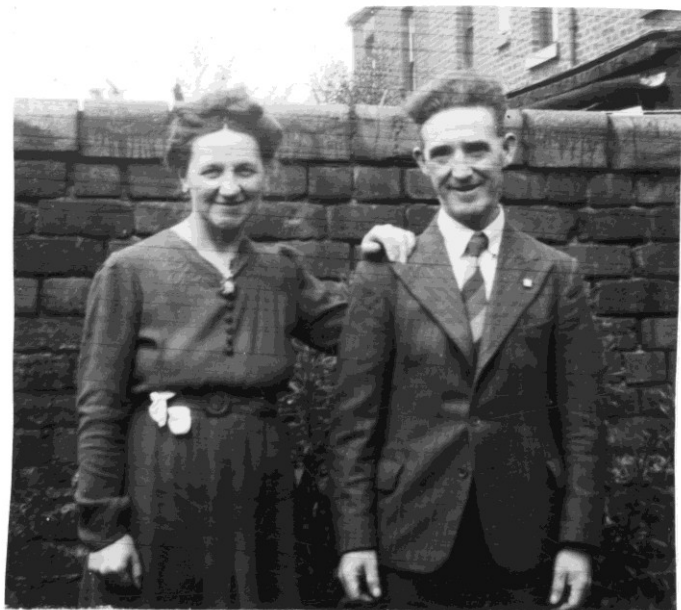
These are some of our family stories.

### **The Duffy side**

My mother's parents, Jack Duffy and Minnie Higgins were married in 1926 in their home town of Accrington in the church where Minnie played the organ. Jack was one of eleven children, Minnie the youngest living of seven, her mother and the eighth child both dying in childbirth.

### **Lil**

Minnie's aunt Lil, her father's sister, brought up Minnie and her brothers and sisters following the early death of Minnie's mother. Having raised Minnie, Lil later helped Minnie's raise her own children as well. In the census she calls herself Lilly and is described as a 'house helper'.



*Minnie and Jack Duffy*

### Jack Duffy

The parents of my mother's father, Jack, were Joseph and Maria. They were married in 1883 in the Haslingden district. They lived at 14 Monarch Street in Oswaldtwistle.

Joseph's father was another John Duffy, reportedly born in Roscommon, Ireland and died in Edinburgh. He worked in the cotton mills as a cotton operative and mule spinner. Joseph's mother was Mary McPhillips, born in

County Monaghan, Ireland, and died in West Lothian, Scotland.

Jack, my mother's father, left school aged thirteen to start work. His parents couldn't afford to let him take up a scholarship reportedly offered by *Manchester Grammar School* because the scholarship fund would only pay for the school fees, but not the travel, uniform or books as well.

Jack was fascinated by the railways; he wanted to work there - a good job then - but couldn't apply initially because of his young age. By 1926 when he married Minnie he was a railway goods porter, though whether he was employed directly by the railway company or at a goods warehouse is not clear. Later that year he was accepted to start a new job to train as a railway signalman at Preston. A senior signalman was said to be equivalent to being a stationmaster. He handed in his week's notice to quit his old job on a Monday. But, on the Friday the *General Strike* was called, so he lost both his old and his new job. Though he struggled to find and keep work for years to come, this did not make him bitter in later years.

By all accounts Jack was a working class intellectual, and it was a standing joke in the family that he had to be pulled away from the detailed overseas pages in the newspapers to even lay the table for a meal. In another age many people suspected he would have gone to university.

## Minnie

Minnie was born on 17 April 1903 in Accrington and her early years were spent at home there at 2 Westwood Street with her widower father William and her spinster aunt Lil. Previously they had lived at 49 Derbyshire Street. Minnie's mother was born Mary Jane Mead and she had died in childbirth while Minnie was still an infant. Minnie's oldest sister Linda Louise had been born in Derby around 1894. Her parents Bill and Mary had married in February 1893. The family story was that they were married in Scotland, and it was in St Andrew's church... but in Willesden, London. Presumably they were living nearby because their first child, Harry, was born in London before they moved north.

In 1926 when Minnie married Jack, she was a cotton weaver. In 1928 she had her first child, Cecilia. Because her husband Jack was in and out of odd jobs Minnie went straight back to work and Cecilia was looked after by Lil, who had continued to live with Minnie after raising her as a child.

Bernard was born in 1930, Minnie's second child. There was a scheme that gave free milk to nursing mothers if the father was out of work. But when Bernard was a few days old Minnie was told this free milk didn't apply for her because, they said, her job at the mill was still vacant. So she had to go back to work ten days after giving birth.

In 1932, Teresa was born two years after Bernard; Jack was still in and out of odd jobs; and Teresa said later that she "wasn't her mother's favourite child". Minnie's aunt Lil, usually a very kind woman, didn't help in keeping

the family harmony; for example telling Jack when he was unemployed, “you cannot poke the fire, you haven’t paid for the coal.”

Jack had a cut-throat razor which Minnie hated. She ordered some new linoleum for the kitchen floor and used the razor to cut it to fit, ruining the edge and ensuring Jack could never again shave with it.

Minnie had a strong faith in the Catholic Church, and was awarded a Papal Medal for a lifetime of service, often playing the church organ while her husband Jack served the priest at the altar. In her later years, Teresa often visited to help her mother Minnie, moving between hospital and her home.

“When I was looking after Minnie of late she told me stories of her earlier years, it was like an oral history lesson. One woman in Accrington, during World War 1, she lost her husband and seven sons in just one day at the Somme. It was all the family she had and, under the recruitment rule saying, ‘If you join together you stay together’ which created *The Accrington Pals*, they all were killed together. She took her shawl and a stool and sat outside looking down the hill, never speaking to anyone. She died soon after too. So who won World War 1? That family didn’t.”

“And one Friday evening in 1918 Minnie was playing the piano and three of her friends were singing along with her. By Sunday she was the only one still alive. That was the flu. Minnie said, ‘You could see someone walking towards you normally, start to stagger then fall down. By the time you reached him he was dead. It was so fast.’ The girls took longer to die, she told me,

because their father kept them sitting up in bed. Flat, their lungs filled with fluid and they drowned very quickly. But even sitting up, they still died. The flu was thought at the time to originate from fleas in the trenches.” This myth was very strongly believed, even up to the 1950s and all across Europe.



*Bernard, Teresa, Cecilia*



When we were small children and visited our grandparents Minnie and Jack in Dovercourt Bay they were renting a flat above a florists shop on the High Street. Minnie had a large tin full of odd buttons, and as children we would be occupied for hours on a rug playing with the button box. Later with their daughter Cecilia they bought a much larger house on Marine Parade, which included rooms for Cecelia's teenage children.

On 7 March 1986 Minnie fell down a step while leaving the local Co-op shop, breaking her right wrist, getting a black eye and being knocked out. Her eyesight was failing, and she said later she had thought she was leaving by another door, the one with a ramp instead of a step.

Her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party was held on 17 April 1993 in Dovercourt and attended by over 50 people. She died in October 1999 in Dovercourt, her final months in a care home.

### Linda

Minnie's sister, Linda Louise, was born in 1894 in Derby and baptised in a Methodist church. She died in 1983 in Norwich, aged 98 years.



*Arthur and Linda*

Linda was a very good cook but with a sharp tongue. She worked at Colchester Hospital and lived in Dovercourt, Essex. Around 1934, she wrote to her sister Minnie in Accrington to say there was a job for a postman in Dovercourt. Jack applied, went to an interview and was accepted. So he sent for Minnie and the children to join him but Minnie's aunt Lil decided to stay where she had friends, in Accrington. Teresa was two years old at the time.

They rented a house in Upper Dovercourt and it cost rather more than was easy to afford. They later moved to another house, still pricey but slightly less than before. Aunt Linda had a house on Empire Road and when one opposite was up for rent at a more reasonable price the family moved in there.

### Maggie

They stayed in Dovercourt until 1939, Jack working at first as a postman and later promoted as a supervisor. In May that year, Jack's sister Maggie in Chorley wrote to say that the *de Havilland* factory, where both her husband and brother-in-law were working, had stepped up the work for the oncoming war and were recruiting.

### Arthur

So in 1939 the family moved again to a rented house at 74 Pilling Lane, Chorley. Four years later they moved two doors along to 78 Pilling Lane, also a house.

Linda Louise Higgins had been married Joseph William Young but very soon afterwards she got a divorce while she was still pregnant with her first and only child Arthur. Her husband had been violent, coming home drunk and pushing her out of the bed. Arthur was born in Ipswich in 1935. He traced his father Joseph many years later, and met with him when his father was dying in early 1954. Neither of them knew what to say.

Arthur has two daughters, Pat and Sue, who reportedly live in Norwich.

Linda, with her son Arthur, moved from Dovercourt to live with the family in Chorley because she had taken work in *Leyland Motor Works* as a cook. Linda underplayed her skills in catering by saying, “when it’s brown it’s cooked, when it’s black it’s bugged.”

After a while Linda and her sister Minnie had a quarrel and ‘parted brass rags’; Linda had extra food and chocolates which she fed only to Arthur and not also to Minnie’s children. Cecilia objected, Bernard didn’t bother and - without a really sweet tooth - Teresa said she didn’t care. But Cecilia’s protests were said to have been heard and Linda moved out of the house and went to live in Leyland nearer to her work.

### Bill

Minnie’s father was William John Higgins, known as Bill, born in Dublin in 1870. If the research is reliable, by 21 years of age he was living as a servant in Berkshire, getting married in London aged 23, and living as a boarder in Leeds aged 31 while his wife and children were in Accrington. By the time he is 41 years of age, he too is living in Accrington, but as a widower with his children and his sister helping. This is now 1911 and he is working as a brewery cellarman.

Bill had been raised by his parents James and Margaret Higgins, possibly at 102 Hardybutts in Wigan. They were an army family and had toured the world. Bill was born in Dublin army barracks and his sister Lil in Canada.

Teresa recalls the family story of the time Bill was in the army and on a ship to India. He would sometimes be promoted to sergeant but soon afterwards he would be busted back to private for gambling. On the ship Bill joined a card game with the officers. He noticed one of the officers was cheating, but Bill could cheat better. However, this officer knew he had been out-cheated and Bill spent the rest of the voyage in the hold in irons.

Bill was born in Dublin army barracks, into an army family. They had followed the regiment around the world and he had one sister born in India as well as another born in Canada. Bill was in the army, possibly including the Boer War. He tried a spell as an officer in *Dartmoor Prison*, probably within the 1890s, but his wife hated it.

He was retired and in his 70s when World War 2 started, and he decided to go to the local Post Office to fill in a form to join the *Home Guard*. The clerk at the counter told him he could not join our Home Guard because he had been born in Dublin. Bill went home, made a list of his army service record and medals, and wrote to various authorities. He got a letter back signed by Winston Churchill saying he would be “delighted” for Bill to join up. Bill returned to the Post Office and waited for the same clerk to be at the window. The clerk read the letter and told Bill, “Of course you can join”. Bill said to him, “I wouldn’t join your Home Guard even if I was the last man in England and the Hun was at the door.” This reply became a repeated family refrain.

## Jack Higgins

Minnie had some bothers, including Harry who emigrated to Australia, as well as her brother Jack who stayed in Britain. It was probably Jack Higgins who was working at sea fishing on trawlers, and who saw his best friend die beside him on deck while at sea, crushed against the side by the net's ropes. Jack's wife had previously died, shortly after giving birth to their fifth child, and the wife of his now-dead best friend was looking after his children as well as her own. They soon married. Teresa recalls that her sister Cecilia and their cousin Arthur had visited Jack and his large family and came back amazed. The couple had started with two houses, side by side and knocked through. As the many children had grown up this communal living had expanded to include more houses on each side, all knocked through and with a massive communal kitchen-cum-dining room. Only one couple in the extended family lived apart, and they visited on good terms. Jack's wife saw to the money and cooking only, dividing out all the other jobs. The extended family were thought by the wider family to be a very astute network. By marriage they had apparently covered all their needs and were buying all their food and goods wholesale.

## Teresa - *Teddy*

The Duffy's next move was around 1944 when Teresa was aged twelve years. Jack had taken work as a baker. The firm had won gold awards for their bread and the competition for the job that Jack gained was very tough. The bakery was in Whittle-le-woods, a few miles from

where they had been living in Chorley on the A6 Preston Road. The two brothers running it wanted to open a shop in Chorley and asked Minnie to run it. So the family moved again to live behind the shop with a wash-room, lavatory and small garden at the back, bedrooms and bathroom upstairs. Minnie allowed people who had ordered bread to call at the back door to collect it in the evening even if they had been at home all day while the shop was open. These late collections stopped when her son Bernard took to answering the door to tell them the shop was now closed and to come back tomorrow.

After the war, bread units (BUs) were introduced. These units cut the amount of bread or cakes any one person could get. The bread then was all made with strong plain flour from Canada, but the UK was bankrupt after the cost of the war and all shipping still faced unexploded mines floating out in the Atlantic Ocean. Previously in 1940, when she was aged eight, Teresa and a friend had jointly won a prize from the Bakers' Association, writing an essay, *Why We Should Eat Wholemeal Bread*.

She and her friend argued that, not only is the whole grain better for you than the refined flour, but she had been to the library to find out how many ships were being lost at sea, the number of seamen in danger, and then, if all the whole grain were used, how many fewer ships would be needed to transport the reduced amount of imported flour. She and a friend, her teacher's son, had thought up this idea and together wrote the essay, and the teacher was said to be very pleased. Teresa and the boy shared the prize. Jack, who loved writing, was over the moon and when he took work as a baker the two

brothers, hearing about it, were said to have looked on him almost as an extra brother. When Teresa was aged fourteen her Guide Patrol was having its 25th birthday and the brothers who owned the bakery offered to cook a cake for her to take in, BUs notwithstanding she recalls.

In 1948, just before her 16th birthday, Teresa had left school. As she says: "Winning two scholarships at nine years old, I joined the school a week after my 10th birthday. At 14 I had taken my School Certificate (it was the last year before the O Level system of separate exams for each subject was introduced) and, of nine subjects I had eight distinctions and a credit in art."

"The headmistress remarked that she hadn't realised I was so brainy. I didn't say it then - we were more mannerly in those days - but she wouldn't; I was a scholarship brat not a paying pupil and I wasn't a boarder and that's where they really made their money. I hated that school, couldn't wait to leave. I thought them - with some extremely good exceptions - shocking snobs. Foolish too. When a question was asked and I put up my hand I was often told I was 'seeking attention'. No, I just probably knew the answer. But, in those days, schools hadn't the real power over careers they have today. Most youngsters taking a job were given one day a week off, paid for by firms, to attend day-release classes."

Teresa first went to work at *Preston Library*. Loving literature, she was disillusioned to find she was not expected to read, just to stamp books out, put them back in racks and generally just do as she was told, even if it sounded stupid to her. She also felt that some of her library staff colleagues looked down on the older,



sometimes tired women factory workers who came in to borrow the ordinary escapist novels.

Teresa was aged 17 years when she and the family moved to Dovercourt and Harwich, Essex, and she started work as a laboratory scientist, first for *BX Plastics* in Manningtree around 1950. She also signed up for evening classes, and studied for her Inter BSc at Colchester. This company made resins, and one of her work colleagues there was Margaret Thatcher (Margaret Roberts at the time), who later retrained as a lawyer and married Dennis. My mother was none too complimentary about Maggie's skills as a research chemist. Teresa recalls, "She had an excellent mind for received knowledge but none for research, where the first thing you have to accept is that there is no such thing as a fact. In research we accept and work with some 'facts' now, but tomorrow we might find there are inaccurate." The team there would also tease Maggie with made-up stories of people they worked with going on around-the-world trips, feeling that she had no sense of humour.

Teresa's next job was as a reporter on the local paper, *The Harwich and Dovercourt Newsman*, where the pay was very low and she supplemented her income by being a stringer for the nationals. She was offered a training post in Fleet Street but her family needed her wage at home because they could not otherwise continue to support her older sister at teacher training college. While she was working at the *Newsman*, her sub-editor advised her - when she was writing as their film critic amongst her many other duties - on how to write reviews so they

would not annoy the cinema owners who bought advertising space. He told her: if you liked the film, then you can say so; if not, just tell the start of the story.



*Teresa*

Her job after the *Newsman* was back to chemistry, this time for a firm making explosives. *The Chemical & Explosive Plant* was at Great Oakley on an isolated site on Bramble Island in Essex. The firm had started as a munitions company, but after World War 2 its products were mostly used in the coal mines to blast new seams.

The quality control of each batch of explosives had to be carefully tested to ensure the mixture was neither too strong nor too weak, as both errors could cause deaths in the mines. This quality control was part of her job. Because the work was dangerous, no more than four people could work together in a team. Four people did die, and some buildings were destroyed, in an explosion there on 7 November 1950. She worked there for five years shortly after that explosion.

One of her colleagues there was Gupta. He was planning to return to newly-independent India to set up his own explosives factory. He had finally paid for his ticket when he had an accident while he was testing some guncotton. It took him three days to die.

“In the 1950s, when I went on to *The Chemical & Explosive Plant* in Great Oakley [Bramble Island] I continued for my BSc with an Oxford college which was probably the forerunner of the Open University. In many ways it was easier then for anyone interested in the work they were doing. Accountants and solicitors, for instance, didn’t go to university, instead they became chartered clerks learning the profession from their seniors. When they took their final exams they were immediately employable. Today’s would-be solicitor has to find a job as para-legal for sometimes three years before he or she is accepted at the bar.”

Teresa was unable to complete her BSc because the laboratory where she worked did not have the equipment for one of the practical modules. Working full-time while studying she could not get time to visit another laboratory. However, her boss agreed to pay her the

extra for the higher grade, as if she had qualified. Even so, with the extra pay she was getting around £7 a week whereas the men doing the same job beside her got £11 a week.

The work was dangerous. “Especially in chemistry, the theorist can be a dangerous maniac until he has done enough practical work. I worked with one such; he closed the factory down for three days. When we resumed we asked where he was and the boss said, ‘He is sweeping up the salt in the salt store until he learns which end is the head of the broom’.”

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When the family had just moved back to Dovercourt (Essex) from Chorley (Lancashire) in 1949, Teresa was aged seventeen and she joined the *Sea Rangers* in Dovercourt. She had a range of proficiency badges from *Guides* including, child care, home nursing and first aid. Minnie similarly joined the *Red Cross* and did shifts in the Nursing Reserve at the local hospital.

Minnie was a keen volunteer in the Red Cross before the NHS existed, and she continued after 1948. After the family moved to Essex she and others helped in the relief efforts following the North Sea Flood which struck on the night of 31 January 1953 with over 300 people killed in England and over 200 more people dying while at sea. A further 30,000 people were saved but evacuated, mostly from around the coast of East Anglia. Linda and her son Arthur were flooded out and went to live with Teresa and her parents until their home was habitable again.

Teresa continues. “The boss’s wife happened to run the Red Cross locally. Minnie had said I had taken those particular proficiency badges and between them I was coaxed, cajoled, ordered to take the Red Cross Cadets through training. It was because of that training that, later when I was living in London, I was asked in 1956 to go to the Austrian side of the Hungarian border. I had met Johnny and we were engaged. So, I don’t know if he didn’t trust me out of his sight, but he came too.”

This assignment by the Red Cross was in working as young volunteers in the Austrian refugee camps following the Hungarian uprising in October 1956 and the subsequent Soviet invasion and crackdown. However, dissatisfied by the way the Red Cross was directed there, a breakaway group was formed, headed by a doctor who had served in many emergency areas. Teresa and John joined this group, *Voluntary BATH* (British Aid to Hungary). The reason for the breakaway was, of all things, a row about soap.

The breakaway group had heard that a senior Red Cross director in Vienna had dictated a letter to be sent to a soap manufacturer in Britain who had sent a consignment of soap bars for the refugees to use. The reply from a local Red Cross official had said, ‘thank you, but your shipment of soap has got in the way of another one of much-needed plasma.’

Teresa continues, “The Red Cross camps were allowed in Austria for first aid only, and Austria had fine hospitals and we had no wish to make an international incident, taking over their role in plasma. Moreover, the flu had killed more people in 1918 than World War 1 had

done and was *thought* to be possibly caused by animal fleas attacking soldiers in the trenches, displaced from their animal hosts. So soap was essential!”

“Also, when we were in Austria the *World Health Organisation* sent a directive that refugees arriving must strip, take a shower and be given fresh clean clothes to wear. We ignored it. We had no running water in our makeshift kitchen there, just a water well outside. Nor did we have an endless supply of clean clothes. And, if we’d told the refugees to strip for any shower so soon after the war years, they would have turned round to take their chances again, going back through the mine fields. But we did watch carefully for any undue scratching.”

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Later on, living in London in the 1960s Teresa had articles published in *The Guardian* newspaper and *Punch* magazine. Teresa recalls that she often had to chase her payments. At the time, although men and women writers were paid the same amount, men were paid on acceptance and women were paid on inclusion, that is, on printing. She would often have to send telegrams to chase a payment. An example of her messages she remembers was, “Man does not live by bread alone, but man it helps.”

One man, George Smedley, who was a features editor at *The Observer* and a gardening book writer who had previously been a farmer, told her he very much liked getting her witty telegrams. She wonders sometimes if, with a little less wit she would have been paid sooner.

Teresa, who is now retired, was a journalist and laboratory scientist, stopping work to raise a family and working freelance from home when time allowed. A stay-at-home mother, she was proud to be the first woman in her lineage to have her own bank account for her earnings. At her school there were a number of girls all named Teresa so she was given the nickname *Teddy*, which has stayed with her for life.

On 4 November 1999 Teresa was admitted to hospital with a severe nose bleed, which after much treatment was stopped. She celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 26 August 2012 at the *Three Hammers* pub in Mill Hill.



*Teresa*

In her retirement Teresa is the secretary of the Westminster Diocese branch of the *Catholic Women's League*, which covers thirteen local sections of the league including one in Mill Hill. In 2013, aged 81, Teresa parachuted from a plane to fundraise for better housing for people with Alzheimer's disease.

## Cecelia

Teresa liked dancing and took her sister Cecilia out to a dance hall in London, where Cecilia met her future husband, a Polish man in the armed forces, Piotr - Peter - Wozny. They had four children: Janek, Krystyna (Krysia), Pawel Alojzy (Paul), and Bernard Peter (Bernard).

As a young family they spent many years growing up in the USA, and Cecilia's parents Minnie and Jack went over and spent some time with them to help while the children were small. They lived at 216 Marshall Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey with Piotr listed in the city directory in 1959 as a machine operator for the P-DCP company.

Cecelia gained a PhD in her work on education and was a respected academic. She returned to the UK in her later years, living back in Dovercourt and then Bradford. Her husband Peter died around 1970.

A Peter Wozny, born around 1920, is listed as sailing on the *Queen Mary* ship of the *Cunard White Star* company, setting off on 31 January 1951 from Southampton to New York. He is described as 'Stateless', and a french polisher by trade.





*Paul, Krysia, Janek, 1959*

Janek died as a young adult in America, probably in the early 1970s. He had got in with a rough crowd and spent some time in prison. We think it was a farcical armed robbery that got him locked up, but alcohol and drugs were never too far away. He had two children, Danny and Diana.

Krysia is a lawyer and married Martin Hayes in 1977. They live in Essex and they have two adult sons, Justin and Luke and grand-children.

Bernard married Iwona and they have two children, Nadia and Pete. Bernard and Iwona live in Folsom, California.



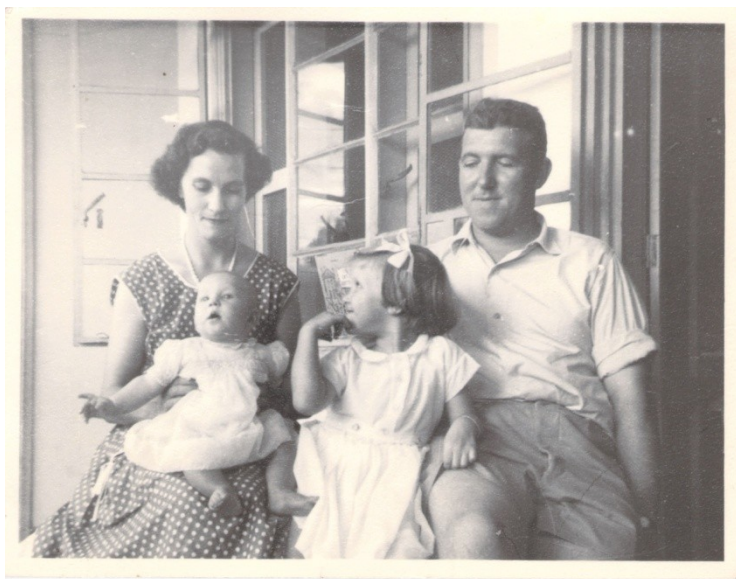
*Eddie, Peter, Michael (Godfather), Virginia  
(Godmother), Minnie, Paul, Bernard, Janek, Michael Jr,  
Krysia (USA)*

Paul was living in Southampton when he died in 1998 aged 44 from a heart attack. After the family moved to Dovercourt from New Jersey in 1970 he got a job with the Harwich Ferries company and joined the *National Union of Seamen*. Paul was very political and joined a number of left-wing organisations as well as the *Labour Party*. He later moved to Southampton and was a full-time paid convenor for the *Unison* trade union. Lorraine and Tony were surprised and pleased to meet up with Paul by chance at a Unison national conference, Lorraine

being a member of the national disabled members section. He liked his beer and full-tar cigarettes, and in a long obituary posted by his political friends one of them recalled how Paul would quote a line (paraphrased from a song by *Howlin' Wolf*), "I live for comfort not for speed."

### Bernard

Teresa's brother Bernard was born on 31 March 1930 and he started work in the *Merchant Navy*, later training as a lawyer and working for the Ugandan government after independence. He married Margaret (Betty) and they had three daughters, Kaye who reportedly died in infancy and Julia (Julie) and Catherine (Cathy) while living in Africa.



*Margaret (Betty), Bernard, Cathy, Julie*

Both Julie and Cathy frequently stayed with us for weekends and short school holidays. They both acquired visual impairments as children in Uganda and went to a boarding school for visually impaired girls in Chorleywood, near our home in north London. In the house they would play wonderful songs from Africa on the record player, including the continent's chart topping singles.

Bernard and Betty later returned to the UK and he completed his career as a lawyer for the *Crown Prosecution Service*. Bernard died in April 1998, and Betty died on 22 September 2006, both in Portsmouth.

### Colin

Minnie and Jack also fostered a boy, Colin, for a number of years. Teresa can recall herself rowing a boat at sea with Colin, as a fishing adventure.



*Colin*

## **The Baldwinson side**

### *Fred - Bud*

My father's father, was born on 26 April 1905 in Bramley, Wortley, Leeds. He was christened as Fred Baldwinson and known as "Bud". He died from work-related cancer on 18 August 1959 at Preston Hospital in North Shields, a former workhouse, now demolished. His funeral was three days later on 21 August 1959 at the West Road Crematorium in Newcastle.



*Fred, Edith, Joan, John*

He was a welding engineer who tested the strength of metal welds by using X-rays. He got throat cancer from

radiation poisoning after the lead surrounding his X-ray source was stolen and he had to drive the uncovered material to a safe place. He placed it in the boot of his car, as far away as possible but his neck was still the most exposed part of him. His death certificate states, “carcinoma of the pyriform fossa [part of the throat] and metastatic neck glands ulcerated.”

As Teresa recalls, “Bud was with us for a time in a flat in Arundel Gardens, bordering Notting Hill and Notting Hill Gate. Then, further into the sickness, he was in *St Charles’ Hospital*, close to where Judy lives now. The rift between him and his wife Edith was more about where they should live. She wanted a settled life, but he went where his job was, South America one time, Australia another, like that. He reckoned a wife should go wherever her husband worked. She thought otherwise.”

“He was a lovely man and thought the world of [baby Tony].” Tony was the first son to be born of his two sons, though not Bud’s first grand-child. “He said Tony was his immortality, but he never lived to see Mary Lou who was born six weeks after we moved to *Swallowfield*. To the end, he liked his tea, with so little milk it looked totally black, and fried bread. I used to wonder the bread wouldn’t be rough in his throat but he enjoyed it so much.”

“They were both visiting us [Teresa and John] when he noticed a lump on his neck and I told him to go see a doctor. He did the next day, Edith went back to look after her son Stewart who was actually working by then and they were living with Fred’s mother [Alice, who

died six years later] in Whitley Bay. He stayed with us for some time until he had to go into hospital. When everyone knew he was nearing the end, that is when he was taken back north.”

“We couldn’t go to the funeral, not enough money and, anyhow, we were only told he was dead a week later. Probably an oversight but it rather upset your daddy. I, too, would have liked to have been told so that I could at least have gone to Mass for him on that day but, water under the bridge, it’s a lifetime ago now.”

Bud’s mother Alice Ann Bedford died six years after he did. Beyond these family anecdotes, much of Fred’s life is currently a bit of a mystery. Hopefully some family records or memories will shed further light on him.

### Percy

Bud’s father was Percy Hammill Baldwinson. Percy’s middle name came from his mother’s maiden name: Mary Emily Hammill; and Percy’s father was Charles Baldwinson, Bud’s grandfather, born in 1857.

Percy’s wife was Alice Ann Bedford, and her parents were Albert Bedford and Mary Jane Beever.



*Percy and Alice*

Percy was an engineer's machinist-shaper by trade. Bud was an only child, it seems, and the family originally came from Yorkshire. Albert Bedford, Bud's maternal grandfather, later lived with Bud and his family as a widower.

Percy was reportedly employed, along with half a dozen or so others by Keir Hardie (1856-1915) to travel around to various mines, mills and factories to negotiate worker's rights.

Family stories tell that his wife, Alice, had three pregnancies that we know of, all said to be twins of a particular variety where both embryos are conceived about a month apart, which caused problems when one



was full term ahead of the other. This is known as *superfetation* in mammals and said to be very rare in humans. One way or another, five babies had reportedly died before Fred managed to survive.

Percy dealt with all of these stillbirths stoically until baby Fred arrived, at which point he was said to have fully realised for the first time exactly what they had lost and reportedly had some type of a breakdown. Kier Hardy was said to have then pensioned him off.

Percy was aged around 41 years when Keir Hardie died, so the story is plausible. In Caroline Benn's biography (1992) of Keir Hardie he is in Budapest as a guest of the conference of the *Pan-European Women's Suffrage Alliance* during at least some of July 1913, the month Fred was born, and nothing else is noted for the months around that time. However, Keir Hardie was also very protective of his money, so the employment could have been actually done through a trade union or through the Independent Labour Party.

### Edith

My father's mother, Edith Wallace, married Fred when she was 22 and he was 18 years old. She was pregnant at the time, but never spoke of it later. She was an enthusiastic member of the local Liberal Party in Newcastle. In the 1980s she campaigned against American nuclear Cruise missiles, and was said to have coined the phrase, *Not on Our Soil* while writing a motion for an annual party conference.



*Edith*

She enjoyed going on the ferry with her friend Madge to drive their camper van around the continent of Europe. In 1984 she sent a postcard saying their favourite place to visit was the Zillertal valley in the Tyroll mountains in the Austrian Alps. One story has the ferry heaving one morning in a terrible storm at sea, and the only two passengers at all who came for breakfast were Edith and Madge, insisting on having their usual greasy fried eggs.

As small children we would invariably each get Book Tokens in the post from Edith ("Gran") at Christmas. We then had a family day out at the Foyles bookshop in central London each year in what was left of the school holidays.

However, Gran could sometimes be mean-spirited and each Christmas she apparently refused to give one of our young cousins a present because the child had been born illegitimate. Her own marriage in July 1931 was followed shortly by the birth of her first child in September, which might have influenced her feelings.

### Sarah Rachel - *Momma*

At the start of this research, Momma was known in the family to have been a formidable woman, yet also very reluctant to talk about her early years. Hopefully this gives a sense of what she had to endure and overcome.

Edith's mother was Sarah Rachel Humphreys (1882-1961), known to everyone as "Momma", and was just possibly Jewish or had Jewish relations (enquiries continue). The early years of Momma were always a bit of a family mystery. Research currently indicates that Momma's parents had been married in Essex (Maldon, 1867) and the first three of their children were born there. Her father and her mother were born in Asheldham and Tillingham respectively.

Momma could well have been named after two of her mother's relatives. She had a great-grandmother Sarah (Murray) and a grandmother Rachel (Saville), both dead decades before she was born.



*Momma, with baby John and Joan*



*Momma with Joan*

The Humphreys family had moved from Essex to Newcastle, arriving at 16 Palmers Terrace, Willington Quay, Newcastle some years before 1881. The most likely reason that Momma's parents moved was to find

work, as they came from a family of iron workers and settled in an area of growing ship-building and repair.

Momma's uncle, her mother's brother Elijah Cottis, later followed her parents to Newcastle and died there in 1929, thirty years after his sister.

As well as possibly moving for work, the move north could also have been caused by a family falling-out, maybe over money. Momma's parents had moved north, away from their extended family who owned an ironworks in Epping, being the largest employer in the town at that time. Yet when Momma was only two years old and her family had recently left Essex, her grandfather died a pauper. He lived in a workhouse in Essex where he had lived for at least his last three years, despite the apparent wealth of the extended family nearby.

So Momma was born in Newcastle, the youngest of eight children. The ages of the children are quite spread out, and it is a large family, so some of the older children leave home as soon as possible. By 1891 when Momma is nearly nine years old the three oldest had already left home.

Her father (John Humphries, (1845-1892)) died when she was around ten years old and her mother (Susan Cottis (1848-1899)) died when she was around sixteen.

Probably soon after, but certainly by two years later in the 1901 census, Momma and two of her brothers are living with the family of a married older sister - Eliza, aged 30 - at 3 Burn Terrace. Momma's brothers here are William, 26, an iron ship riveter, and Charles, 23, a

marine engine boilermaker. Eliza's husband (another Charles, 28) is a rope maker. At this point Momma has left school and has no trade, so she is probably helping Eliza with her three infants, the oldest aged three years.

Six years after the death of her mother, Momma marries John Wallace in the autumn of 1905. He is a shipyard labourer, working with the carpenters. By 1911 the census has her and John living as a family at 69 Grey Street in North Shields. At this point John is 31 and Momma is 28 years old, and they have three children: Winifred, 6 years, Edith, 2 years, and John (junior), 9 months. A fourth child, Gordon, was born in 1914 but sadly died two years later.

John, her first husband, died in World War 1 on 3 July 1916 on the third day of the *Battle of the Somme*. They had been married for less than eleven years. She had given birth to five children, first two girls then three boys.

Eight years later in 1924 Momma married her second husband, Thomas Bolton Patterson. They had no further children. Thomas died on 11 April 1942, at sea. He was in the *Merchant Navy*, serving on the goods ship *SS Empire Cowper* in the Arctic Convoy returning empty to Reykjavik from supplying Murmansk in Russia, when it was bombed in the Barents Sea by aircraft and sunk, with nine deaths. Thomas was a Second Engineer Officer. His memorial is within the Tower Hill Memorial in London, for Merchant Navy sailors lost at sea in both World Wars 1 and 2 (panel 39). His effects to Momma were £128 4s 4d. The ship was a year old, registered to

the firm of *William Doxford & Sons Ltd* in Sunderland. The convoy number was QP10.

It seems that one of Thomas' sons was Norman Patterson, from Thomas' first marriage in 1905 to Hannah Hetherington. Norman also died at sea just a month before his father Thomas. Norman was on the *SS San Demetiro* which sank on 17 March 1942.

One family anecdote is where Momma, her second daughter Edith and her grandson John were walking down the road together when John was still very young. He wanted to walk along the top of a wall, as children will, but Edith was reluctant because of his frailty and medical history from polio. Momma insisted that he must be allowed to, persuading Edith to hold back her own anxiety.

She lives for 79 years. Her Will shows £428-15s being left to her oldest child Winifred.

Our cousin Rich adds: "Momma died in December 1961. I know... because I was actually there at the time! My family were living with Momma at her house in North Shields at the time (65, Cleveland Road) and my mother had gone out shopping one morning leaving me (in my pre-school days) and Momma in the house when she suffered a sudden, fatal heart attack, albeit quite peacefully. Although I was only four and a half at the time, it is a memory that has always stayed with me." Rich is her great-grandchild.



## Susan

Momma's mother Susan came from the Cottis family in Essex, sometimes spelt Cottiss. The earliest of these folk found so far were illiterate and agricultural labourers (very possibly a Victorian euphemism for a peasant) who would 'make their mark' on documents with a cross for a signature. Her mother, Rachel, died when Susan was aged eleven. Her father William was also described as an agricultural labourer.

## William (1815-1884)

Some of Momma's extended family seem to have made their mark in a different way, being relatively prosperous. This branch of the family were the *Cottis' of Epping* who ran an iron foundry and hardware business, from 1860 to 1972, and at its long peak they were the main employer in Epping. Their work apparently included making the iconic street lamps still standing along the Thames Embankment and some of the ironwork and railings around Buckingham Palace. A small book was written in 2004 on this branch of the family and on their successful business venture - *Cottis of Epping*, by Chris Johnson (ISBN 0954944208).

There were at least four "William Cottis" and a further four "Isaac Cottis" going around in the family. At the time generally it was common practice for families to re-use the name of a child that had died in infancy, given again to a later child in tribute. Similarly it was common practice to use a parent's name for a child all in the same family.

And here, it seems there were limits to any sharing of the family wealth. One William Cottis (1809-1894) was running the family business with his son Crispus and they had creating a substantial enterprise. But it was another William Cottis (1815-1884) living in the area – William who was Susan’s father and Momma’s grandfather – who died a pauper as an inmate at the Maldon Union Workhouse on Spital Road nearby. He had been living in the workhouse for at least three years, and had previously been an agricultural labourer.

The business Cottis’s were reported to be strong Baptists, which may have been a source of family friction. Some later generations changed to Methodist. William Cottis the business-owner was known as “Iron Will” by his foundry staff. The family was heavily involved in the town’s civic matters, so possibly the funds for the workhouse was their sense of provision.

#### Isaac (1775-1853)

The father of William (1815-1884) was Isaac Cottis (1775-1853), a labourer, and Rachel’s father was Thomas Saville, a carpenter.

In 1851 the census has an Isaac Cottis living at Jews Houses, Back Place, in Tillingham, Essex. This could be any one of:

1. the Isaac Cottis (1775-1853) who was Momma’s great-grandfather and William’s father and the son of John Cottis;

2. the Isaac Cottis (1817-?) who was William's brother; or
3. the possibly unrelated Isaac Cottis (1789-1853) known in the area who was the son of another Isaac Cottis (1753-1830).

Research from other family trees online suggests that: the parents of Isaac were John Curtis (c.1740-1806) and Mary Whitaker (1742-1802) living in Tillingham, Essex; the parents of John were John Curtis (1720-1773) and Sarah Ford (1706-unknown); and that the parents of Mary were Aaron Whitaker (1715-unknown) and Elizabeth (1718-unknown).

### John Wallace

Momma's first husband was John Wallace (1879-1916), born in Tynemouth. His father was William Wallace from Glasgow, born around 1843, where the trail ends at the moment, and his mother was likely to have been Mary Ann Wilkinson, born around 1845 in Tynemouth.

John was reportedly a Methodist, despite which he seems to have had a colourful army record, at least for the first four years, as follows:

"Army Service Corps (ASC) - Attested - Private - 2 Feb 1900  
Imprisoned by commanding officer - 12 Nov 1900  
Returned to duty - Private - 27 Nov 1900  
In custody Civil power (drunk) - 26 June 1903  
Returned to duty - Private - 27 July 1903  
Imprisoned by commanding officer - 17 Aug 1903  
Returned to duty - Private - 21 Aug 1903  
Reserve ASC, Transferred, Private - 27 Jan 1904"

When John signed up for the *Army Service Corp* it probably took him to South Africa and the Boer War. The Service Corp was responsible for logistics such as post and communications, offices and some engineering. By World War 1 he appears to have been enlisted to 12th Battalion of the *Royal Northumberland Fusiliers* and sent to “France and Flanders” where he died on 3 July 1916, on the third day of the *Battle of the Somme*. His service number was 9642. The 12th and 13th Service Battalions had been formed in Newcastle in September 1914 before shipping out to France a year later, September 1915. His name is reportedly on the *Thiepval Memorial*, along with 73,000 other “missing” soldiers who also all have no grave.

For a sense of the carnage that was the Battle of the Somme, the novel *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks is excellent.

The same year, 1916, his wife and widow, Momma, also lost her youngest child, two-year-old Gordon.

### Jack Wallace

John Wallace (1910-1999), “Jack”, was the third child from the first marriage of Momma and John Wallace (Senior), and he was our father’s uncle.



*Jack Wallace*

Jack was a journalist at *Reuters* and lived in a flat near to Fleet Street for some time. He is known to have taken an interest in my father's early writing career, as well as being the best man at my parent's wedding. Already living in the middle of London, he undoubtedly helped his nephew - my father - when he left home from Newcastle to find work in London as well.

Jack was born on 3 July 1910 and brought up in Tyneside. His father died in 1916 on Jack's sixth birthday, fighting in the *Battle of the Somme* during the First World War in Flanders. Later, his step-father would die at sea in the Second World War serving in an Arctic Convoy. Neither had a grave.

Jack's first newspaper job was in Tyneside as a sub-editor in complete charge of the sports desk at the *Shields News*, after which he joined the *Gazette* in Middlesbrough, known then as the *North Eastern Daily Gazette*. By this stage he had become an accomplished sub-editor in all news areas. On 3 February 1936 he

moved again, this time to London to continue his journalism at *Reuters*, starting as an editorial assistant.

The people who interviewed him for the job noted that he had, “a very gentlemanly appearance and spoke with a ‘northern-Scottish’ accent,” a phrase at the time meaning Geordie. He working at *Reuters* in the footsteps of journalists like Ian Fleming (there 1929-33), who went on to write his James Bond books and manage at The Times after serving in naval intelligence during the war.

While he was working in London, on 19 July 1938 Jack had returned to Tyneside to marry his sweetheart, Eleanor Wouldhave Chambers, three years his younger. As was the custom then for professional working people, to keep his job he had to ask for permission from his boss at Reuters before getting married. The couple lived together in London and she died in June 1956 aged only 43 years. They had no children, and Jack never married again.

After four years working at *Reuters*, Jack was in the army from 13 December 1940 to 11 February 1946. He then returned to Reuters for nine years before leaving in April 1955 to take up a new post, described as “too attractive to refuse”. (enquiries continue for 1955-1975)

Jack was the best man when his nephew John Baldwinson married Teresa Duffy in 1957. Teresa, now 82, recalls Jack as “a careful and dependable man.” She added that, after his wife died, “for the rest of his life he wore a black tie.” She remembers he was a regular member of the choir at his church.

Our cousin Rich also remembers meeting Jack, noting his deep voice “a bit like Perry Mason” and a no-nonsense manner.

Jack retired around 1975 and stayed in London, moving into a sheltered flat in Wimbledon which was newly-built in 1989, his rooms full of books. He died on 16 March 1999 aged 88 years from heart disease due to his diabetes. All his books were lovingly collected and re-housed by his niece Joan Morton, living then in Whitley Bay.

### Joan

Joan was my father’s older sister. She was born five years earlier than him, in 1931. In 1950, when she was 19 years old she married Geoff Morton and they have four children: Rowena, Christopher (Chris), Piers and Richard (Rich).



*Chris, Rich, Joan, Geoff, 1958*

## Stewart

Stewart was my father's younger brother. He was born five years after him, in 1941. He married Sylvia and they had one son, Alistair Stewart Wallace Baldwinson. Stewart died in 1998 aged 57 years, and it was widely thought in the family that his death led to the rapid decline and then death of his mother Edith just two months later.

## John - *Johnny*

John, *Johnny*, our father was at his working peak in the 1960s and 1970s, winning national and international awards for his work as an advertising copywriter. It was London, the swinging sixties — it was like the TV series *Mad Men*.



*John, leaving home, 16 years old*



He caught the polio virus as a young child. It mainly affected his spine and one leg which made his walking difficult, and gave him more pain in later years. It was never a topic for family conversation. When he was around seven years old a boy threw a brick at him or attached him with a nail in a plank of wood while in hospital, either way leaving him with a scar above his eye for life. Another time, he lost the tip of one finger as a child when someone was undertaking a mechanical repair and Johnny asked, "What is that bit, what does that do?" by pointing with his finger.

When John was fifteen years old he returned to England with his parents and brother Stewart from a stay in Singapore, arriving in London on the P&O ship *Canton* on 26 November 1951. His older sister Joan had met Geoff Morton and they had stayed on in Singapore and became married.

As Teresa explains: "Johnny trained originally as a sub-editor with the *Hulton Press* which produced *The Eagle*. That was when we were back from Austria. He'd been working somewhere else before that as a clerk - and hating it - but left when he got the chance to go to *Hulton Press*. While there he was writing stories for magazines as well. From reading one of his tales an advertising boss looked him up to ask him to go to work for him. That was the year Judy was born, 1961. He was to be given £1,000 a year. We thought we had it made! It was very good money then."

A copy has been found by his granddaughter Sophie of a later science fiction short story he wrote. It is titled *Mary, Mary* and was published in March 1965 in the

*Fantastic SF* magazine, based in Chicago (vol 13, no 3, pp22-29).

As an engagement present, Teresa had given John an expensive acoustic guitar, a *Gretsch New Yorker Non-Blonde*. As well as writing John was a singer and guitar player, a member of a skiffle group (enquiries continue).

There is a newspaper photograph of John and the rest of the *Southern Skiffle Group* playing to a crowd outdoors, taken on 19 October 1956 for the *Evening News* paper in London. Reportedly it was taken “at 4am” at Billingsgate wholesale fish market, and the crowd were porters and similar market workers.



*John and skiffle group, Billingsgate Market 1956*

There are also pictures of the band playing indoors at pubs and clubs. He was mixing with the likes of Tommy

Steele, who wanted to buy John's guitar and made him an offer, which was turned down.

The Baldwinson's faith was Methodist, and John had to undergo various meetings and obligations before he could marry Teresa, his Catholic fiancée. During his talks with a Catholic priest John asked him, "Must I become a Catholic to marry her?" The priest, horrified, said, "No. We have enough bad Catholics of our own, thank you."

His first award, in the early 1960s, was for a cinema commercial for *The Laughing Man*, made for the *National Provincial Bank*, very probably while working at CDP - *Colette Dickinson Pearce*.

As Teresa said: "The ad was being cheered, standing ovations even, in the cinemas. I'm not sure exactly which award was given for it. I do know the award bore John's name on it, but that didn't stop lots of other people putting the ad on their showreels and claiming it was written by them. It was, I was told, the most widely-claimed commercial of all time," which was quite a compliment.

"Frank Lowe was an account director at CDP with Johnny as his copywriter and another whose name escapes me at the moment as artist. Frank left CDP to set up his own agency which was said to have grown like Topsy and was eventually floated on the [Stock] Exchange." Teresa did some work herself for a sub-agency of his with *Texaco* as the client. She wrote about where to go and what to see, ideas for family days out. It paid her well, she recalls. There was a story that someone had been trying to shake Frank down and he

knew what they were planning, so he taped the phone call. “End of trouble,” said Teresa. Teresa and Johnny both liked Frank. They would say he had his feet on the ground, and that this was a rarity in any advertising firm at the time. Not everyone in the advertising industry agreed, it seems.

One of John’s ads was for the *Lyons Cream Cakes* account. As usual he was the copywriter, with an art director and an account executive, and between them they created the slogan, *Naughty, but nice*.

John worked for a number of advertising agencies, including *McCann Erickson*. However, he never worked for the *J Walter Thompson* agency although they wanted him. “He was about to do so when he found out that someone he loathed was there and had no wish to inhabit the same room as him. The planet, he thought, was only just big enough,” according to Teresa. The advertising agency he was working with when he died in 1981 was *Charles Barker*.

We had the first colour television in our street, courtesy of his employers who paid for these new TVs so that their staff could watch the competition’s ads in colour in the evening. In 1974 he wrote a weekly column for the London *Evening Standard* newspaper on affordable wine, and in 1975 this column moved to *The Observer Colour Magazine*. He summarised this work in a book, also in 1975, *Plonk and Super-Plonk* (ISBN 0718114078) published by Michael Joseph, now an imprint of Penguin Books. He spent some time away from home in a hotel room with his typewriter to finish

writing it on time. The book is 26,000 words and has been scanned as a computer file.



*John*

His advertising copywriting included working on the *Oxfam* charity account; and his design of their logo - the top half of a stick person with raised arms - was used for many years. He said the raised arms meant both 'help me' and 'I'm happy'. It was inspired by the design of a pendant John wore at the time, an almost Celtic shape of a cross with the top section replaced by an egg-shaped circle. The design from this pendant was copied for the headstone of baby Michael, who had died a few days

after being born. He was brought home from hospital but we were told he was poorly.

\*

One of the people John worked with in advertising at *Charles Barker* was James Herbert, an art director who became a very successful author of horror books.

As Teresa recalls, “they worked together and he was quite a gentle sort of guy. When he told people of his weird dream, Johnny told him to write it down and send it to an agent. That was the first of his books, *The Rats*. When he’d done two or three he had enough money coming in from them so he quit the advertising world and went his own way from there.”

Our cousin Rich Morton was told that Johnny had inspired James to write one of his later books, *Others*, published in 1999. The End Note in the book says some more, but gives no names. Rich discovered this connection just by chance, chatting with James about advertising in the 1960s while preparing to record a radio interview with him about his writing. Rich tells of how James’ face suddenly turned very pale when Rich casually mentioned that John had been his uncle.

John won what were probably his best regarded awards for his work for *Bassett’s* and for the *Irish Tourist Board* during the time of The Troubles in Northern Ireland.

He had a showreel, a 35mm cine film reel with around a dozen of his film and TV commercials. It was used like a CV by his firms to impress potential new clients when pitching for work. His clients included *Ritter* chocolates and *Cinzano* drinks. The family has donated his

showreel to the *History of Advertising Trust*, based in Norfolk. He liked using the words ‘ad’ and ‘advertisement’, but winced if anyone said ‘advert’ to him.

In 1973 we (John, Teresa and five children) had a family summer holiday in northern France. We stayed at a hotel in a small town called Le Fret on the Brittany coast. On the beaches nearby there were the hulls of a few old abandoned fishing ships - just their large, brooding and weathered hulks. When Johnny got home and took the holiday photos in to show people at work, everyone asked him where this fantastic coast was. He said he refused to tell, because he didn’t want the place to be spoilt by loads of advertising people descending on the place as a new shooting location. The local hotel owner would probably have wished differently.

Eight years later, John, Teresa and their youngest child Maff were on a week’s holiday in Killarney, Ireland in April 1981 when John was knocked over on a pavement by a passing pedestrian. No bones were broken, but it left him very bruised and confined to his bed after returning to London.

John then had a series of strokes from May 1981 onwards and died in hospital on 4 August 1981 aged 45, tobacco, alcohol and maybe more having brought him down. If there was a pleasure in life he felt obliged to test it to destruction.

He was a gifted writer, but almost totally innumerate and did not manage his money well. He had written a semi-humorous article, but also a *cris-de-coeur*, on the need for a national numeracy campaign to go alongside the

existing literacy schemes. He had been trying to pay off a large tax debt when he died, a debt Teresa did not know about. There were three mortgages on the house. His life insurance policy only paid for two of the mortgages, and left the main one plus the tax debts for Teresa to deal with as best as she could.

\*

When I was born in 1958 John and Teresa were renting a home at 26 Hungerford Road, Islington, London N7. Later that year we moved to a flat at 15 Arundel Gardens near Notting Hill, London W11. Notting Hill experienced race riots, the most severe being on 2 September 1958. Apparently one evening around that time Johnny thought the rioting was at our front door from all the noise they could hear, but Teddy told him it was just the neighbours having a child's birthday party. Not reassured, reportedly John had soon bought himself a gun. Later on he owned a flick knife from a gift shop in Lourdes, and a walking cane which unscrewed to reveal a sword-like blade. This cane had to be wrapped up and carried in the hold of the aircraft when he flew on holiday to Ireland.

In August 1959 the family moved to Mill Hill in the north London suburbs six weeks before the second child - Mary Lou - was born, where they rented a ground-floor two-bedroom flat called *Swallowfield* at 45 Hammers Lane, NW7. The flat had lino floors, was very cold in the winter, and the only heating was a coal fire in the living room. A gas poker was used to light the fire each day, and the coal was delivered in sacks. An accidentally



charred doll, Burnt Louisa, was kept beside the fire as a reminder to the children to take care.

In the mid 1960s they moved again, this time to buy a three-bedroom house two streets away on Highwood Hill, NW7. They named the house *Stet*, being Latin for: let it stand. It is used by writers when some text has been crossed out but is then wanted again. The first time they tried to move there the woman who had sold the house had not yet moved out, so the large, young family returned to the flat on Hammers Lane and lived out of packing boxes for a week or so while the issue was resolved.

All the children went to St Vincent's RC Primary School, a short bus ride on the 240, and later to various secondary schools in Finchley and Barnet.

The first family car we had in the 1960s was a six-seater 633cc Fiat Multipla, with a top speed of 57mph, which Teresa could drive. For a while John had a moped for commuting, and he later changed this to being driven to and collected from the Underground station at Mill Hill East. Teresa did the driving during most of the 1960s with all the family inside, including a trip between London to Newcastle to see our Gran, Edith. The same car also made frequent family trips to our Nanny and Grandad in Dovercourt Bay, Essex. It was a family story how it regularly broke down midway, every time it seemed at the Marks Tey roundabout, when the fan belt would finally give up and snap.

The little Fiat was later replaced with two cars: a Mini Traveller for Teresa and the Citroen DS for John. This was John's favourite car - the smooth, iconic wedge-

shaped Citroen DS - and earning good money in the late 1960s this was his opportunity to get himself an automatic version which he could drive with his stronger leg. Both these cars were later replaced with one family car, an automatic Ford Cortina Estate, which both of them could drive. The Mini Traveller by then was very old and had failed its MOT test so Tony was given it to work on and learn about cars. After a few months of tinkering he sold it to his school's technology teacher and bought a stereo record player from Woolworths instead.

We were seen as a down-to-earth, some would say middle class, family during the time we were growing up, and quite trendy and bohemian for the time. For a family treat we would be taken for a meal at the *Alvaro* restaurant on the King's Road. As kids we didn't know at the time how trendy this place was, but it was the place to eat in London in the 60s. However, one sister recalls she was seriously discouraged or craftily pointed in other directions when friends of hers did ballet or horse riding and she wanted to go as well. At home, it was always Mummy and Daddy, never Mum or Dad. Our parents' families were both working class, or *skilled* working class as their parents would have emphasised.

John smoked Gitanes, very strong French cigarettes all his adult life, whereas Teresa stopped smoking her milder brand in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The music we all heard at home and enjoyed was mostly from American rhythm and blues singers plus some British singers: Leadbelly, Billie Holiday, Mahalia Jackson, Ella

Fitzgerald, Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Peggy Lee, but above all, John Lee Hooker and Ray Charles.

I am the eldest child (Tony) with three younger sisters (Mary Lou, Judy, Lucy), a baby brother who died in infancy (Michael), and a younger brother (Matthew, "Maff").

## **John Baldwinson - Awards**

(an incomplete list):

### **- The Laughing Man, early 1960s -**

One or more awards (details now lost) for The Laughing Man cinema ad for the National Provincial Bank.

[Related source: 1970 - BFI National Archive, record 555525 - National Provincial Bank – The Laughing Man, Television Commercial, produced by Lintas. But this version was for TV, unless the same as the cinema ad.]

### **- Ireland, 1976 -**

A Golden Postcard presented to him for the Irish Tourist Board commercials from the Travel Industry Marketing Group and the Travel Trade Gazette.

### **- Kaleidoscope, 1977 -**

Two Clio Awards, both in the advertising excellence worldwide category, the first for Liquorice Allsorts, and the second for the Kaleidoscope Dolly Mixtures commercial both for Bassett's.

A Bronze Arrow award (previously British Television Advertising Awards) for the Kaleidoscope Dolly Mixtures commercial.

- Kaleidoscope, 1977, continued -

A Diplome at the *24th Festival International du Film Publicitaire* in Cannes for the Kaleidoscope Dolly Mixture commercial for Bassett's.

- Ireland, 1978 -

Two Clio Awards, the first in the international television and cinema advertisement category for Peter Ustinov in Ireland, and the second in the international print advertisement category for the Welcome to Ireland '78, both for the Irish Tourist Board.

## Closing Remarks

I hope you enjoy looking through this collection, though it is probably too rich a mix to take in all at once.

And if I have just one message, it is that this booklet is a *draft*, and probably always will be. Hopefully it is 90% correct, but I won't pretend for a minute that it is perfect research.

So, please do send me corrections, plus any new material, photos and accounts from your precious memories. Unless, of course, they start with me gargling at the dinner table...

Tony, Manchester.



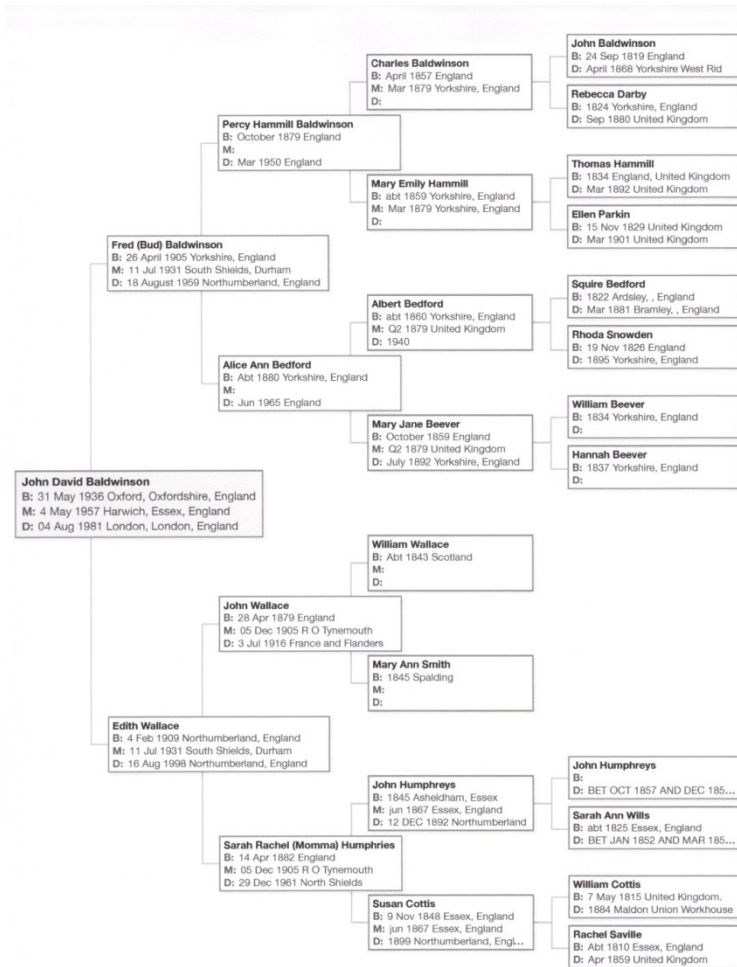
*Minnie's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party*



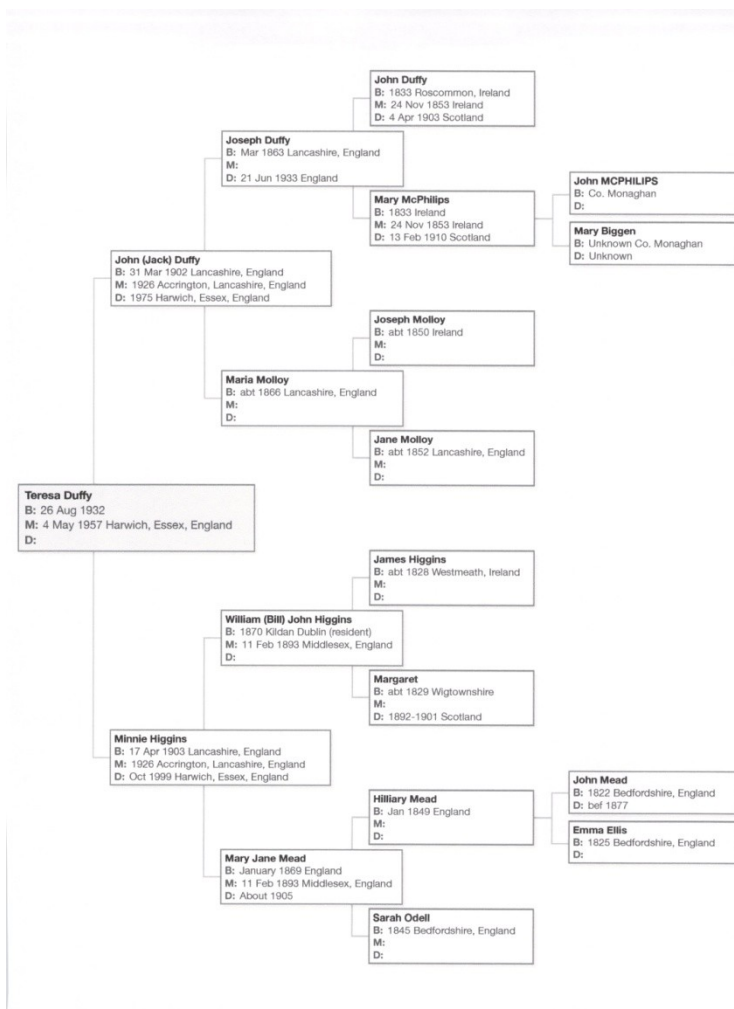
*Teresa, Julie, Mary Lou, Judy, Lucy (front)*



*Bernard, Teresa, Minnie, Cecelia*







## NOTES





*Mary Lou, Tony, Judy, Lucy*



*Maff*

ISBN - 978 095 726 0665