



# “Father” Bill Pratt 1898 - 1965

A brief biography,  
by his son  
2012

Address	Northing	Easting
Heaton Road, Newcastle	54-57-06.59N	1-31-52.74W
Bowden School, Seaford	50-46-48.95N	0-06-11.43E
Shrewsbury School	52-42-09.89N	2-24-47.64W
Clarges Street, London	51-30-25.01N	0-08-43.07W
Lavender Cottage, Bridstow	51-55-35.04N	2-36-37.74W
Willesden General Hospital	51-32-04.75N	0-13-48.40W
Wits End Cottage, Croasdale	54-32-38.77N	3-24-11.05W
139 Walm Lane Cricklewood, Ldn	51-33-09.90N	0-12-58.89W
Monkswell, Monmouth	51-48-58.18N	2-42-45.82W
31 Royston Park Road, Pinner	51-36-54.80N	0-22-06.29W
Byeways, Milton Lilbourne	51-20-37.65N	1-43-51.29W



**Marriage** solemnized in the Parish Church, in the Parish of St. Cuthbert, Gateshead, in the County of Durham.

141-220—Howe Bros., Printers, G

WHEN MARRIED.	NAME AND SURNAMES.	AGE.	CONDITION.	RANK OR PROFESSION.	RESIDENCE AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE.	FATHER'S NAME AND SURNAMES.	RANK OR PROFESSION OF FATHER.
August 1 <sup>st</sup> 1895	Edward Frederick Pratt	28	Bachelor	Surgeon	32 Heaton Road Newcastle-on-Tyne	Benjamin Frederick Pratt (dec)	Soldier
	Susannah Dodds Hedley	31	Spinster		8 Blomfield Terrace	James Dodds Hedley	Grocer

d in the Parish Church, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, by \_\_\_\_\_ or after *Banns*  
*C H Rolt*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { *Edward Frederick Pratt*  
*Susannah Dodds Hedley* } in the presence of us, { *Jas D Hedley*  
*Jas D Hedley Junior*

I hereby certify that the above is a true Copy of an Entry in the Register Book of Marriages belonging to St. Cuthbert's Church, Gateshead.

Witness my hand this *3<sup>rd</sup>* day of *August* 1905. *Lionel Thompson*

In 1895, Dr Edward Frederick Pratt married Miss Susannah Dodds Hedley, in Gateshead, a suburb of the city of Newcastle - upon- Tyne, in the county of Northumberland. England. Edward's father, Benjamin Frederick Pratt, was no longer alive. He had been a soldier, possibly with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoon Guards and had seen active service in India at the time of the Indian Mutiny (1857 – 1858).

Nothing is known of the Hedley side of the family

Edward was 28, Susannah 31. He trained as a doctor, qualifying with an Honours degree (MB, BS) from the University of Durham in 1899, and had a practice in Heaton, a suburb of Newcastle.





At the time of their marriage, they lived here, at 32, Heaton Road, Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne. This is shown on the 1895 Heaton and Byker map, below. Note that Heaton Road is surrounded by a grid of narrow streets and small houses, most of which had been built in the previous 20 years to house the huge numbers of workers needed for the emerging heavy industries which were a feature of this city.



“Father” was born here on March 22 1898, and christened Frederick William Markham Pratt.

YG 337113

R. Cert. S.  
S.R.

1 & 2 ELIZ. 2 CH. 20

**CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH**

Name and Surname *Frederick William Markham Pratt*

Sex *Boy.*

Date of Birth *Twenty second March. 1898.*

Place of Birth { Registration *NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE*  
District  
Sub-district *Byker.*

I, G. CRAIGHILL Superintendent Registrar  
for the Registration District of NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE do hereby  
certify that the above particulars have been compiled from an entry in a  
register in my custody.

Witness my hand this *20th* day of *May*. 195*9*.

CAUTION :—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on  
this certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true,  
knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.

*117/381*

*[Signature]*  
Superintendent Registrar



Two years later, a brother Percival was born.

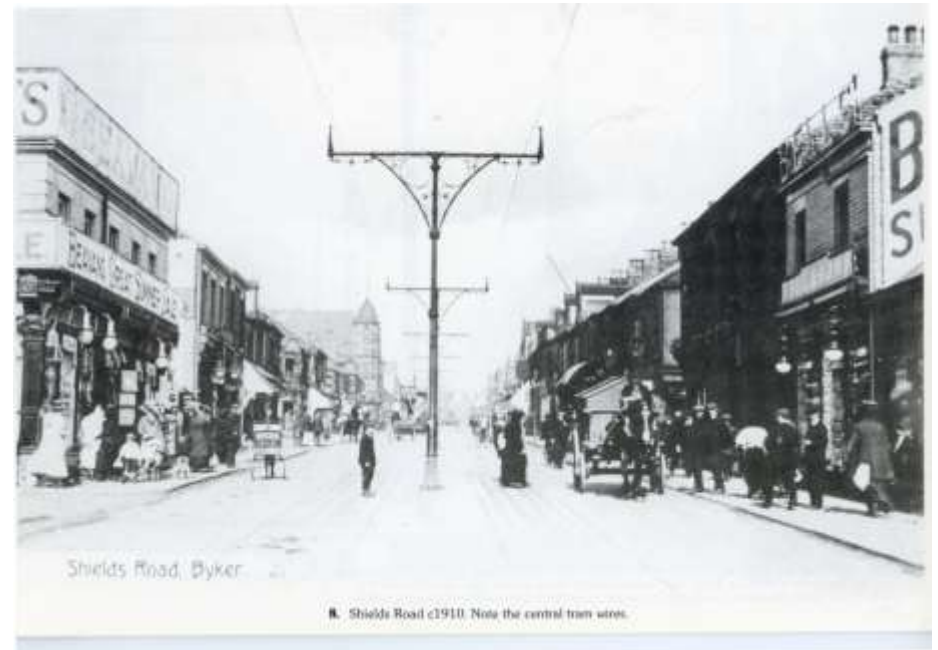




These are the streets of Newcastle he would have been familiar with. Note the horses, the overhead cables for trams, and the lack of motor cars or lorries.

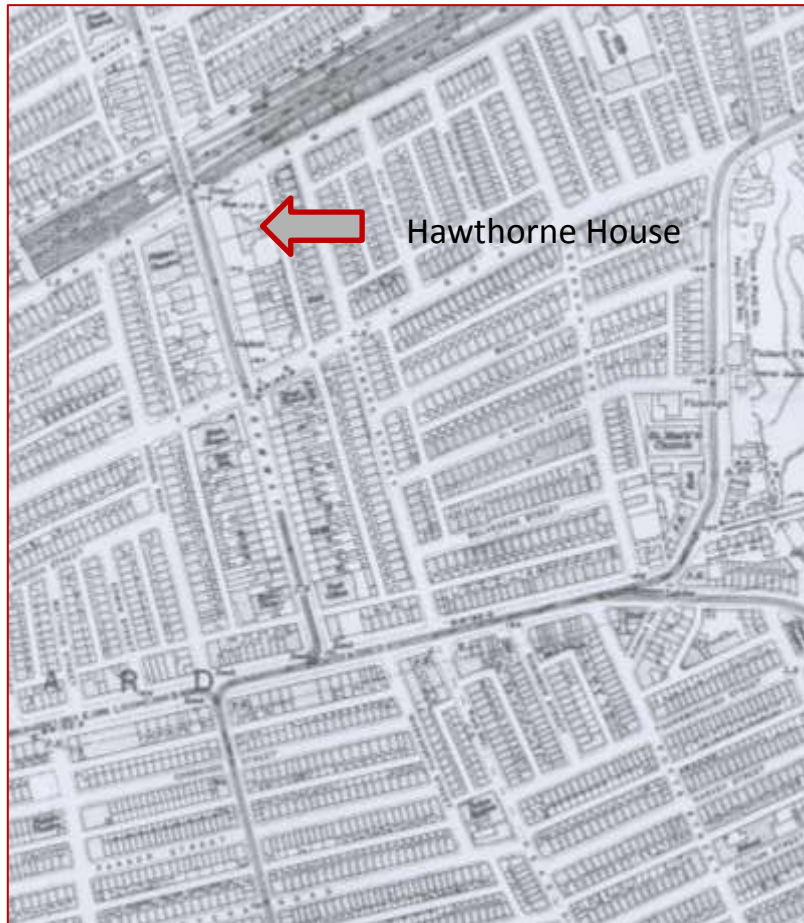


L. At the turn of the century much building took place between St. George's Terrace and the Town Moor; most of the new housing was two-flat dwellings. Much rented accommodation was available in demand between the wars. Two delivery boys can be seen in this photograph of Tynemouth Road.



R. Shields Road c1910. Note the central tram wires.

Within ten years, the family moved into a larger house 200 yards north of No 32, known as Hawthorne House. This was on the corner between Heaton Road and North View, and it was pulled down for the building of a new road in the 1960's.



When he was 8, Father experienced his first time living away from home at a Prep school. This fee-paying school for about 50 boys was a typically middle-class English establishment with one master to every ten pupils. Known as Bowden House School, it was situated about 300 miles from Newcastle, in the south of England, at Seaford, in Sussex. In the photograph below, we think we have identified him in the third row from the front, 5 places in from the right hand end. He is tall, circled in blue. You can tell the boys from the masters because the former are all wearing stiff Eton collars.



Interestingly, Bowden House is still a boarding school (2012), but no longer for the sons of the wealthy middle class but for problem pupils from inner London.

We guess this photograph was taken around 1907.



In 1912, (at an age of 14) he was sent to Shrewsbury School. Founded some two hundred years earlier, the school moved to its present site on the outskirts of the town of Shrewsbury some 50 years before Father went there. It was an English boys public school, run on the same traditional lines as Eton, Rugby and Felsted, etc., housing a couple of hundred sons of the middle and upper classes and preparing them for careers in the Church, the Army, and the professions.



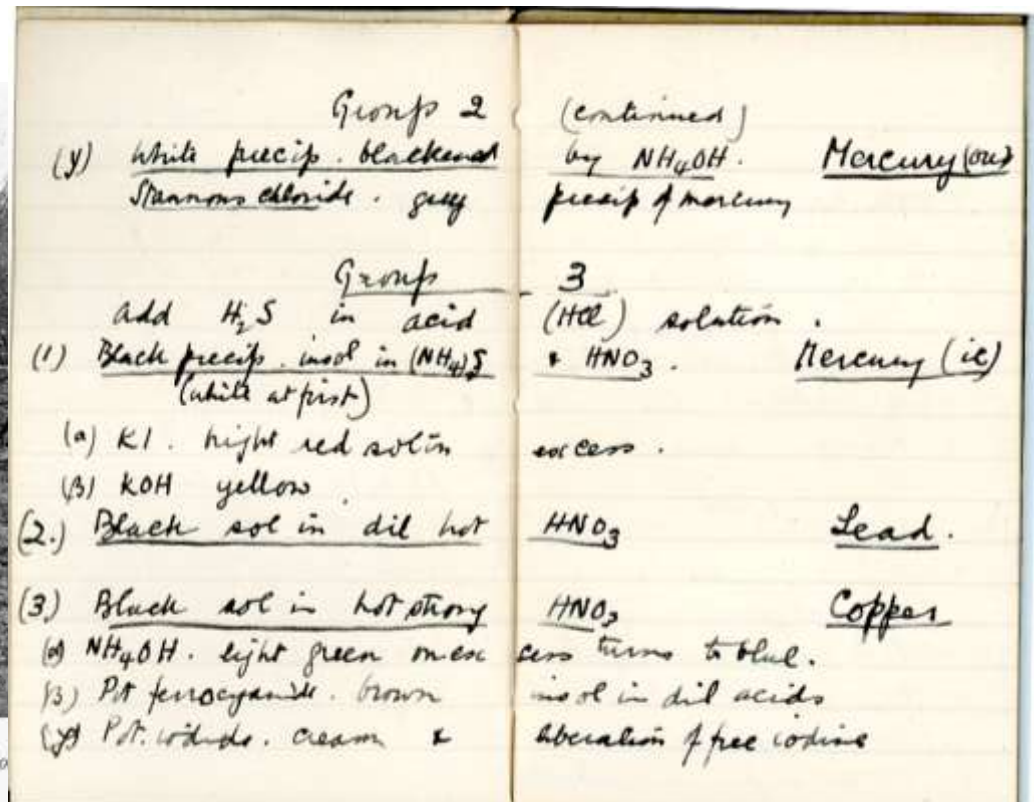
School



Life at the school would have been spartan and tough, with cold-water baths before breakfast, physical training at least once every day and regular sport, including rowing, running, football, rugger, cricket, fives and boxing. There were other facilities which would have appealed to Father more than these: small-bore rifle shooting, and a photographic dark-room. Educationally, the boys were taught traditional subjects in the humanities and science, so that Father was proficient at Greek as well as chemistry, as this notebook written in his characteristic handwriting shows.



A STEEPLECHASE.  
The Water Jump at the Rad Brook.



Two years into his time at Shrewsbury, the Allied nations of Britain, France, Italy and Russia declared war on Germany and its ally, the Austria/Hungary Empire, in August 1914. The main areas of operation are shown in green on the map below. This, the most destructive war so far, lasted 4 years and killed 9 million servicemen and five million civilians. Most of the action involving British land forces was in northern France and Belgium, in an area known as the Western Front. The belligerent armies faced each other along a narrow, twisting line stretching from the North Sea to the Swiss border. Here, the armies stuck in deep trenches in which men lived and died under appalling and terrifying conditions.



The First World War: British soldiers of the 8th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment move up into flooded trenches in France in the winter of 1915; a painting by soldier-artist 'Dick' Read. T. L. 'Dick' Read, Liddle Collection, University of Leeds

By 1914, Britain had been at war in one place or another almost continuously for 100 years, and schools like Shrewsbury offered training in the military for its boys, supervised and equipped by the Regular Army and organised into Officers Training Corps (OTC). As you can see in the photograph below in which the boys are parading in 1915, they wore uniforms and had access to rifles.



AN O.T.C. PARADE, 1915.

In this photograph (one of several taken by Father in 1914) his friends are on manoeuvre, probably during the annual summer camp. These young teenagers were being trained as officers. 25% of them would be killed, and 25% wounded in the next four years. The rifle is a Lee-Netford.



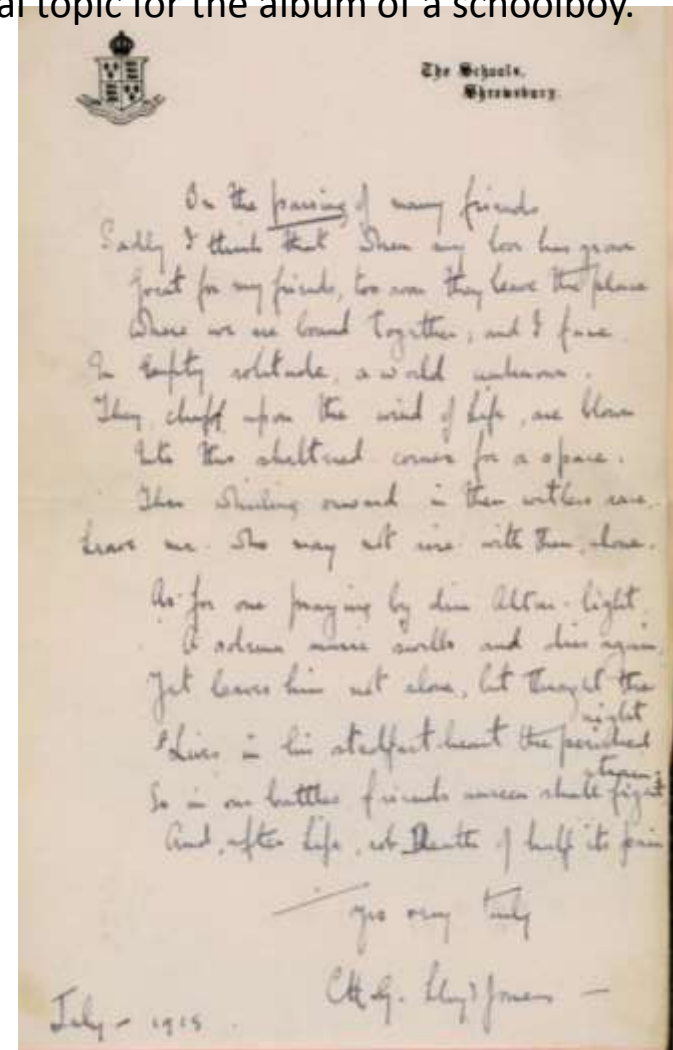
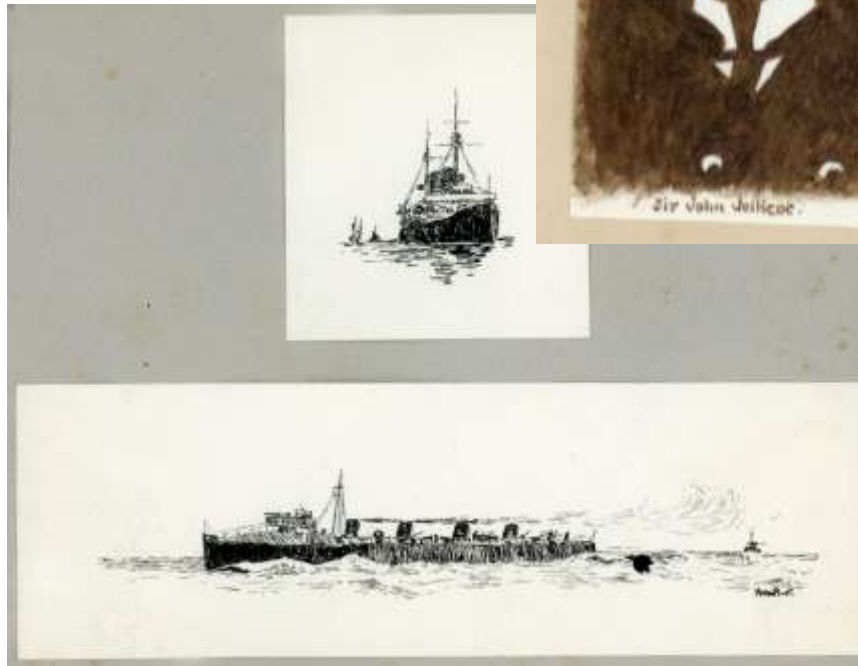


When the war started in August 1914, the boys had no reason to suppose that it would be very different from the other wars: it would be over by Christmas and would be fought by Britain's small, highly-trained regular Army and Navy. It cannot have taken long for them to realise this war would be different, especially when the Roll of Honour for old boys killed in the conflict began to rise. Four years later, of 1,850 old boys from Shrewsbury School who served, 321 had died and a further 350 had been wounded. In the country as a whole, 37,484 out of 234,000 British officers had been killed. For the rest of his professional life, Father gave of his time to the wounded from this and later conflicts.

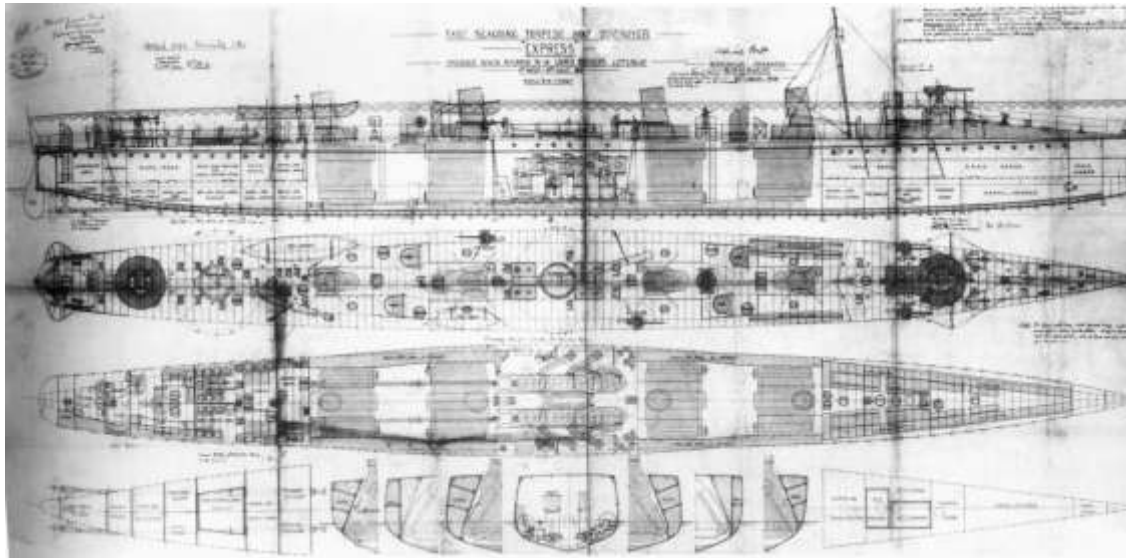
Shrewsbury School.		STATISTICS.									
<h1>Roll of Service</h1> <h2>1914-1918.</h2>		O.S.S. Serving	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1820
		Killed	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	321
		Privately	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	44
		Wounded once	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	374
		twice	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	49
		three times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	10
		four times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	4
		Interested at Bachelors 1914 to 1918	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	194
		Mentioned in Despatches, once	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	107
		twice	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	33
		three times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
		four times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	7
		five times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		six times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		seven times	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Distinctions	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		V.C.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		K.C.B.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		K.C.M.G.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		K.B.E.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		C.B.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		C.B.J.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		C.M.G.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		C.I.E.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		C.B.E.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		D.S.O.	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Croix de Guerre	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		avec ruban	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Cross of Chevalier of Legion of Honour	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Légion of Honour	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and Crown of Italy	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Italian Silver Medal for Military Valour	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Chevalier of the Order of Leopold with Croix de Guerre	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of Leopold	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Croix de Guerre (Belgium)	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Chevalier de l'Ordre de Mérite Agricole	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Russian Order of St. Anne with Swords	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Cross of the Order of St. Anne	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of St. Vladimir	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of the Star	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Ordre de l'Étoile Noire	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Cavalier of the Order of the Redeemer (Greece)	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of St. John of Jerusalem	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Commander Order de la Couronne	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Cavalier of St. Maurice and Lazarus	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of Medjidieh	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Officer of Military Order of Savoy	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Serbian Order of White Eagle	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Chevalier of the Military Order of Avis	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1
		Order of St. Sava	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	1



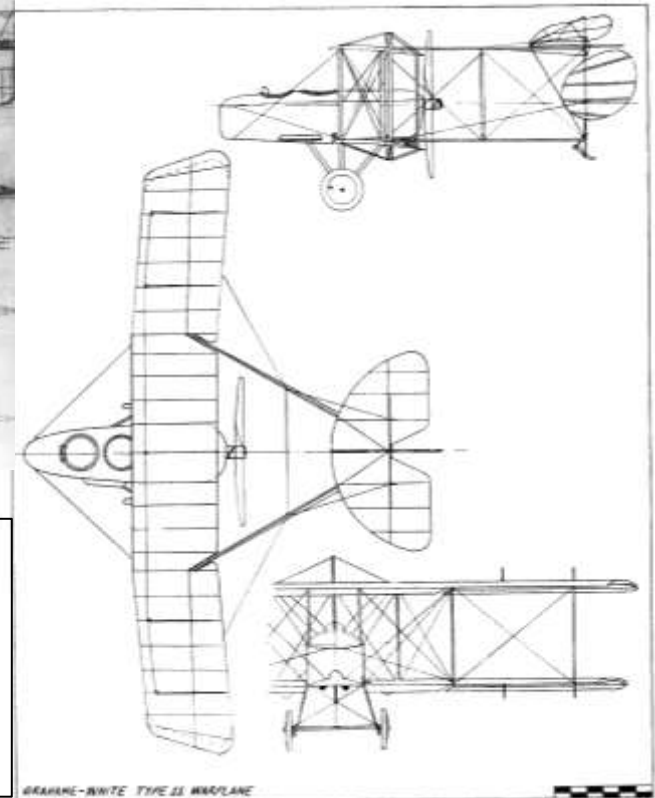
The patriotism which enveloped the country during the early years of the war was not lost on the boys of Shrewsbury. Father had an album to which his friends contributed and in which he painted. Here are his drawings of a Royal Naval vessel, (probably *HMS Express*) the Commander of the British Grand Fleet, and a letter of valediction on the passing of friends: surely an unusual topic for the album of a schoolboy.



Father's drawing was of the latest in experimental warships, (Torpedo Destroyer *HMS Express*) having two drive shafts with two boilers feeding each of the four triple expansion engines. Her top speed was around 30 Knots. She weighed 472 tons, had a crew of 74, and was armed with two 18" torpedo tubes and one 12-pounder gun.



In the air, most aircraft were experimental since the first machine capable of leaving the ground under its own power did so in 1903, that is, when Father was 5 years old. By 1914, this experimental fighter, with a crew of two and one gun, could reach just under 100 mph.



However, the war did not dominate their lives at school, where artistic talent was of a very high standard. His great friend, Tom Rose Bowden (who ended the war as a Captain in the Artillery, trained as a GP in Edinburgh and practiced in North Wales) also contributed superb drawings to his album.



Indeed, Father was also showing talent with his paints





He is recorded as leaving school in 1915, but we know nothing about his qualifications at that time. These photographs were taken in 1916, at Otterburn, Northumberland during a family holiday with his parents and brother Percival (Perk). Fishing was to become an important part of his life.



His mother, Susannah, died in May 1917 from Interstitial hepatitis and cholaemia. She was 53. We have no annotated photographs of her: the two shown were both in Father's school satchel, along with one of his Father, and we assume they are of her.

001473

[Printed by authority of the Registrar-General.]

**CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF DEATH.**  
Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Acts, 1836 to 1874.

Registration District **NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.**

Death in the Sub-district of **Byker** in the County of **NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
When and where Died.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Cause of Death.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.
Nineteenth May 1917. Hawthorn House Hawthorn Road N.E.	Susannah Doddie Pratt.	Female	53.	Wife of Edward Frederick Pratt Medical Practitioner	(1) Interstitial Hepatitis (2) Cholaemia  Certified by Ischibald Campbell. M.B.	Margaret A. Smith. present at death 44 Baring Street South Shields Durham	Twenty First May 1917.	S. Hamilton  Registrar.

I, **FRANK HAMILTON** Deputy Superintendent Registrar of the District of **NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.** in the County of **NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE** do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Entry No. **155** in the Register Book of Deaths No. **2** for the above-named Sub-District, and that such Register is now legally in my custody.

WITNESSED MY HAND this **11<sup>th</sup>** day of **December**, 19**17**.

Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be falsified, is liable to prosecution under the Forgery Act, 1913.

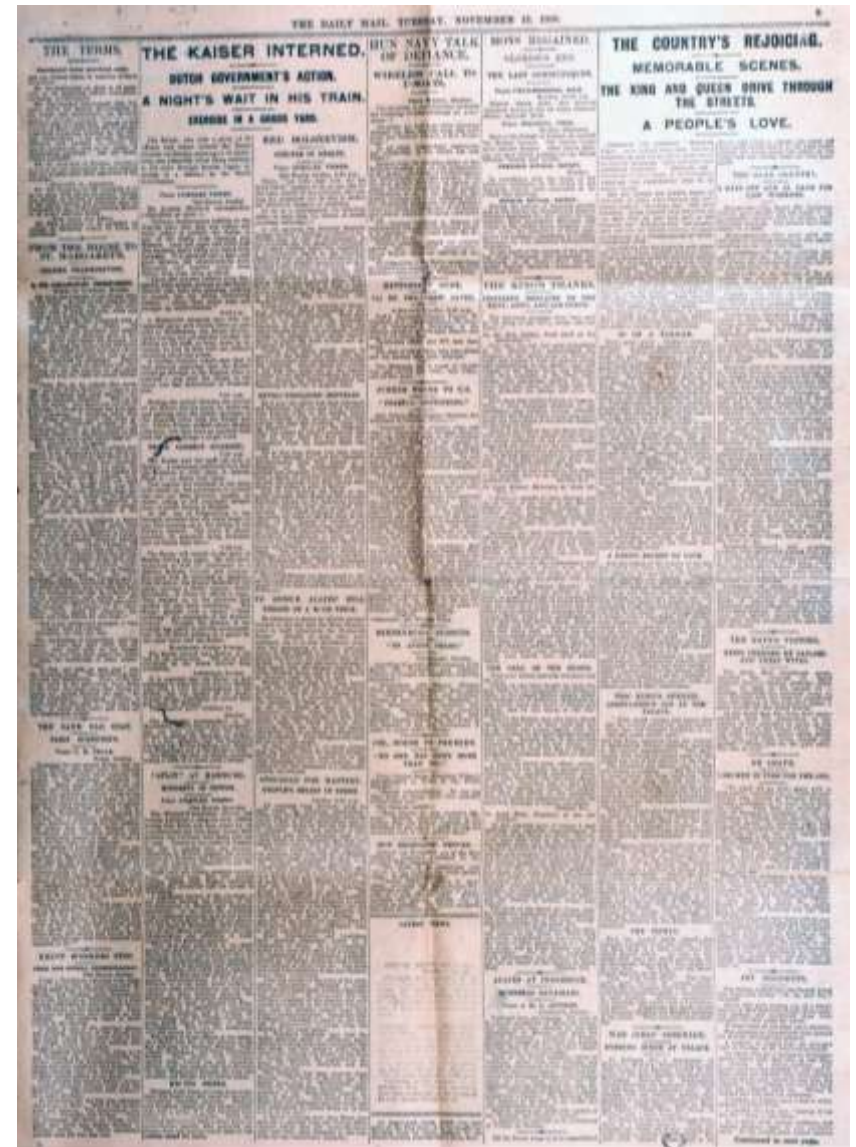
**W. Osborne**  
DEPUTY Superintendent Registrar



We think she is buried here, in All Saints Cemetery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne



The war ended on Monday November 11 1918, as this copy of the Daily Mail which Father preserved testifies. It is worth reading: it is a rare historical document. Although he never spoke about this war, I'm sure it was seared into his mind.







This, the last page, shows the cult of personality and the creation of heroes; these men all survived. 750,000 other British and Empire troops did not. But for those who did, clothes for their wives and girlfriends in the very latest fashion were clearly available.

**Mail**

PER. NUMBER 3,907. ONE PENNY.

**PONTINGS**  
THE HOLE FOR VALUE.  
**SALE OFFER of BLOUSES**  
ORDERS BY POST should be sent as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

**SUPERB ROBE VALUES BARKERS**  
FAMOUS QUALITY  
THE PRESENT **VOGUE**  
TWO Exceptional Offers in CHIFFON  
**Velveteen FROCKS**  
which cannot be repeated

**DERRY & TOMS**  
Important Stock Sale  
In Robe Department



At some stage in his youth, at University or at school, Father was infected by a common throat pathogen, *Streptococcus pyogenes*: a bacterium that commonly causes sore throat. In his case, however, it migrated to his heart where it did irreparable damage to the valves which aid blood circulation. This once relatively common disease is now treatable by antibiotics : then, it was not and the disease had a profound influence on the rest of his life, which is undoubtedly shortened. He had two bouts of infection.

Rheumatic fever is common worldwide and responsible for many cases of damaged heart valves. In Western countries, it became fairly rare since the 1960s, probably due to widespread use of antibiotics to treat streptococcus infections. While it has been far less common in the United States since the beginning of the 20th century, there have been a few outbreaks since the 1980s. Although the disease seldom occurs, it is serious and has a case-fatality rate of 2–5%.

Rheumatic fever primarily affects children between ages 5 and 17 years and occurs approximately 20 days after strep throat. In up to a third of cases, the underlying strep infection may not have caused any symptoms.

The rate of development of rheumatic fever in individuals with untreated strep infection is estimated to be 3%. The incidence of recurrence with a subsequent untreated infection is substantially greater (about 50%). The rate of development is far lower in individuals who have received antibiotic treatment. Persons who have suffered a case of rheumatic fever have a tendency to develop flare-ups with repeated strep infections.

The recurrence of rheumatic fever is relatively common in the absence of maintenance of low dose antibiotics, especially during the first three to five years after the first episode. Heart complications may be long-term and severe, particularly if valves are involved.

Survivors of rheumatic fever often have to take penicillin to prevent streptococcal infection which could possibly lead to another case of rheumatic fever that could prove fatal.



*Rheumatic heart disease at autopsy with characteristic findings (thickened mitral valve, thickened chordae tendineae, hypertrophied left ventricular myocardium).*

In 1919, two years after his mother's death and when he would have been in the midst of his studies as a medical student, the family had another holiday, this time on the Isle of Man. Father sported a pair of white golfing shoes. His father may (or may not) have married his second wife, Daisy, about whom we know nothing at all. But she may be present in this group, which (again) contains his younger brother Perk.



The date and place of these photographs is not recorded, but we think they were taken at the Newcastle Victoria Infirmary around 1918-20. The vehicle is a military ambulance.



These portraits, taken in 1922 possibly in London, show the family at the time when Father (left) was close to obtaining his first medical degree, and his younger brother Perk (right) would be at the start of his medical training. They flank their father, who appears to be confident and assured in his profession as a fashionable GP in London.





We think the Sweeney Todd pose was taken in Newcastle, the rather self-conscious portrait in London but we have no idea when. A clue lies, perhaps, in his upper lip: clear of fuzz on the left, but with an incipient 'tash' on the right.



We know very little about his medical education, other than what he states in his CV which is dated December 1934. He was listed as a student at the University of Durham College of Medicine in 1918.

The House Governor,  
King's College Hospital.

Dear Sir,

I beg to submit my application for the post of Junior Surgeon.

I am aged 36. I was educated at Shrewsbury School. My medical education was received partly at the University of Durham College of Medicine and partly at St. George's Hospital, London. At the latter school I received the Brackenbury Prize in Medicine and the Benjamin Brodie Prize in Surgery.

I took the qualification M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (London), in 1921, the degrees M.B., B.S. of Durham University in 1922, and M.S. in 1923, and the diploma of F.R.C.S. (Eng.), in 1926.

PAST APPOINTMENTS:

I have held the following posts at St. George's Hospital:  
Casualty Officer.  
House Surgeon.  
House Physician.  
Resident Obstetric Assistant.  
Assistant Curator of the Museum (1925).  
Surgical Registrar and Surgical Tutor (1926, 1927).  
Resident Assistant Surgeon (1928, 1929, 1930).

PRESENT APPOINTMENTS:

I hold the appointment of Surgeon to Out-patients at the Paddington Green Children's Hospital, the appointment of Assistant Surgical Officer at Willemsen General Hospital, and the following appointments at St. George's Hospital:  
Radium Registrar.  
First Assistant to the Genito-Urinary Department.  
Clinical Assistant to the V.D. Department.

I am also Consulting Surgeon to Bushay Heath Cottage Hospital.

During these various appointments I have had the opportunity of acquiring considerable operative experience and have performed more than fifteen hundred major operations. This series includes emergency and routine operations in both children and adults. My duties have also included the taking of Out-patients and teaching in the latter department and in the wards.

In the event of my being appointed to the post of Junior Surgeon, I will promise to be available at all times for such surgical work, emergency or otherwise, as may be necessary.

I am,  
Yours faithfully,  
F. W. M. PRATT.

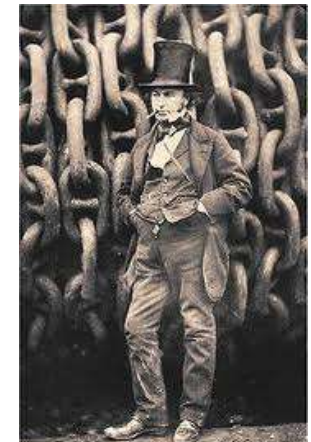
Testimonials appended.

By this time, the family had moved away from Newcastle, to a very fashionable part of London, namely No 15, Clarges Street, Mayfair. The original building has long since been replaced by a monotonous office block, but these Georgian terrace houses on the other side of the street indicate the quality of this address, which is close to Buckingham Palace. Father had his own flat on the top floor, where he housed his collection of antique furniture and rugs, his stamps and his music.



(Univ. Ed. & St. Mary's).	
PRATT, Edward Fredk., 15, Clarges-st. Mayfair, W.1 (Tel. Grosvenor 1565); & 126, Harley-st. W.1 (Tel. Langham 2537)—M.B. Durh. (Hnrs.), B.S. 1899; L.R.C.P. Lond. 1889; (Qu. Coll. Birm. & Univ. Durh.); Lond. Univ. Exhib.; Hnrs. Anat., Physiol. & Mat. Med. Intermed. M.B.; Phys. Lond. Neurol. Clinic, Min. of Pensions; Med. Ref. Phoenix & other Assur. Cos.; Exam. St. John Ambul. Assn.; Hon. Assoc. Ord. St. John Jerus.; Fell. Roy. Soc. Med.; Mem. Harv. & Psycho-Neurol. Socs.; Ex-Pres. Newc.-on-Tyne Div. B.M.A. 1919-20; late Certif. Fact. Surg. Newc.-on-Tyne; Surg. N.E. Ry. (Newc. & Wallsend Dist.); Surg. Newc. Corp. Tramw. Author, "Treatm. of Habitual Abortion by Chlorate of Potassium," <i>Lancet</i> , 1893; "Com. Value of Anæsthetics," <i>Trans. N. of Eng. Odont. Soc.</i> 1896-7; "Experiences of the Nat. Health Insur. Act," <i>B.M.J.</i> 1914; "Treatm. of Wounds by Paraffin," <i>Ib.</i> 1919; "The Conduct of Practice," <i>Pract.</i> 1921.	
PRATT, Fredk. Wm. Markham, 15, Clarges-st. W.1—M.B., B.S. Durh. 1922; M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond. 1921; (Durh. & St. Geo.); Brackenbury Prize in Med. 1922, Benjamin Brodie Prize in Surg. 1921, St. Geo. Hosp.; Cas. Off. St. Geo. Hosp.; late Ho. Surg. King Edward VII. Hosp. Offs.	
PRATT, Fredk. Wm. Markham, 15, Clarges-st. W.1 (Tel. Park 3428)	
—F.	1882;
(Wes.)	Med.
Sch.	Mem.
Med.	Hosp.
Surg.	Hosp.
Soc.	Dis.

By 1923 he was established at St George's Hospital and had won two prizes during his medical education. The Benjamin Brodie prize was named after Sir Benjamin Collins Brodie, Bart., PRCS, FRS 1783 – 1862. Largely self-taught as a surgeon, he nevertheless contributed greatly to surgical knowledge at St George's Hospital. His rise to fame followed the successful tracheotomy on Sir Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1805 – 1859) when the latter inhaled a half-sovereign whilst performing a conjuring trick at a children's party. Brodie modified a pair of forceps, stood the patient on his head and extracted the coin.





Practising as a medical expert was illegal without the appropriate qualifications and certificates, and these are Father's starting with his Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians (LRCP) in 1921, and culminating with his Master of Surgery in 1935, from the University of Durham. That examination lasted two days, consisted of a series of *Vivats* and the observation of his operating skills by the examiners during two full operations.

**MEDICAL REGISTRATION-CERTIFICATE.**

GENERAL COUNCIL OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
44, BALLAM STREET, FORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

[Certificate-Number 42953 J] *16 June 1926*

I hereby Certify that the following is a true copy of the entry in the Medical Register of the name specified below:-

NAME	ADDRESS	DATE and PLACE of REGISTRATION	QUALIFICATIONS
Pratt Frederick William Harrison	18 Clarges Street, London, W.1.	1921. Edin. E.	L.R.C.P. Lond. 1921

\* Entries Supplied by the Members of the General Council for Doctors.

*Norman C. L. ...* REGISTRAR.  
CHIEF CLERK *...*

N.B.—This certified copy remains evidence of registration ONLY until the PUBLICATION of the printed MEDICAL REGISTER for 192... Thereafter the Medical Register is evidence (Med. Act 1858, Sec. 27). This Certificate is NOT, nor must it be used as, EVIDENCE of the IDENTITY of the holder with the person named herein.

**REGISTRATION-CERTIFICATE for ADDITIONAL MEDICAL QUALIFICATION.**

GENERAL COUNCIL OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
44, BALLAM STREET, FORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

[Certificate-Number 24225 J] *16 June 1926*

I hereby Certify that the following additional Qualification has been duly registered in the Medical Register.

NAME	ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION
Pratt Frederick William Harrison	F.R.C.S. Eng. 1926

*Norman C. L. ...* REGISTRAR.  
CHIEF CLERK *...*

N.B.—This Certificate is valid as evidence of registration ONLY until the PUBLICATION of the printed MEDICAL REGISTER for 192...

**REGISTRATION-CERTIFICATE for ADDITIONAL MEDICAL QUALIFICATIONS.**

GENERAL COUNCIL OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
44, BALLAM STREET, FORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

[Certificate-Number 23435 J] *16 June 1926*

I hereby Certify that the following additional Qualification has been duly registered in the Medical Register.

NAME	ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION
Pratt Frederick William Harrison	M.B. B.S. 1922. Edin.

*Norman C. L. ...* REGISTRAR.  
CHIEF CLERK *...*

N.B.—This Certificate is valid as evidence of registration ONLY until the PUBLICATION of the printed MEDICAL REGISTER for 192...

**REGISTRATION-CERTIFICATE for ADDITIONAL MEDICAL QUALIFICATION.**

GENERAL COUNCIL OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
44, BALLAM STREET, FORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

[Certificate-Number 28377 J] *16 June 1926*

I hereby Certify that the following additional Qualification has been duly registered in the Medical Register.

NAME	ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION
Pratt Frederick William Harrison	M.S. U. Dub. 1933

*Michael Hartline* REGISTRAR.  
CHIEF CLERK *...*

N.B.—This Certificate is valid as evidence of registration ONLY until the PUBLICATION of the printed MEDICAL REGISTER for 1935.



His application to Kings College Hospital was supported by three testimonials from his colleagues, of which two are shown below. Note particularly that from Mr (later Sir) Claude Frankau, DSO,CBE,MS,FRCS. He was one of the most distinguished surgeons of his generation, and served as Director of the Emergency Medical Service for London and the Home counties during the 1939 – 45 war, a post with immense responsibility.

Testimonial from CLAUDE FRANKAU, Esq., M.S., F.R.C.S.,  
Surgeon to St. George's Hospital.

"Mr. F.W. Pratt has had a very large clinical and operative experience at St. George's Hospital, first as Surgical Registrar and later for three years as Resident Assistant Surgeon. He has shown himself throughout to be a skilled clinician and a careful observer and to be an exceedingly good operator.

"Mr. Pratt makes an admirable colleague and I can with the greatest confidence recommend him for the vacant post at the King's College Hospital."

December, 1934.

51, Wimpole Street,  
W.1.

Testimonial from C.B. MOHR WHITE, Esq., B.S., F.R.C.S. Eng.,  
Senior Surgeon to the Willesden General Hospital, etc., etc.

"I have much pleasure in recording the very high opinion which I have of Mr. F.W. Pratt, both as regards his personal character and his surgical work.

"I have now been working with Mr. Pratt weekly for a period of eighteen months and know what a good surgeon he is. He is a very sound diagnostician and a good operator; and has an extensive and intimate knowledge of all branches of surgery. In this connection I would like to draw attention to the fact that Mr. Pratt took his M.S. Durb. in 1933.

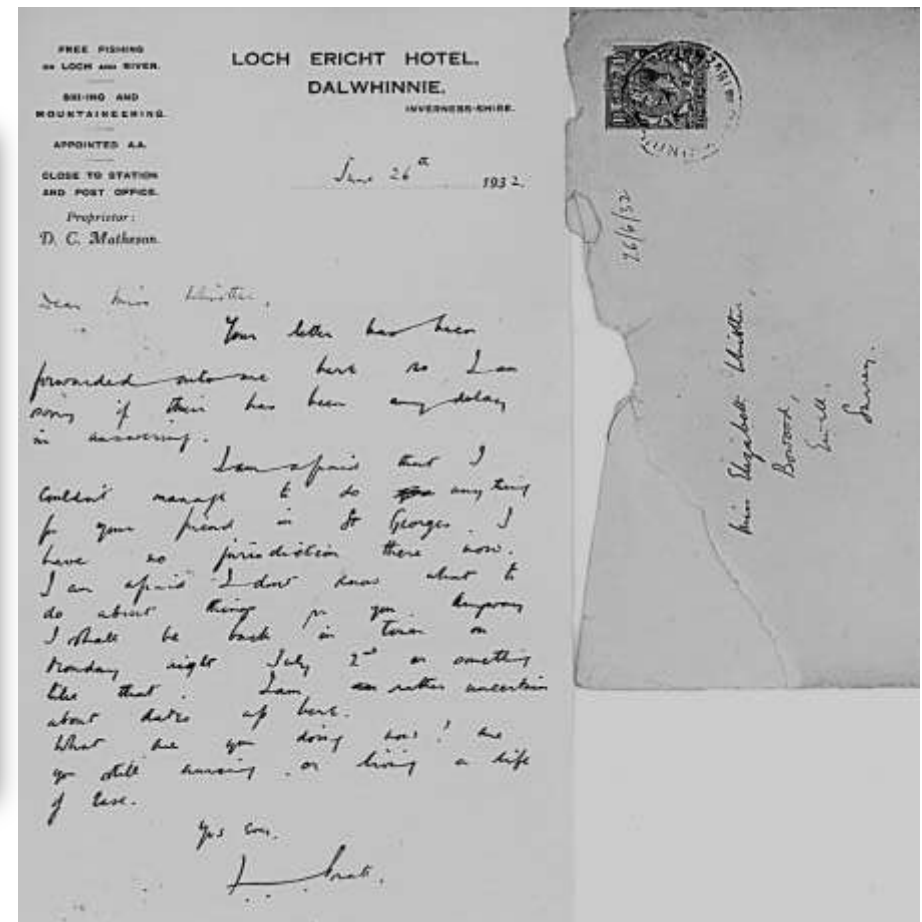
"In particular, I should like to mention that Mr. Pratt has made a special study of Genito-urinary Surgery and from my own observation I know what an adept he is in this branch of surgical work.

"As a colleague, Mr. Pratt is all that one could desire, loyal, helpful and energetic. He has plenty of initiative and is a generous worker."

4.12.34.

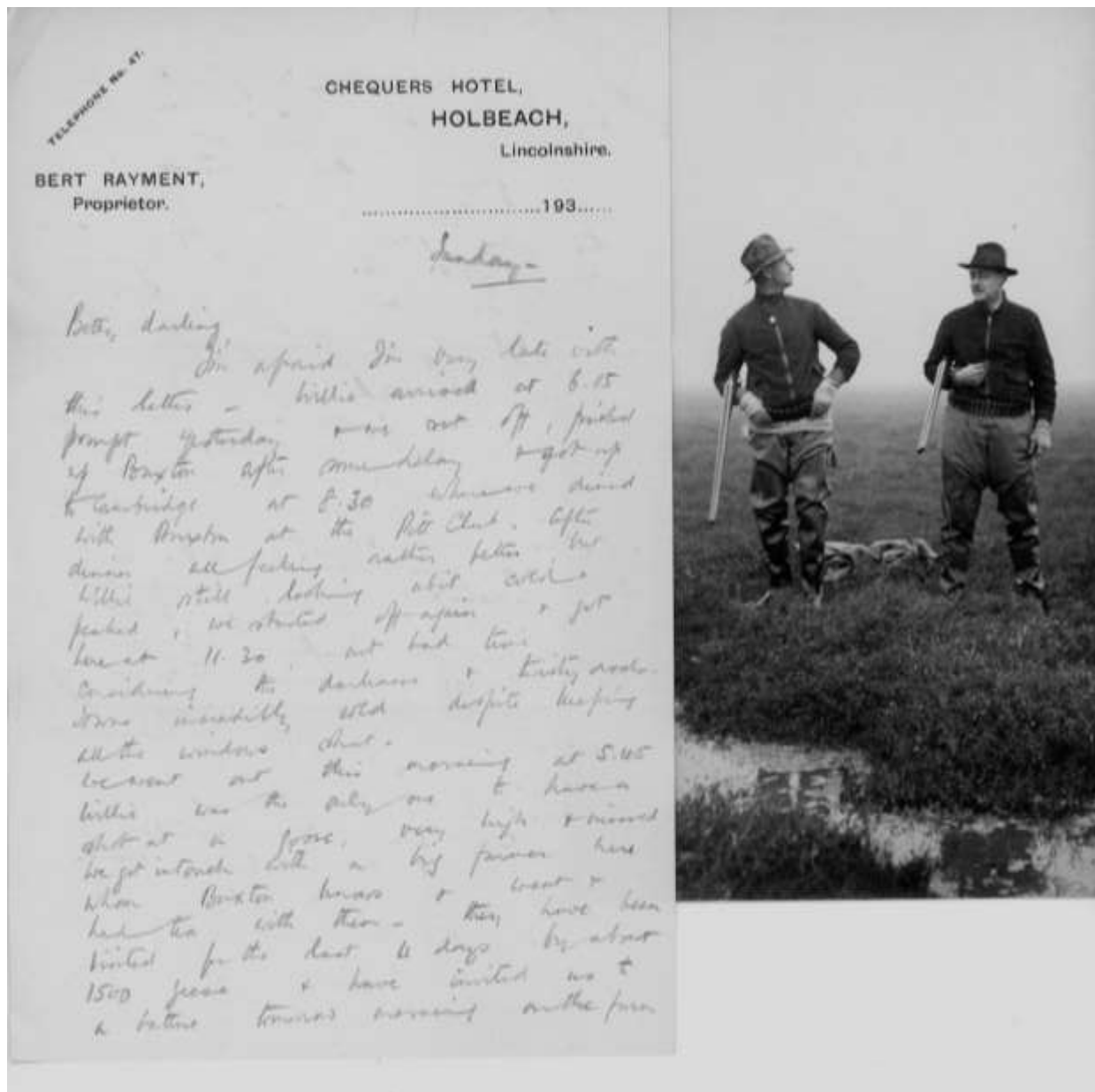
115, Harley Street,  
W.

It was at St George's that my father earned the soubriquet "Father", which we assume was a term of endearment and respect. In 1927 my mother, Betty Whistler, started training as a nurse in St George's Hospital where Father was already established on the surgical staff. The details of their long courtship are hinted at in the letters Father sent to Ma over several years, each of which she kept. It will be up to a later generation to read and interpret them. But here is the first, and it is revealing.



Betty (the tallest of the four nurses pictured at St. Georges Hospital in 1929) was the oldest of four children of Katherine Isobel and Godfrey James Whistler (1866 – 1935): Nancy (painter), Roger (soldier) and Peggy (Margiad Evans, author). This photograph of the three of them with their mother was taken at their home Lavender Cottage, near Ross-on-Wye in 1938.





Their courtship lasted for about 3 years, until Father had earned enough to maintain his family in relative comfort. While they were apart, he wrote to her virtually every day (often twice), and this is a typical letter, dated Jan 23<sup>th</sup> 1933 when, with a colleague, he had a few days hunting wild geese near the East Coast. Later in the same letter, he describes how he has only fired one shot (that missed), and still has 219 cartridges available. The gun is a Cogswell and Harrison side-by-side 12 bore built in 1911 as No 1 of a pair made for an Army Captain. It is still in the family.



In 1934, he became Consulting Surgeon at two hospitals in north London: the Paddington Green Children's hospital, and the Willesden General hospital, and he was to stay here for the rest of his working life. During this time, he had consulting rooms in Wimpole Street and at 73 Harley Street, both in central London.

Willesden General Hospital 1960

Paddington Green Children's Hospital



Also in 1934, in February, Father married my mother (Betty Whistler) and she gave up her job as a nurse (latterly in a nursing home in Bentick Street, near Father's flat in Clarges Street. They moved to a small top-floor flat in West End Lane, Hampstead. Here, his life changed and he became a family man: a role that well suited his personality. However, life was not all plain sailing: Ma found she was prone to miscarriages. However she managed to carry a child to term, but they were both devastated when he was still-born. In her memoirs, she describes Father's grief and disappointment as being deep, though hidden. Two more miscarriages convinced her she would remain childless. Their friend, Dorothy Ewart, suggested they adopt, and Anna Catherine came into the family.



Father always liked the English Lake District, as a place where he could walk, take photographs and fish. After their marriage, and with financial help from Granny Whistler, they purchased a cottage near the village of Ennerdale Bridge. Wits End is in the hamlet of Croasdale, in an unfrequented corner of the Lake District. This place was to be an anchor for the entire family until it was sold in 1960, being the place we went for our summer holidays. It provided Father with an isolated bolt-hole with no telephone, no electricity where, for two to three weeks, he could relax away from hospital, from London and from stress.





Amongst other pursuits, the cottage gave them both the opportunity to do something neither was experienced in, namely gardening. With the help of one of Mr Edmondson's farm workers, Jim Barnes (on the right in colour), they created a productive fruit and vegetable garden, in which they entertained friends and family from the south. Both Mr Edmondson (with the mug) and Jim were of Father's size and welcomed his cast-off clothes (note the former's black waistcoat for example).



In September 1939, the Nazi German Chancellor, Adolph Hitler, invaded Poland and set in train the second major war to have a profound effect on Father, his family and his work. Britain and France, allies of Poland, declared war on Germany. In May 1940, Hitler invaded France and carried the war to the island of Britain by bombing London. The bombing was indiscriminate, and London became a dangerous place to live. Father decided he did not want to lose Anna and Ma, and they went to live away from the city. This left him on his own, and for five years he lived in the hospital operating on air-raid casualties, usually on his own. He also rented a house near the hospital, where he kept chickens, grew vegetables and built himself a workshop.






The Germans attempted to cut off our supplies of food and weapons and materials by sinking merchant ships crossing the Atlantic, using U boat submarines. They were successful, and there were times during the five years of the war when Britain was dangerously short of these essentials. The population was encouraged to be as self-sufficient as possible, growing their own vegetables and mending their clothes when they wore out. The war-time Government published pamphlets, showing how to save: this is a page from one of them, explaining how to reduce the domestic use of coal and gas so that more would be available for the making of guns and vehicles and other weapons.

## Practical Hints for Saving Fuel at Home

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### HEATING




**FIRE BRICKS FOR ECONOMY**  
Put fire bricks at the sides and back of all coal fires. This effects a great saving of fuel without seriously reducing the room temperature. Keep the fire small. Don't put an another lump after 5 p.m. Go easy with the poker.

**USE GAS AND ELECTRIC FIRES SPARINGLY**  
Replace any broken radiants in gas fires. These are wasteful of gas. Never use two elements in your electric fire when one will do. Keep doors of rooms closed and exclude draughts to maintain the room temperature.


**'LAG' YOUR HOT WATER SYSTEM**  
Examine your hot water system and wherever possible cover up hot water tanks and the hot water pipes nearby with old bits of felt, thickness of newspaper or corrugated paper. Use string or wire to lash these or similar materials round your tanks and pipes. The object of this is to save fuel by preventing the heat from radiating into the air. You will use much less fuel and your water will keep hot much longer.




**DAMPER DRILL**  
Study your boiler carefully and learn how you can use it economically. Don't keep dampers and doors wide open, adjust the draught carefully. In some cases as much as 4 lbs. of coke can be saved this way each day.




**ALWAYS SIFT YOUR CINDERS**  
They are partly-burnt coal or coke and their heat value is 7 lbs. of cinders to 5 lbs. of coal. If you have an sifter, the grate bottom may answer your purpose, otherwise pick the cinders carefully out of the debris. Everything will burn again except the ash dust.



**CLEANLINESS MAKES FOR ECONOMY**  
Do not use a dirty wick. Clean the wick daily with a soft cloth, taking care that the charred fragments do not collect on the burner.




**BATHTUB ECONOMY**  
Limit yourself to one hot bath a week. Use a bowl and a sponge on other days. . . . Never have the water in the bath more than 5 ins. deep. Go easy with the geyser.



**EIGHT RULES FOR USERS OF COMBINATION GRATES**  
• Give the words Combination Grate a new meaning by combining with your neighbour to use one fire. Do this until the cold weather comes. Get together and combine against Hitler by making one grate serve

**TURN OFF THE HEAT**  
If you use a gas-heated boiler or electrical immersion heater, turn it off when the water is hot, and make do with one cylinder of hot water. Do not leave the heater running continuously.



**WATCH THE WATER TAPS**  
Do not let taps drip. Coal is used in pumping cold water. Have all worn washers replaced. Don't wash or clean your teeth under a running tap. Don't have more water in the basin than needed.

**GOLDEN RULES FOR GAS COOKERS**  
Never light your oven to cook a single dish. With a little planning you can easily prepare an entire meal while the oven is hot, as well as a pudding or tart that can be eaten cold next day.  
Turn out the burners directly the food is done - it will keep hot in the oven for some time. Always clean your cooker regularly - burners clogged with grease are slow and extravagant. More than half the gas which is used in homes on the gas cooker, is used on the large ring. By using the small ring instead, there is a saving of over one fuel unit in ten, although the job takes longer. Keep lids on saucepans to contain the heat. Cut down hot meals to a minimum.



**WRINKLES FOR WASHING-UP**  
Use a small bowl . . . . Heat the water in the oven while it is cooking. . . . Do the whole day's dishes at one time. . . . Scrape all the plates and dishes before you start. . . . Never wash-up or clean vegetables under a running tap. . . .



**HOW TO MEASURE YOUR COAL AND COKE.**  
A two-gallon bucket holds about 12 lbs. of coal or 8 lbs. of coke.



**Remember-** that  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your fuel allowance is needed for heating rooms and water. Cooking takes about  $\frac{1}{5}$  and the rest is used for lighting, radio, etc.



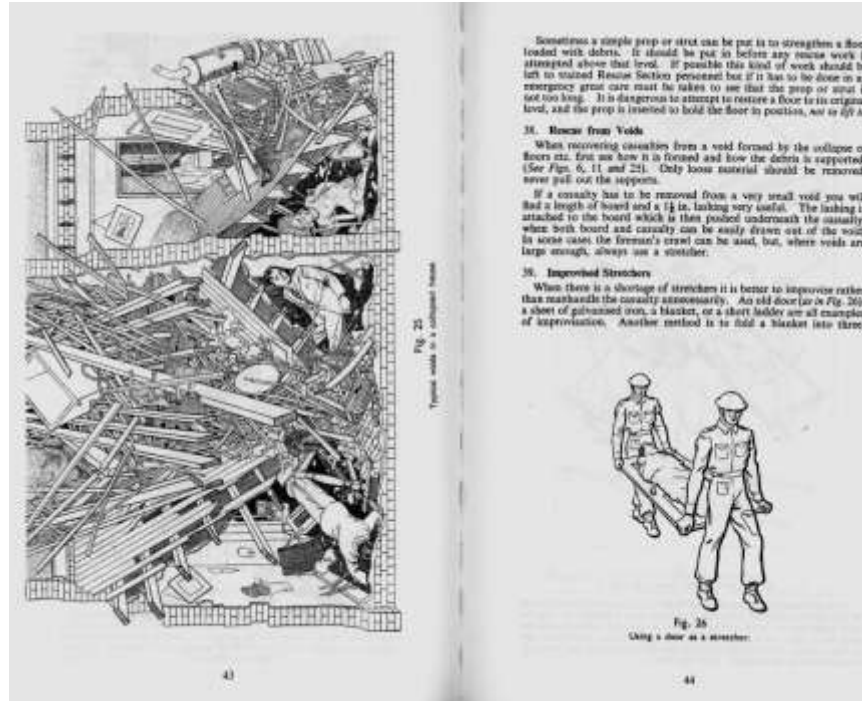


Father contributed to the need for self-sufficiency. At the Hospital, he bred Rabbits as a source of food, and he kept chickens for meat and for eggs. He managed two allotments at the hospital to grow vegetables, persuading the young Doctors and nurses to look after it. During periods of calm, he used his time to make us clothes, rugs, furniture, woven work, toys, radios, preserves, and so much more, all made with care and precision and a flair for design. All of these, (other than the preserves) made between 1939 and 1950, were photographed 60 years later.

Among his pastimes, photography remained the most important for all of his life. This portrait of Jane in 1940, processed in his dark-room, was a special favourite: he called it *A Study in Ovals*.

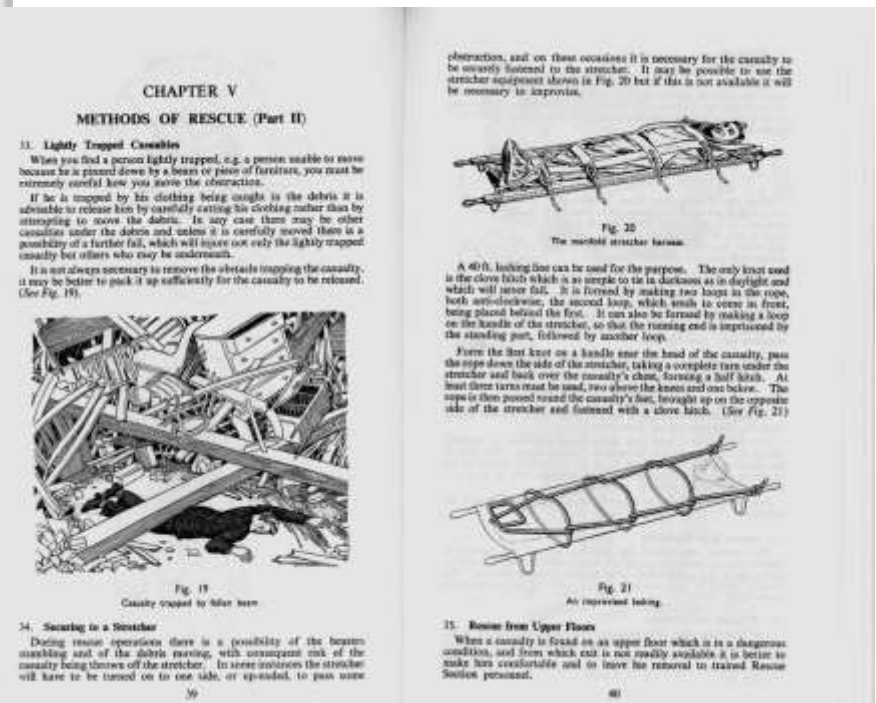


In addition to the normal range of operations which Father did (he classed himself as a General Surgeon, not a specialist), he had to be prepared to treat large numbers of casualties, rescued after bombing raids. There was a sophisticated Civil Defence organisation trained in first aid, and the injured people who would be brought to the hospital for his attention would have been assessed and bandaged on site by men and women who had been properly trained in this kind of work.



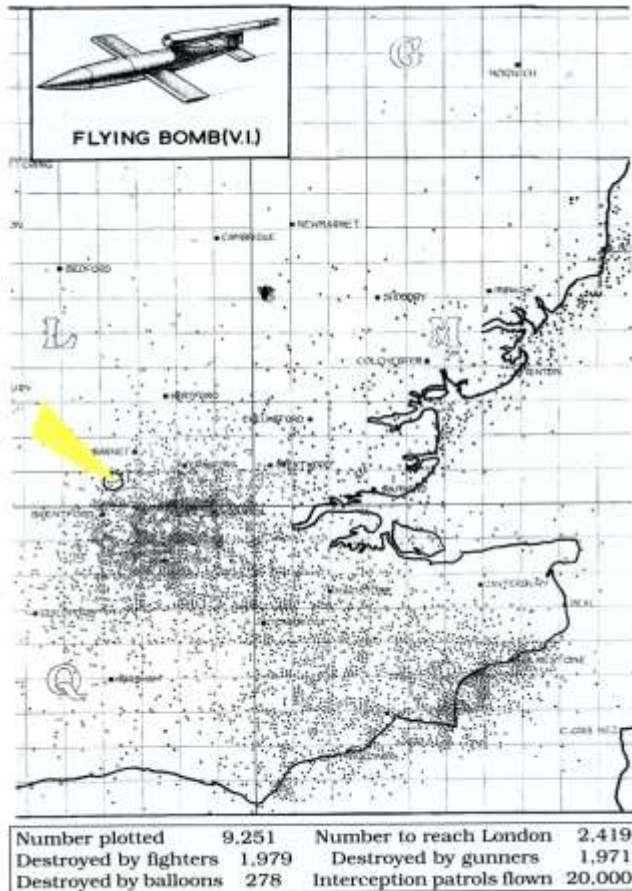
The hardest cases to deal with were those involving injury to the head, since damage to the brain was usually fatal or could disable the patient for the rest of their lives. Sophisticated brain scanning equipment had not been invented, and the surgeon had to rely on his experience and observational powers to assess the type of damage present.

Typically, wounds would have been from explosive blasts or fire, from lacerations or punctures, with broken bones and internal damage. Ingestion of dust (from collapsed buildings), and damage to ears and eyes came along with mental trauma. The wounded could be of any age or sex, rich or poor. In any case, rapid treatment in the hospital would aid survival and recovery.

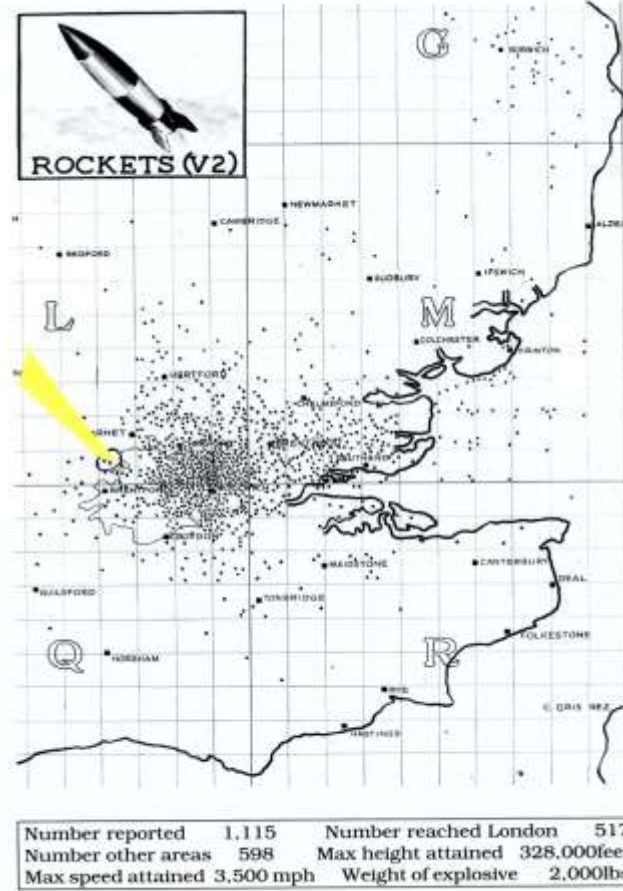




The Blitz proper lasted for about 8 months in 1940-'41. During this time, up to 20 people per week were killed in Willesden: the numbers injured are not recorded, but would have been many times that amount with maybe 5 to 10 per day. Between May 1941 and June 1944, there were few air-raids. However, following the Allied invasion of Europe on June 6<sup>th</sup> that year, London was the target of a new type of weapon: first the Flying Bomb (V1) and then a ballistic missile (V2). Over 10,000 were aimed at Britain, of which 3000 reached London (see below: Willesden marked with yellow).



These two plans were compiled at the end of the war to show the extent of the V1 and V2 offensives on England. They were taken from drawings made by RAF draughtsmen who worked at The Rookery, near Biggin Hill, which was part of "Diver" control.



The V2 rocket is shown in its position and oriented for a better view to the target area. Many of the early launch attempts ended in a failure. The rocket is shown in its position and oriented for a better view to the target area. Many of the early launch attempts ended in a failure. The rocket is shown in its position and oriented for a better view to the target area. Many of the early launch attempts ended in a failure.

For some time during the war, Ma and the three of us lived in a house called Monskwell, in Monmouth. Our Aunt Nancy came as well, and she drew this picture of the three of us children for Anna's birthday present in August 1942. The photograph was taken on the front step of the house, in summer 1942 by Father on one of his infrequent visits to us from London.





This house, 139 Walm Lane, Cricklewood, London was rented by Father, from a local (Maud Coleman) during the war, and he lived there alone while the family were living at a safe distance from London. In 1945, however, we all returned and this was our family home for the next five years. The extensive back garden was equipped with its own air-raid shelter, and we kept chickens, for eggs and meat.



James, Anna, Richard Lawman and Jane, Walm Lane 1949






In 1950, we all moved further out to Hatch End, 31 Royston Park Road. This house, with six bedrooms and nearly an acre of garden was Father's home for the last ten years of his working life. It gave him space to build a garden and a dark-room, and to construct a radio for almost every room in the house. He also indulged another passion: listening and recording classical music from the radio.

Adjoining Green Belt Farmland

## 31 & 33 Royston Park Road HATCH END, MIDDLESEX



*Front Elevation showing Double Plot*

### A Splendid Detached Family Residence

*containing exceptionally spacious, light and lofty rooms*  
*Conveniently sited. Frontage approx. 112 feet*  
**ALLOWING AMPLE SPACE FOR A SECOND RESIDENCE**  
*Planning Permission granted and Plans approved for a Four-Bedroom House and Garage*  
**UNUSUALLY LOVELY GARDENS. IN ALL ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF AN ACRE**  
*Adjoining and overlooking open Grasslands*  
**FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION**

*To be offered for Sale by Public Auction (unless previously sold privately)*  
**At The Queen's Head Hotel, High Street, Pinner, Middlesex**  
**On WEDNESDAY, 18th JULY, 1961, at 2.30 p.m.**

*Solicitors: Messrs. WALFORD & CO., 175, The Broadway, Cricklewood, N.W.2*  
*(Tel.: GLADSTONE 0644/5)*  
*Auctioneers:*  
**BRADSTREET & CO., F.A.I.**  
*Chartered Auctioneers and Estate Agents*  
**419/421, Hendon Way, London, N.W.4 (Tel.: HENDON 7676—4 lines)**



At the end of this period, we children left school: Anna became a nurse, Jane a secretary and James a forester. There were few occasions when we were all home together: this was in Spring 1961, a few months before Father retired.



The previous summer, the ballerina Dame Margot Fonteyn presented the nurses prizes at Willesden General Hospital: a moment Father valued for the rest of his life.



Towards the end of the 1950's, it became apparent to Father that he was getting increasingly unwell. Being a prudent, thoughtful man, he prepared for the future, and the 1959 letter to Ma shows where his priorities had lain: to educate his children and provide her with as good a home as he could manage. His extraordinarily deep attachment to her is evident in the second letter.

31, ROYSTON PARK ROAD,  
HATCH END, MIDDLESEX.  
HATCH END 2626.

Sept. 8. 1959

My dear Darling Betty,

This letter is a revision of one I wrote in 1954 and it is in the least young death. I have had a most wonderful and happy married life with you and I would hate to die and leave you and the dear children but we never know what may befall and I want to be helpful to you ~~and~~ should I suddenly pass out. I am afraid there is not an escape but I have managed to educate the children and give you as good a home as I could. I give you a list on the attached schedule of my principal assets. All the contents of the house are yours with the exception of my instruments, my cars, and the contents of Stanley St. My furs and fishing rods are also personal but I would like James to have his choice of these as well as my personal jewellery. If I have not paid back I will the loss of the piano I would like her to have this one out of my estate with a choice of my photographic equipment she wants. I want James to have the also and something personal. I don't quite know what. I would like my Nassimie property to go back to the

31, ROYSTON PARK ROAD,  
HATCH END, MIDDLESEX.  
HATCH END 2626.

August 14<sup>th</sup>.

Darling Betty,

Very many happy returns of your birthday. I know it will be a happy one.

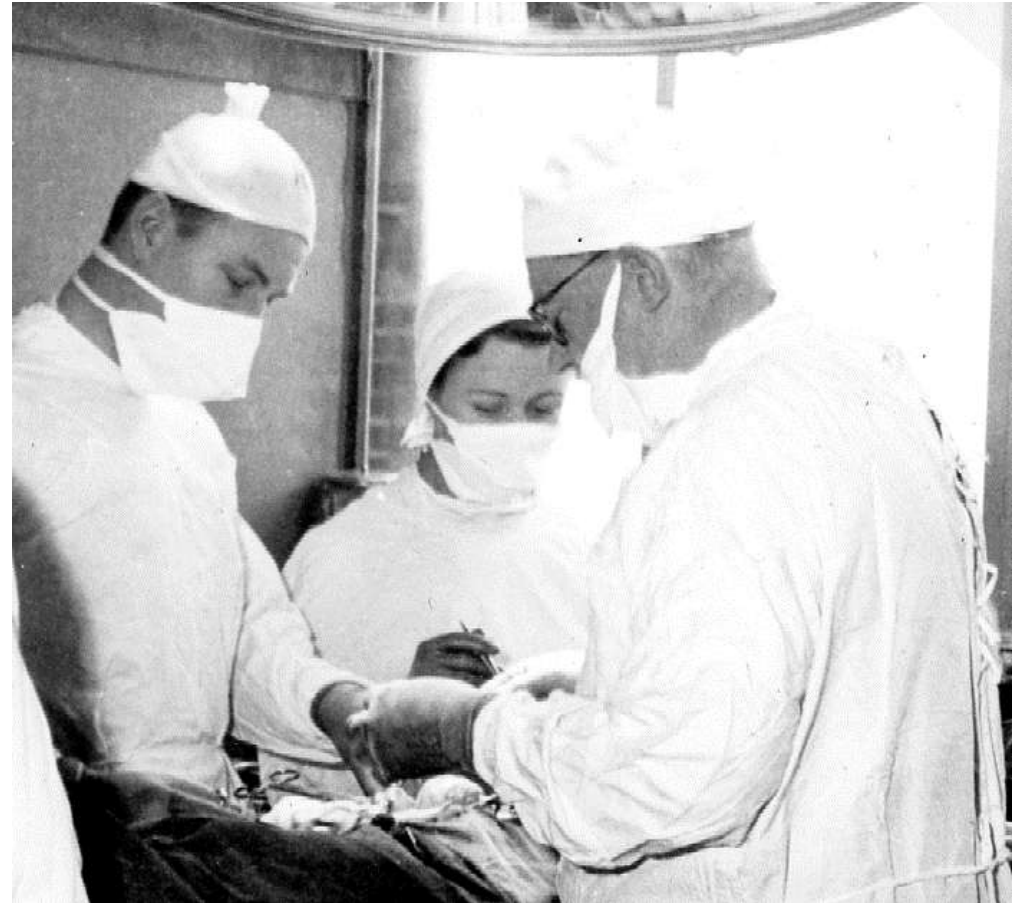
The older I get the more I love you and it strange. I am only happy when I am near you. I do not think that I need any more.

Dearest love,

Bill



Ill-health, brought on by a combination of London "Smogs" in the 1950's, smoking and a weak chest, persuaded Father to retire from surgery three years early, at the age of 63, in 1961, which coincided with this portrait taken by his nephew Graham Whistler FRPS. There are no photographs of his working other than one snap taken in the Theatre in 1959.



# HOSPITAL'S CHIEF SURGEON RETIRES

**A**FTER 28 years as surgeon at Willesden General Hospital, Mr. Frederick William M. Pratt, retired on Thursday last week. He became chief surgeon four years ago, for the second time he was being made an honorary consultant.

A presentation was made to him in the common room of the Nurses' Home.

Hospital secretary, Mr. J. N. Drake, told assembled members of the staff that Mr. Pratt had gone to Willesden General in 1933 as assistant surgeon and two years later became honorary consultant surgeon.

Mr. Drake said that it was during the war years that he grew to know Mr. Pratt when he took charge of the surgical side dealing with the "blitz" victims.

He played a big part as chairman of the hospital building committee in drawing up plans for a new building for, before nationalisation, when he became a paid consultant.

He said Mr. Pratt's retirement would be an irreplaceable loss to Willesden General and they were again making him an honorary consultant surgeon.

On behalf of the clerical, auxiliary and domestic staff of the hospital he presented Mr. Pratt with record tokens.

## SAD DAY

The matron, Miss E. C. Mills, said that during her term at the hospital (the past eleven years), she had grown to regard Mr. Pratt as an unshakable rock. Nothing was too trivial for him and it was a sad day for the hospital that he was leaving.

On behalf of the nursing staff, Nurse R. Levy then presented Mr. Pratt with a shooting stick.

In reply, Mr. Pratt said it was also a sad day for him. He said such a small hospital had its merits. He said it was



Mr. F. W. M. Pratt

more intimate than bigger hospitals and he felt it was the intimacy that was important for the work.

He said it had been hard keeping up the high standard of surgery and he felt it was that standard that had caused the hospital to be upgraded to the proposed 400 beds.

The previous week, Mr. Pratt had received a silver salver from the nursing sisters.

A television set and a gold watch was presented to him by Dr. A. L. Wingfield on behalf of the Medical Society of which Mr. Pratt was president, and from Dr. Max Mundy, on behalf of the local practitioners, a motor lawnmower and a cheque.

During the war, Mr. Pratt bred chinchilla rabbits to help supplement hospital meals.

His retirement was reported in the Willesden Chronicle 22 Sept 1961, in a typically low-key way, as was the presentation made to him of a watch by an erstwhile colleague.





THE WILLESDEN GENERAL HOSPITAL.

HARLESDEN ROAD,

LONDON, N.W.10

TELEPHONE: WILLESDEN 9655.7

OUR REF.:

YOUR REF.:

14th September 1961.

Dear Mr. Pratt,

On behalf of all the staff, I want to express to you our gratitude and thanks for all the wonderful work which you have done both as a surgeon and hospital statesman during the past 28 years.

Of your brilliant and distinguished work in the theatres, wards and departments many doctors and nurses and a host of patients can testify, whilst the great work which you did throughout the 6 years of the second world war, when, almost single handed you carried all the surgery of the hospital, is a record of skill, courage and unruffled fortitude which has never been surpassed in the history of Willesden General.

But perhaps the real stamp of your greatness is that everyone - your colleagues, senior nursing and administrative staff - have turned automatically to you for guidance whenever a problem or difficulty has arisen, in the certain knowledge that your wise counsel and help would be given willingly, swiftly and courteously with a flash of that characteristic kindly humour which has endeared you to us all.

In short, your retirement is a loss of the first magnitude to W.G.H., but sad though we be at your departure, I know that I am expressing the sentiments of all when I wish you the long and happy retirement which you have so richly earned.

Thank you again and with kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

*P. W. M. Pratt*  
Hospital Secretary.

P. W. M. Pratt, Esq., M.S., F.R.C.S.,  
Senior Surgeon.

These two letters, one from the Hospital Secretary and the other from a patient, Mrs E Gill, encapsulate his career as being one of service to others.

retirement.  
I shall ever be in  
your debt as will  
thousands of others  
who have passed  
through your hands.  
Sincere good wishes  
for your future  
health & happiness.  
Yours gratefully,  
E. Gill (Mrs)

24th July 1961.  
Dear Mr Pratt, I was a  
patient in Willesden  
General Hospital for  
5 months - Dec 1960 to  
May 1961 - under your  
care and as I have  
very much to be  
grateful to you for  
your skill & kindness  
I write to wish you  
every happiness in  
your well deserved



In 1961, after a memorable holiday in Norway, Father and Ma sold the Hatch End house and moved to Wiltshire, a county not unlike Northumberland with its wide landscapes of rolling hills. The house, Byeways, Milton Lilbourne, was perfect for him: warm, quiet with adequate garden on a light soil and friendly neighbours. It was here that he concentrated on his photography, recording some 50 or more of Wiltshire's churches. The photographs, which he processed and printed, are held at the Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes.

In some ways, this was amongst the happiest period of his life. Both Anna and Jane were married in the local church, and he was under no stress. Ma devoted her life to him, nursed his illnesses, and drove him all round the county. He had time to enjoy, for the first time, television and he exercised his mind by unscrambling Anglo-Saxon place-names.



However, his health was failing and after two strokes, he had a heart attack and a few days later, he died at home: as he wished. This we think is his last letter, to Anna in Germany where she was preparing to give birth to her first child, James. It is a typically forthright, practical letter, and it is clear to those who know that he was fully aware that the end of his life was near.

Friday.

Dear Anna,

We got ~~the~~ your letter this morning. Ma thinks it will be as well to post the baby's things straight out to Germany. He says what about using disposable nappies for the fortnight you will be in Germany. Save a lot of packing & postage. I am sorry about you as it was lucky it broke down so near home. I like it the cloth ones as I had a nasty do. The coroner was pretty awful but put off by morphine & whiskey. I was determined to get up into my own bed & not be carted off to hospital. Susan said I had a small posterior infant and put me to bed with one pillow, but as you can imagine with my chest this was just impossible and my chest deteriorated straight away so I have been elevated to 3 pillows. Nonsense I call it. We have a charming district nurse who comes in daily & does my back & pressure points. We have also got a breadbox to fix up an electric bell in her room. I am allowed practically nothing to eat which does not matter as I have no appetite. I sleep well. Tom Ma has bought me the most marvellous transistor radio in the world. V.H.F. & adding extraordinarily powerful & an amazing tone. I listened to Boris Yelstov all yesterday afternoon but cut it off before Boris died of a coronary in the Kremlin. Enjoy yourselves my dears. The weather is awful here too. Hardest love Dad.

He died, in bed, 29 Nov 1965. His ashes were spread in Salisbury crematorium garden.

and his manner of treating every patient as a personal problem which was of such special value in the training of his juniors, and for which he will long be remembered by all who were associated with him.

When he died on 25 September 1968 after a long and trying illness he was survived by his wife Barbara and their daughter and two sons.

*Brit. med. J.* 1968, 4, 126.

**PRATT, Frederick William Markham (1898–1965).** MRCS 1921; FRCS 1926; MS Durham 1933; LRCP 1921.

Frederick William Markham Pratt was born in 1898 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the eldest son of a well known general practitioner, Dr E. F. Pratt. He went to Shrewsbury School and Durham University, coming to St George's Hospital to complete his medical course and qualifying with the Conjoint Diploma in 1921. At St George's he won the Benjamin Brodie Prize in 1921 and the Brackenbury Prize in 1922, and held several junior surgical appointments there leading to the FRCS in 1926.

In 1933 Pratt took the MS Durham, and was appointed surgeon to Paddington Green Children's Hospital to which he devoted the greater part of his time and effort till his premature retirement owing to ill-health in 1961. In 1935 he joined the staff of the Willesden General Hospital, and his clinical work at both these hospitals was general surgery in the broadest sense. Though a skilful surgeon, he was a quiet, unassuming person who left little record of the great number of successful surgical cases which stood to his credit.

When he retired to Pewsey, in Wiltshire he benefited greatly from the quiet life of the country and the opportunity of indulging in gardening and photography, embarking on a photographic catalogue of all the Wiltshire parish churches. When he died in his sleep on 29 November 1965 he was survived by his devoted wife, and three children, two of whom joined the nursing profession.

*Brit. med. J.* 1966, 1, 363.

## Retired surgeon dies

THE death has taken place of Mr. Frederick William Markham Pratt (67), of Byeway, Milton Lilbourne, which had been his home for the past four years.

Mr. Pratt, who retired prematurely because of ill-health, was a surgeon and had been senior consultant at the Paddington Green Children's Hospital and the Willesden General Hospital. He was also on the staff of St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington.

A South coastman, Mr. Pratt had been married with one child. He was a keen sportsman and had been a member of the 1st of the county's 140 choruses. This fine collection of photographs, which he himself produced, with notes of each church, is to be found in the Wiltshire Antiquarian Society.

### OTHER HOBBIES

Mr. Pratt was also keenly interested in music, and as a practical musician he made his own radio sets and tape recordings. He was, too, a gifted artist.

Mrs. Pratt survives her husband, and a son lives in Suffolk. There are two daughters, both married. One is in Germany and the other is in America.

Cremation took place at Salisbury on Friday and on Monday a memorial service, conducted by the Vicar (the Rev. E. G. Dymally), was held at Milton Parish Church.

### F. W. M. PRATT, M.S., F.R.C.S.

Mr. F. W. M. Pratt, former surgeon at Paddington Green Children's Hospital, London, died at his home in Pewsey, Wiltshire, on 29 November 1965. He was 67.

Frederick William Markham Pratt was born in 1898 at Newcastle upon Tyne, the eldest son of Dr. E. F. Pratt, a well-known general practitioner. He was educated at Shrewsbury School and studied medicine at Durham University and St. George's Hospital, London, where he qualified M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. in 1921. He was awarded the Benjamin Brodie prize in 1921 and the Brackenbury prize in medicine in 1922. He held several appointments at St. George's, being surgical registrar for two years and resident assistant surgeon for three years. Taking the F.R.C.S. in 1926 and M.S. (Durham) in 1933, he was appointed surgeon to Paddington Green Children's Hospital in the latter year, and to Willesden General Hospital in 1935. He retired in 1961 and settled down to a quiet country life in Pewsey, Wiltshire.

Bill Pratt was one of the last of the old school of great all-rounders in surgery. He

was a general surgeon in the broadest sense, and while he recognized his limitations in the surgical specialties he was quite at home with all the routine operations of abdominal, paediatric, orthopaedic, fracture, and arthritic surgery.

He was deservedly popular with his patients and colleagues not only for his surgical skill but for his generous and kindly character. No one ever heard an unkind word about Bill Pratt. A quiet, modest gentleman, he was held in the highest esteem and affection by all who knew him. He said little at medical committees, but once he had expressed his opinion he was not over-likely of arguing any further.

Bill Pratt was a large, handsome, happy man devoted to his work and to his family. He enjoyed his garden and photography in his leisure hours. He shunned publicity and self-advancement, so that he published little, and he avoided medical meetings. His great contribution was in his numerous output of successful surgical cases, and in the reputation earned by his hospital: there must be thousands of patients alive to-day who are grateful for the skill and kindness of Bill Pratt.—G. G.

M. H. H. writes: Bill Pratt will long be remembered at Paddington Green Children's Hospital, to the staff of which he was appointed in March 1933. In those far-off, pre-antibiotic days sick children were often very sick children indeed, and, moreover, such hazards as surgical operations had not then come our way. In consequence he was called upon frequently, and he gave unstinting attention to the children under his care. He was a most gentle and kindly man as well as a very skilful surgeon.

During the early war years the hospital was staffed mainly as a first-aid post, but as children drifted back into London on-parent clinics were re-established. He and two or three other members of the staff worked hard to get the hospital back to normal in 1945. After the appointed day, when the administration began to come into their own, the hospital was threatened with extinction. A popular and surprisingly spontaneous reaction developed, and the local inhabitants of Paddington were at one moment reported to be threatening to chain their persons and their babies to the railings of the hospital as a protest. Tempers rose high. In the critical weeks of the Battle of Paddington Green (as it was dubbed) Bill Pratt, then chairman of the medical committee, poured oil on the waters and did much to achieve a satisfactory settlement.

Like many surgeons he was a competent handman and a keen gardener, though I think it is true to say that it was his wife who had the really green fingers. A north-countryman himself, he loved the English Lake District, and with Matthew Arnold he might have said, "I know those hills: who knows them if not I?" For some years he owned a small farm cottage at the foot of Eborac.

He smoked far too much, and each succeeding winter his lungs became increasingly irritated by the London fog. At first he used to "carry on" later it used to put him to bed in spite of his protests. He had the good sense to retire a year or so before he had to, and was much fatter in his house in the Vale of Pewsey. Here he was able to lay out a new garden and indulge his



