



Lord.  
LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE,  
HOLYROOD PALACE.

19. July 11

The Lord Chamberlain  
presents his compliments  
& has voted with regret  
that Mr. Charles  
Pennycuik cannot  
present with Pennycuik  
at the King's Court -  
He has caused the  
name of Miss Pennycuik







***Clockwise from facing page: Charles Edward Ducat Pennycuick, (1844 - 1903) Treasurer of Ceylon with his children James and Agnes; James Pennycuick, our mother's uncle, 1910; Baby James or Agnes Pennycuick in Ceylon, c.1888; Clementina Pennycuick, and her daughter Agnes (on right), c.1910; James C. Pennycuick, our mother's uncle, Phoenix Park, 1913***

## Sarah Farrell – The Irish Connection

In the 1980s our mother Elizabeth discovered that her great grandmother, Sarah Farrell, was Irish. A portrait of Sarah with her son Charles, had hung in the dining room at Skryne Castle for fifty years. This discovery delighted her and she then set about investigating the Farrell family. With much help Peter and Geraldine she spent the next few years following up “The Irish Connection”.

By checking through Church records, travelling for weekends to Co. Longford and Co. Roscommon and searching through graveyards, they collected a great deal of information and built up a history of the Farrell family previously unknown to her.

She discovered that Sarah was the daughter of Rev. James Farrell, 1759 – 1834, Rector of Rathcline, Co Longford and Maria, nee Hogg, daughter of William Hogg from Co Roscommon. James was educated at Trinity College Dublin. He was ordained deacon in 1785. In 1790 he became Curate of Kilashee, diocese of Ardagh, Co. Longford.

Sarah was the third of nine daughters, three of whom died in infancy. There were definitely two sons Maurice and James Junior, possibly twins. There are signatures on the vestry minutes at Rathcline Church during this period of a Roger and Andrew Farrell who were possibly two other brothers.

Sarah married John Pennycuick at the age of fifteen and went on to have eleven children. The youngest of these, Charles, was, as we have said, our mother’s grandfather.

Sarah travelled with her husband and children who were born in such diverse places as Calcutta and Berhampore and Poona in India, Albany Barracks – Isle of White, Soilzarie Perthshire, Tullamore, Plymouth and Aden, now the Yemen and formerly under British control.

After the death of her husband and son Alexander in the Battle of Chillianwallah in 1849, Sarah travelled from England to visit the site. She lived in Sialcot, not far from Chillianwallah. She laid a marble slab in the church there in their memory. On her return, as we have said, she was granted Grace and Favour apartments in Hampton Court Palace. When Terry and Netta visited Hampton Court some years ago they were able to see some of the apartments. The following is an extract of a leaflet from Hampton Court:

*Sarah Pennycuick: Occupancy 7 May 1851 to 1878*

*Sarah (1805-78), daughter of James Farrell, Vicar of Rathcline, and widow of Brig-Gen John Pennycuick (1789-1849). John was born in Perthshire in October 1789. He was appointed ensign in the Edinburgh militia on 17 February 1806 and entered the army on 31 August 1807 as an ensign in the 78th (Highland) Regt becoming Lieutenant 15 January 1812. He served in the expedition to Java and was wounded in the attack on the entrenched camp adjoining the Fort of Meester-Cornelis on 26 August 1811. They were married, at Lanesborough, Co Roscommon, on 21 March 1820, and had five sons and six daughters. John served in the 24th Regt during the second Anglo-Sikh war in 1848. During one fierce battle in 1849, their regiment was heavily outnumbered and, despite his and his fellow officers’ skill and judgement, lost 22 officers and 497 men. Among the officers killed was one of his younger sons, Alexander, aged 17. The junior ensign of the regiment.*

*The two were buried alongside one another on the evening after the battle. Pennycuick’s second son was James Farrell Pennycuick (1829 – 88), later Major-General, who also lived in the palace.*

*When Sarah moved into the palace she was a widow with a large family, including children and grandchildren. In 1853 a Romfors stove was installed in the apartment but her repeated requests for an upper-storey kitchen were dismissed by the Office of Works. At the 1861 census she was living with an unmarried daughter, five grandchildren, a governess, a housemaid, a cook/ domestic and a coachman. By 1871 she was there with her spinster daughter and three servants.*

James Farrell Junior, Sarah’s brother, followed in his father’s footsteps and went to Trinity College, Dublin.

He became a Rector and spent time as curate of Kilfree, Co Sligo. In 1840 he went to South Australia and in 1849 he became First Dean of Adelaide. He died in 1869 and is commemorated by a stained glass window and Chancel tablet in the Holy Trinity Church, North Terrace, Adelaide. Teddy Malet Warden, our mother's half brother, lives in Australia and went to visit the church in Adelaide and sent her photographs and a booklet on the history of the church. Shane also visited the church when in Australia and brought home some photographs.

Another brother of Sarah's, Maurice was also educated in Trinity and became curate of Rathcline in 1834, the same year that his father died. He later went to parishes in Lincoln, England.

In the early 1990s our mother was delighted to discover the tomb of Rev. James Farrell in Kilashee Church in Co. Longford. Engraved on this tomb is a mortar board, surmounted by a shamrock and an Irish Wolf hound. She researched this and found out that he was a Scholar Hibernici, a title, now abolished, that meant he was a native of Ireland and was able to read and write Irish. In 1781 he was awarded the title of Scholar of Trinity College which is also inscribed on his tomb stone.

This gives you a brief outline of the Farrell family. There is much more in our archive and much left yet to be discovered.

### **Sir John Pennycuick**

**W**e were brought up knowing that we had a relative who was a High Court Judge in London. He was Sir John Pennycuick, who was born 1899 and died in 1982. He was a grandson of Sarah Farrell and a first cousin of Agnes Pennycuick, our grandmother.

He had an illustrious career and is described as a shy, self-effacing, much liked person. He was a well known tennis player and attended Wimbledon regularly.

He served thirty five years at the Chancery Bar, became a judge in 1960 and a senior judge in 1970. He was appointed Vice Chancellor in 1974. In a memoriam at the time of his death, he was described by the Royal Courts of Justice as "one of the really great judges of his generation".

The only personal contact that we know of is a letter written to our mother in February 1971 in response to a query of hers regarding some tombs in Westminster Abbey. He writes a nice, almost illegible letter to 'Dear Cousin Elizabeth' answering her questions and invites her to visit him when she is next in London.

References to his judgements crop up regularly. Eoin came across legal references to Judge Pennycuick in some of his business dealings.



**Sir John Pennycuick, (1899-1982), Vice Chancellor to Royal Courts of Justice, grandson of Sara Farrell and first cousin of Agnes, our grand mother. Above: Christmas card from James Pennycuick K.C, Agnes's first cousin**

## **Elizabeth Hickey - Writing, Publishing, History, Archaeology**

Writing always seemed to come naturally to our mother. She wrote with a good hand and used a fountain pen. She typed but found it slow and the computer, for her, came just a little too late. She started early. We have a little book, coloured, folded, bound and stitched titled ‘The Wonder Magazine, Riddles, Stories, Comments, Games, etc. By E. Warden, Illustrated by E. Warden.’ It is dated only ‘December’ but we would guess it was 1926 when Elizabeth was nine years old.

Peter was frequently asked to read and re-read her drafts and to proof read. She wrote throughout all phases of her life. As early as 1952 ‘The Legend Of Tara’ was published and still, to this day, is one of the authoritative guides to Tara on the Hill.

Alan Figgis & Company Limited published ‘I Send My Love Along the Boyne’ in 1966. It opens with a quote from the nineteenth century Drogheda exile, John Boyle O’Reilly:

*“I send my love to the very fields and trees along the Boyne from Drogheda to Slane. Sometime for my sake, go out to Dowth alone, and go up to the moat and look across the Boyne, over to Rossnaree to the Hill of Tara and Newgrange, and Nowth, and Slane, and Mellifont, and Old-bridge and you will see there the pictures that I carry forever in my brain and heart.”*

The stories are lovingly told of the mills, Newgrange, St. Patrick, the kings, the hermits and the Normans. The book is beautifully illustrated by the Drogheda artist Nano Reid. It was Nano Reid’s illustrations we believe inspired the book. Nano Reid (1905-1981) was born in Drogheda. She spent many years in Dublin but always held strong links with her home place. Nano’s family were farmers and ran several pubs in the town in Drogheda. Nano, in later life lived with her sister in one of the pubs. She studied in Dublin under Harry Clarke and later in Paris and London.

In 1994 Elizabeth Hickey completed a work of many years, ‘Skryne and the Early Normans’ and published it through the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society. It is interesting to note here that our mother was one of the founding members of the society back in the fifties and more or less continually thereafter Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Publishing Secretary. Much of her work was published through the society, effectively by herself. Several people suggested she should have called this book – ‘Meath and the Early Normans’ which would have helped sales, particularly in America, but she was adamant it should stay Skryne. It did sell out and is quite a collector’s item today.

In Skryne and the Early Normans she traces the advent of the Norman Adam de Feypo from Hereford into Co. Meath in the twelfth century. It documents the reformation of the local churches to conform to Norman mores and the development of the settlement at Skryne into a medieval borough town. The book covers the parishes of Skryne and the Norman knights to whom they were granted. It also covers the manors within the Barony, the de Feype of Herefordshire and the later medieval town of Skryne from 1232 onwards. The front cover design is based on the Bayeaux Tapestry which shows Norman cavalry in action. Elizabeth went to Normandy to see the tapestry shortly before she died.

Was Shakespeare a Nobleman’s Son? Did he carry the papal canopy? Was he involved in a lengthy lawsuit with one of the Queen’s justices? Did he write Irish poetry? Was he an undergraduate at Oxford? These are some of the intriguing questions asked in ‘The Green Cockatrice’ by Basil Iske, the pseudonym used by Elizabeth Hickey again published by the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society in 1978. One of her reasons for using the pseudonym for her authorship of this magnificent work of research on the life and times of William Nugent and sixteenth century Meath was that she felt it would be taken more seriously if the reader thought that the author was a man. In the last chapter she mischievously suggests that Nugent could possibly have been the author of Shakespeare’s plays.

The International League of Antiquarian Booksellers (ILAB) recently featured on its website interesting correspondence between Elizabeth and the late British MP Enoch Powell. As we write, ILAB, have for sale Enoch Powell's copy of *The Green Cockatrice*, annotated by the author, together with correspondence between Elizabeth Hickey and Enoch Powell.

As recently as April 2009, the work has been acknowledged by shaksper.net, an online Shakespeare forum where the editor comments;

*Elizabeth Hickey*

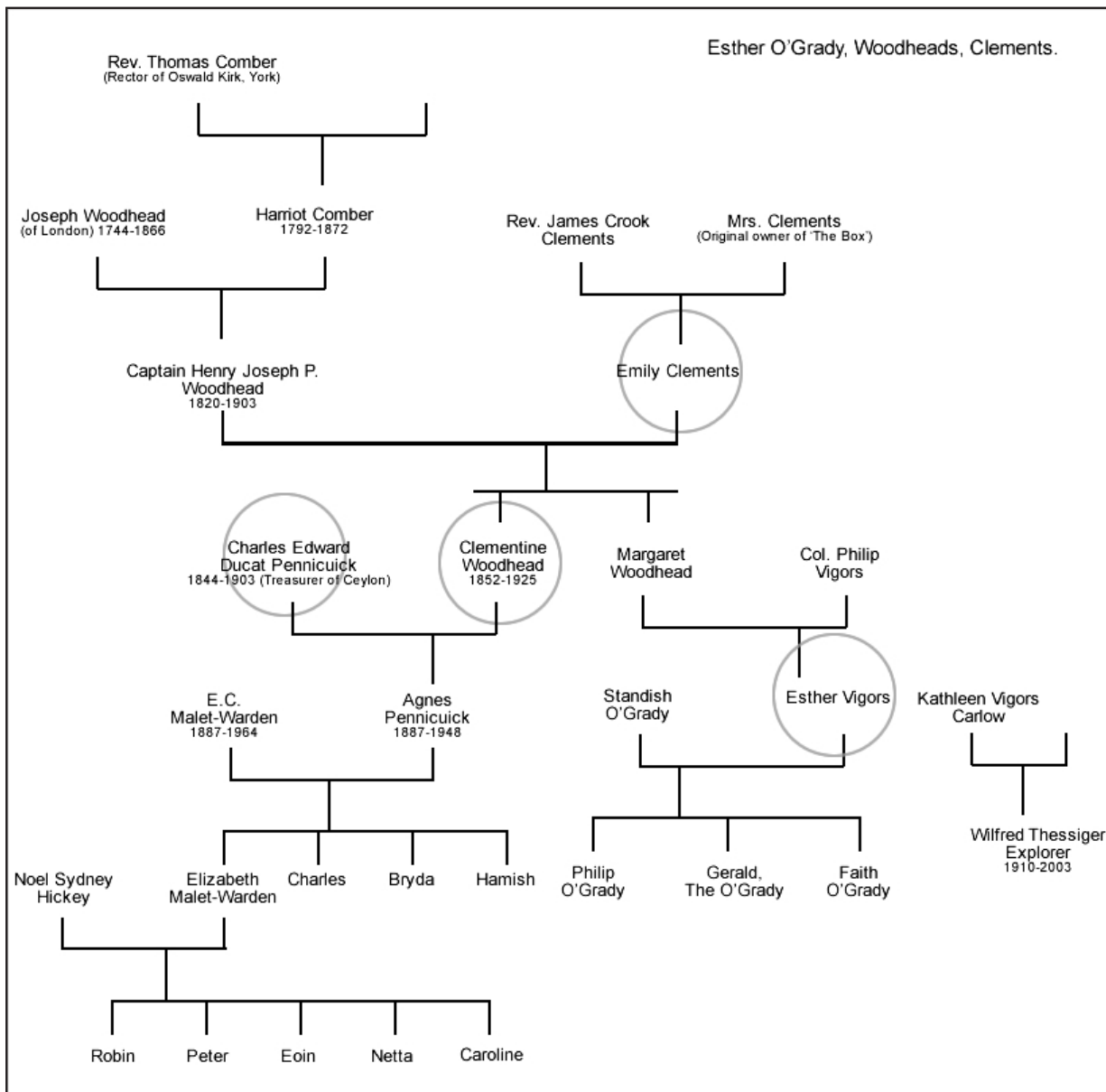
*That article wasn't followed up though and the story goes into abeyance until we come across what in County Meath are known as 'relics of auld dacency' lol: a Protestant antiquarian who was rattling around an old castle in the Pale in the 1970s. She was a leading light all her life on Meath history and wrote countless articles and some books particularly for the journal of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society, Riocht na Midhe. Anyway she persuaded them in 1978 to undertake the publication of a remarkable book called 'The Green Cockatrice'. In that she details the account of an Irish nobleman who lived for a time at Skryne and whose life story seemed to her to make him a perfect candidate for Shakespeare. She herself stayed anonymous, publishing it under the name 'Basil Iske', although when writing on the cover that the book was available from the 'secretary of the Meath Historical Society' she was actually referring to herself. Some people in fact bought the book from her that way without realising she wrote it! Anyway it was the talk of the county for a short while, with a big write up in the Meath Chronicle and she was even interviewed by the BBC, but unfortunately it wasn't republished and is not so well-remembered now except among the Meath historical groups and local booksellers. It is, nonetheless, well-known to be a high quality work with much authoritative research by an always highly thought of historian.*

Having written 'The Irish Life of Siant Finian of Clonard, Master of the Saints of Ireland' with a commentary for the general reader, the book was published by the Meath Archaeological and Historical society in 1995. Elizabeth later returned to the subject of St. Finian and Clonard with the publication of 'Clonard, The Story of an Early Irish Monastery 520 – 1202'. It is interesting to note that this latter was published by the author.

In the Irish Life of Saint Finian of Conard, her intention was to throw some historical light on the early Christian monastery of Clonard and on Saint Finian, its founder. An easily read book, she wrote in the introduction it is not for the scholar... but for the general reader who, when visiting Clonard, would like to have the story of St. Finian presented as simply as possible.

Clonard was to be her final book, published just at the time of her death. It is an unusual book in that it is a history of an early medieval monastery. It studies the men and women of Clonard through the centuries – the Abbots; the learned professors; the training schools; the first diocesan bishops. She gives the reader something of the background of Irish and Continental history, against which the monastery flourished, in a sometimes unconventional but always interesting approach.

## Cousin Esther: Esther O'Grady, the Woodheads and Clements



We have, passed on to us by our mother, a huge collection of photographs and letters comprising a wonderful archive of the Woodhead family. We also have a detailed family tree, a mostly nineteenth century photograph album and a tape recording which combine with the letters to give an insight to one branch of our ancestors.

Our mother's grandmother was Clementina Woodhead. Clementina was one of ten sisters and two brothers. They were all born between 1847 and 1865. Edith, the third youngest, lived on until 1952. Their parents were Henry Woodhead and Emily Clements, we have significant archive material about them. We know that Emily also came from a large family which included triplets and that her father was Rev. James Crook Clements.

Clementina's father Henry Woodhead was a Major of the 3rd Battalion Royal Fusiliers and her grandfather, Joseph Woodhead, was a navy agent. Many of the family are buried in the family vault in the the Extra Mural Cemetary, Woodvale, Brighton.



Henry Woodhead and his family lived at 12 Norfolk Terrace, Brighton and they also had a country home, Heathfield House.

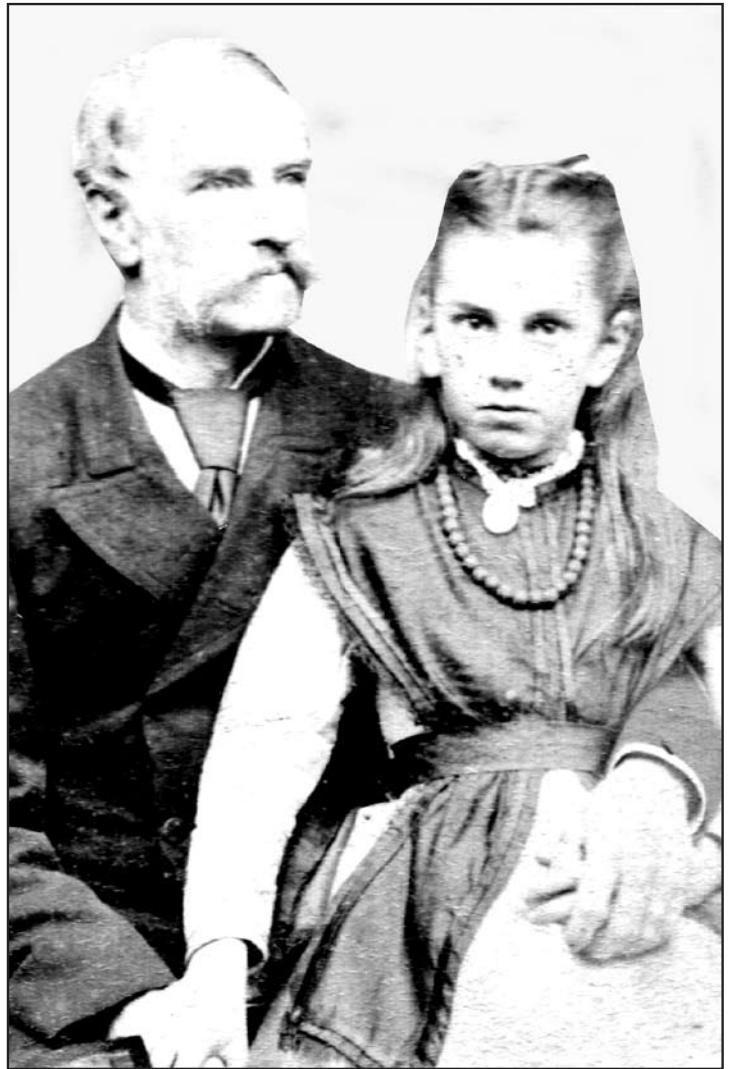
Our mother gave Netta much of her collection including a memorandum in the photograph album where she describes a visit in 1925, with her mother Agnes, to Nellie. Nellie was the daughter of Clementina's brother Thomas Wandesforde (Womby). She had married a labouring man, was living in Cornwall and had been disowned by her family. Our mother said she remembered that she didn't like Nellie's husband at all because he was very cruel to his dog. He cracked a whip at the dog while it was tied up. This was his idea of dog training. As they were leaving, Nellie gave them a large heavy photograph album. The album contains photographs of all the siblings, their parents, in-laws and interestingly the photographs are, for the most part, titled and sometimes dated.

The family members were, starting with the eldest:

**Mary Josephine.** Born in Florence in 1847. Mary married Lt. Col. Ed. Walker.

**Emily Alice.** Born 1848. Died 1937 and did not marry.

**Henry Comber.** Born 1851. Died 1933. Henry was educated at Brighton College and King's College, London and was ordained in 1875. He served in various parishes including Hampstead, Battersea Park, Bedford Hill, Balham, All Saints, Clapton and Holy Trinity,



**Major Woodhead and Constance Woodehead**



**Mary J and Margaret C Woodhead, 1871.**

**Following pages: Set of Woodhead photographs from the album of Jessie Weir together with our mother's notes.**

Barnes. He never married and retired to Compton Avenue, Brighton where he lived with his sisters Grace and Hilda. His will makes bequests to his sisters, Grace, Hilda, Amy, Edith, Alice, Maud, Clementina and Constance.

**Margaret Caroline.** Born 1850. Margaret married Col. Phillip Vigers and was the mother of Esther O'Grady, "Cousin Esther". They lived at Holloden, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow. Our mother as a child and in turn us as children, have fond memories of regular visits to Holloden, to see both Cousin Esther and her daughter Faith. Cousin Esther has given us an eye witness account of the late nineteenth century and of her aunts, uncles and grandparents in Brighton, in a tape recording which our mother made with her in 1966. Notes and extracts from the tape we will give you later.

The Vigers while not directly related to us, are quite an interesting family. They lived at the Burgage Estate, Bagenalstown. The Vigers came there in the mid seventeenth century. Nicolas Alward Vigers F.R.S.



**Clockwise from top left: Emily Woodhead (nee Clements); Emily Woodhead; Emily Woodhead; Jessie L Weir - wife of Thomas Wandesford Woodhead, 1880; Hilda Woodhead**

(b1875) was an Irish Zoologist and Politician and was the first Secretary of the London Zoological Society. Willfred Thessiger (1910-2003) the explorer of the Arabian Peninsula and best known for his two books *Arabian Sands* (1959) and *The Marsh Arabs* (1964) was knighted in 1968. Willfred's mother was a Vigor, probably Esther's sister in law. Eoin and our mother had the great privilege of meeting with Willfred in 1960 when they stayed with Esther's son, Gerald and his then wife Pamela, at their home in Killballyowen, Bruff, Co. Limerick.

**Clementina.** Born 1852. Died 1925. Clementina was our great grandmother. She married Charles Pennycuik and they had two children – Agnes and James.

Clementina spent some years in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, where her husband was appointed Treasurer of Ceylon. Agnes and her brother James lived there in their early childhood.

A letter we have, dated 1925 to our mother is from her grandmother, Clementina. We think our mother was in boarding school at the time. She would have been eight years old. Clementina sent her a postal order for five shillings and suggests that she buy some strawberries. This is a very affectionate letter and is signed “your most loving Grandma”. Clementina died later that year.

**Thomas Wandesforde.** Born 1854. Thomas married Jessie Weir from Canada. They had three sons and one daughter. Thomas died on board H.M.S. Serapin, off Gibraltar in 1893 aged 39. His eldest son Henry went to China and became a newspaper correspondent in Peking. His daughter is Nellie of the earlier photograph album story. The name Wandesforde is inherited from their great, great, great, grandfather. He was Sir Christopher Wandesforde 1592 – 1640 and became Lord Deputy of Ireland!! So grandchildren take note, the Lord Deputy was your great (six times) grandfather.

We were interested to discover that Sir. Christopher built and lived in Castlecomer House, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny which was subsequently burned down during the Battle of Castlecomer in 1798, rebuilt and

some of his descendants seemed to have lived there right up until the mid twentieth century. You can find the full story at <http://www.discoverypark.ie/history-page.html>.

**Maud Helena.** Born 1855. Maud married Edward Comber. They had four children.

**Ada Constance.** Born 1859 – Died 1937. She did not marry and lived in Tisbury Road, Hove.

**Amy Christina.** Born 1861. Died 1948. She did not marry. Our mother has given us three letters from ‘Aunt Amy’ written in 1942. In these letters she is remembering Uncle Hamish, our mother’s brother, who had recently been killed, shot down over Holland, in the war. Amy also sends some money for Elizabeth to buy a carpet as a wedding present.

**Edith.** Born 1862. Died in 1952. She married Henry James St. Benno Cunliffe.

We have five letters to our mother. (Dear Honey Bun) from Aunt Edith dated from January 1940 to January 1942. Her sister Maud was now living with her. She comments: “We do not have a peaceful time here as there are constant planes, bombs and raids, but when one thinks how terrible others are suffering, anything that comes our ... seems small”. Edith also expresses surprise that our mother had married an Irishman. She sends her £5 for a wedding present and says “I hope it does not spoil your life in any way having your mother in Ireland”.

Edith married and later separated and some details of her difficult husband are given later in the tape recording notes and extracts.

**Grace Eyre.** Born 1864. Died 1936. Grace did not marry. She made a name for herself which remains to this day. Grace devoted her life to the care of mentally-handicapped children from poor families and backgrounds and founded an organization which is still going today. After studying at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, Grace became concerned with the provision of country holidays for children from London Special Schools. At first she had the children come and stay in her house at Compton Avenue, Brighton. Then she started an unofficial society persuading her friends to offer a home to poor, handicapped children, removing them from institutional care, into family life. Grace devoted all her energies to the Institute she founded, Brighton Guardianship Society, which helped improve the conditions of the mentally disadvantaged. She set up industrial schools and organised after care to help children leaving mental hospitals. She is described as a pioneer for “Care in the Community” and Grace Eyre Woodhead’s work continues today under the name of The Grace Eyre Foundation at its home in Old Shoreham Road, Hove.

**Hilda.** Born 1865. Died 1937. Hilda did not marry.

Old Mrs. Clements, mother to Emily Woodhead, grandmother to all of the foregoing family of twelve, great grandmother to Cousin Esther and great great grandmother to our mother, Elizabeth, as we mentioned earlier, kept many of her family treasures in a secure well made metal and leather box with a hinged lid and inscribed on top in brass letters ‘Mrs. Clements’. Netta has inherited this box and contents, always passed on through the female line, for seven generations.

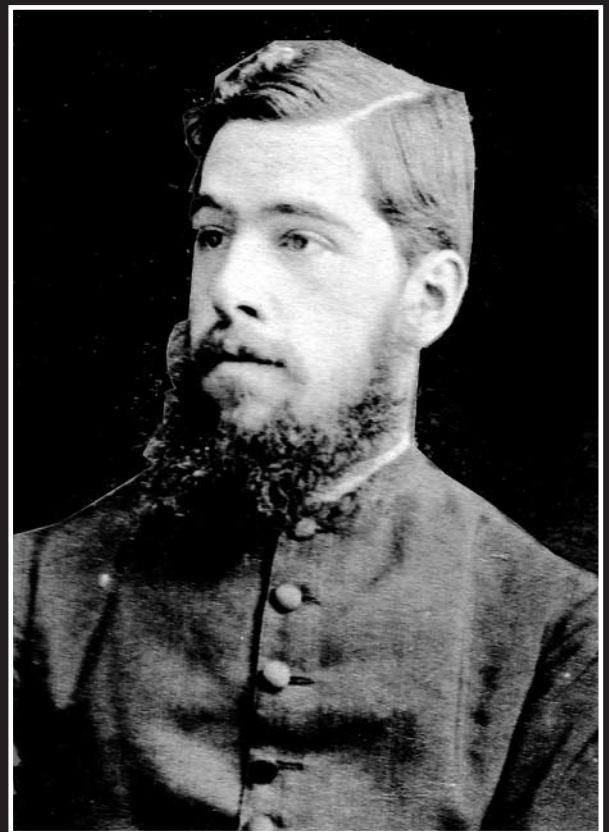
A photographic copy of the accompanying sketch was hanging in the dining room at Skryne for many years. The original sketch is in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. It was sketched by the famous French artist Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. while the subjects, Mr & Mrs Woodhead were in Rome on the Grand Tour in 1816. It depicts Mr & Mrs Joseph Woodhead and Mrs Woodhead’s brother. The couple had married in 1815 and later had a son Henry. This son married Emily Clements and they in turn became the parents of Clementina Woodhead who was Elizabeth’s grandmother.

Bryda has written a note about the sketch and says that it originally cost thirty shillings. (approximately €1.50) It was later left to the younger daughter of Henry Woodhead, Hilda, thence passed to her sister Grace Woodhead and eventually to a nephew Brig. Gen Henry Alexander Walker who sold it to the Fitzwilliam Museum for £1,000.



**'Mr. and Mrs. Woodhead and Mr. Comber' by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres**

**Mr. and Mrs. Woodhead and Mr. Comber (1816)  
Copyright held by Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge**

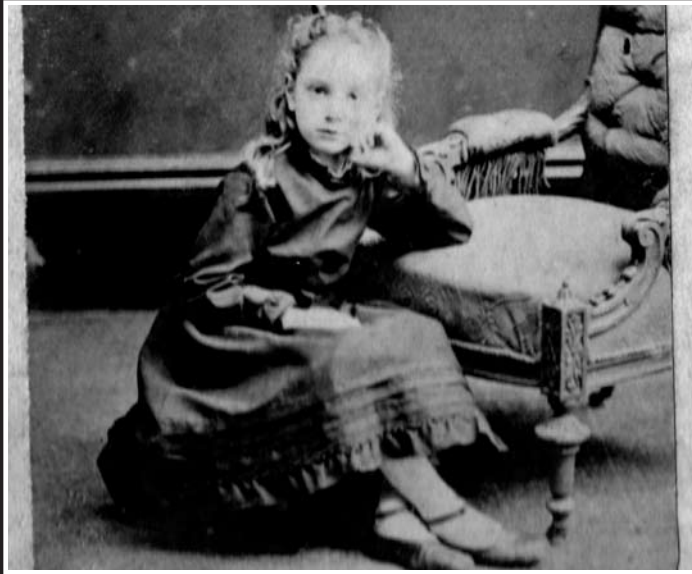


***Clockwise from top left: Emily Alice Woodhead; Rev HC Woodhead; Margaret C Woodhead; Clementina Woodhead; Col P Vigors; Clementina Woodhead; Mary Josephine Walker (nee Woodhead); Margaret C Vigors (nee Woodhead); Clementina Woodhead; and Col P Vigors***



Wanda/rd Woodhead was one of two Woodhead brothers - a  
uncle of my mother. I never met him. E.H.

At some time in the 1920s perhaps 1926 we  
visited Cousin <sup>Nellie</sup> ~~Jessie~~ in Cornwall I think that was  
~~her name~~ She was a first cousin of my mother's  
and had been born a Weir - Her <sup>father</sup> ~~mother~~ ~~must~~ <sup>had</sup>  
been <sup>Wanda/rd Woodhead</sup> ~~one~~ of the five Woodhead girls who married  
<sup>Nellie</sup> ~~she~~ had married a labouring man and been <sup>Weir</sup>  
disowned by the family. He lived in a small house  
right in the country with his husband who I  
remember training their dog by tethering him and  
then cracking a whip at him he did this a  
many times and I ~~do~~ we did not like him. He  
was no children He put me on a pony and  
fell off. She gave my mother this old photograph  
album which besides picture of Weirs and their  
relations contains several of my grandmother Eleanora  
Woodhead (Pennyquid) and her sisters and some of  
their husbands and relations



*Clockwise from top left: Grace E Woodhead; Clementina Woodhead; Thomas Wandsford and Maud H. Woodhead; Amy Christina Woodhead; Hilda Woodhead 1884; Maud H Comber (nee Woodhead); Maud Helena Woodhead, 1875; Edith Woodhead; Thomas Wandsford Woodhead, 1875; Maud and Wambie Woodhead; Ada Constance Woodhead; Grace E Woodhead, 1884*





**Clockwise from top left: Agnes Malet-Warden, our grandmother, with her grandfather Henry Woodhead; Clementina Woodhead - died 1925; Edith Cunniffe, Brighton; Agnes, Charles, Hamish, Bryda and probably Mrs Clementina Woodhead (see Elizabeth Hickey's note at bottom)**



The fact that this photograph is taken at Brighton makes me think it might be a family photograph - Possibly old Mrs Woodhead, my great-grandmother who lived at Brighton. However I do not know and the lady has no family. Hence that I can recognise.

Elizabeth Hickey



## ***Tape recording of Esther O'Grady***

**T**hese are some notes and extracts we have taken from a tape recording made by Elizabeth Hickey, talking to Esther O'Grady at Holloden, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow in 1966.

At the time of the recording, Esther was an old lady and bed ridden. She and our mother were cousins, but a generation apart. Elizabeth's mother Agnes and Esther were first cousins, their mothers Clementine and Margaret Woodhead were sisters brought up in Brighton. Margaret married an Irishman Col. Philip Vigors from Co. Carlow. They lived at Bagenalstown. Subsequently Esther and her husband Standish O'Grady lived at Holloden, a fine country house, next door to Burgage, the Vigors house at Bagenalstown. As a young person, Esther travelled with her family each summer, and perhaps more often, to stay with her grandparents and family in Brighton. The tape is about forty minutes long and Elizabeth is keen to learn about her grand aunts, grand uncles and her great grandparents but also about the family home in Brighton, No. 12 Norfolk Terrace.

Esther's grandparents were Major Henry Joseph Plumridge Woodhead and Emily nee Clements.

Esther begins on the tape by saying that her grandparents, as well as Norfolk Terrace, had a house in the country, Heathfield House, which was rented and later demolished. It was a Regency House and Elizabeth remembers that the gates were transferred to London.

Esther recounts that her Woodhead grandparents had ten daughters and two sons. She remembers them very well and was very fond in particular of Grandmother.

Esther goes through the family members starting with the eldest: "Mary married Colonel Walker. Aunt Alice never married and worked in New Zealand with Dr. Barnardo's. Then the third was my mother Margaret, then came Clementina [Elizabeth's grandmother]. Holly next, Amy, Grace and Hilda, Edith [was] one of the younger ones."

"Grandpa played the tiller most beautifully. Aunt Amy played the First Violin in St. Bartholomew's Church in Brighton. Aunt Edith and Mother played their accompanies". Esther says that when she was a girl, Aunt Connie, Amy, Grace, Hilda & Mary were all at home.

"Connie was Grandpa's favourite. Aunt Amy did a lot of good works down in the slums. She was involved with the Guardianship Society, for children with no parents".

"Aunt Hilda [Grace?] went to Oxford and a charity organisation."

"At Heatfield there were two lovely tennis courts and croquet lawn, with tennis parties every Monday. Grandpa in Brighton loved going to Empire and the pier in Brighton, to listen to the bands." Esther goes on to say that he had a bad heart and was not supposed to walk up the hill so the family would make him take a taxi. He lived to be an old man and died about 1900/01. [actually 1903]"

Esther speaks about bicycles. "The craze came in Brighton for musical bicycle rides. They used to ride them in the Great Pool Hall to music. Tremendous fun. Forwards and backwards, musical chairs on bicycles. Grandpa used to take them up to the Dyke outside Brighton with had lovely views of The Downs."

"Grandpa used to go down to his club to play chess; he was a very good player. Grandma kept a patch of garden down at the back of Norfolk Terrace and we used to go there after church on Sundays. Grandparents always went to Christchurch in Brighton. They are buried in Brighton cemetery where there was a family vault. All the others went to different churches. Aunt Amy went to an extremely 'high church', St. Bartholomew's, where two of the parsons went over to Rome."



***Faith O'Grady, Netta and Cousin Esther - Holloden 1961***

“Aunt Connie went to St. Stephen’s Church, near Norfolk Terrace.”

“There was a church in Norfolk Terrace or Norfolk Road? Not quite Church of England, a Reformed Church of England or something like that. The parson used to change into black for the sermon”. Esther didn’t like that church, it was very dull. The parish church, she explains was St. Michaelmas, her parents were married there. “I expect your [Elizabeth’s] grandparents were married there too”.

On the two brothers Esther continues. “Uncle Harry was a clergyman”. Elizabeth says she remembers that Harry kept a mechanical dog in a spring box, which as children, if they were good, they were allowed to see it spring out.

“He [Harry] had a church in Hammersmith, just over Hammersmith Bridge. He was very musical”. Esther says she used to go and stay with him and that he played the organ, “he was a regular old bachelor with a beard”.

“Uncle Womby [Thomas Wandesforde Woodhead] was in the navy.” Esther never saw him. He died at sea. “I remember Mother and I going over from Ireland to Liverpool. Aunt Alice was a deaconess there and when we got there, news came through that he [Harry] had died at sea. He married a Canadian and they didn’t like her, Jessie [Weir]. He left a daughter and three boys”.

“The eldest one [Womby’s son, Henry George] was the Times correspondent, out in China, the Peking Times or The Chinese Times? He was educated at Brighton College. He used to come down on Sundays to Norfolk Terrace”.

Esther continues “Every year we would go over to stay at Norfolk Terrace, the whole family, Father [Col. Philip Vigors] would go for a week. Sometimes we would stay in lodgings. Sometimes we stayed with Aunt Edith which wasn’t very comfortable because he was so queer. Very clever but as mad as a hatter. I dreaded staying there because he [Edith’s husband, Henry James Cunliffe] [would] always be playing jokes on you. Poor Aunt Edith! His mother was a very charming woman and she made the match and Grandmother and Grandfather didn’t like it. Married at Mrs. Cunliffe’s house”.

“Uncle Womby’s widow married again.”

“Aunty Nelly, first cousin to Esther and Agnes and daughter of Womby, married down in Cornwall”. Elizabeth remembers going to visit. “She married Ledwith.” Esther continues “They lived a hard life. Their two boys Bobby and Billy were educated at The Bluecoat School in London. One went to Canada.”

Elizabeth asks about the house at Norfolk Terrace.

Esther explains “[There were] a flight of white marble-like steps [not marble] which had to be whitened every morning. Leading up to the entrance hall, with more steps, grandpa’s study was on the left, straight ahead was the dining room, steps down into a type of garden. Aunt Hilda had a grey parrot which always sat in the dining room and used to bite if you put your finger in the cage.”

“Grandma used to sit in the dining room, in the morning and write to all the family and also to her nephews and nieces. A marvellous woman to keep up correspondence. Her brother the Sub Dean of Lincoln, uncle Jacob. His son, General Clements was killed in the South African War. One of the daughters was Hester. Aunt Julia in London, one of Grandma’s many sisters”.

“Mother [Margaret] used to go and stay with Aunt Julia [nee Clements], one of triplets. They were Pennances [this is what it sounds like]. Aunt Julia was as strong as a horse, had two daughters and two sons”. Elizabeth says: “There were a lot of Clements.” Esther continues: “The eldest was the Sub Dean of Lincoln, then Uncle James who lived in London, Uncle Charlie who lived in London, we used to stay with them, they all had large families. There were several sisters, Mansfield. Some married out in the West Indies”. Esther whispers: “Uncle Sheldon, he married a black woman..... had beautiful daughters”

“Uncle Poppin lived at Upfield, had two daughters, Eileen and Clements.

Elizabeth says: “Aunt Amy used to write to me when our children were born, suggesting to name one of them after her mother Clementine and we did name Eoin - Eoin Clement”.

Esther returns to describing the house: “Upstairs, there was a drawing room, there were two flights up to it. Half way up was one of the black holes of Calcutta, with no light at all, a lavatory. Then what was the school room in earlier days and a small room. Latterly Grandpa had that as his bedroom because he couldn’t go up above the drawing room - too steep”.

Elizabeth asks “No bathroom?” “Dear, no such thing!” Esther replies. “Water was carried upstairs. The bedrooms – Grandparent’s room, visitor’s room, Aunt Aimee’s room, Grandpa’s dressing room later used as spare room. Up above that, I suppose, two nurseries, one Grandma’s maid slept in, and I often camped down there. A large chest of drawers type thing which opened out [to become] to the maid’s bed at night. Most unsanitary don’t you think? When Father wasn’t there I would sleep with Mother”.

“Kitchen in basement, old cook there for thirteen or fourteen years. Aunt Amy’s cat. They kept door mice”. Elizabeth mentions Benji [the dog]. Esther says: “Benji was before my time, your mother was very fond of Benji. Aunt Connie had Cuba”.

Esther continues: “The staff, there was old cook, a parlour maid, a house maid, cleaning maid who helped with the cooking. I think Grandma had a separate maid. Parlour maid slept in the pantry, downstairs in the basement.

“Grandma used to sit in the dining room and mend the stockings for all the family. Grandma died there. By the time I married, Grandma was paralysed. Aunt Edith lived in Hove then. “

Esther goes on: “When Edith parted from Harry Cunliffe, it wasn’t safe you know. He had a keeper [?]. She [Edith] took two of the maids from Grandma’s.” Elizabeth says: “He used to give everybody soap”. Esther continues “he gave everybody bicycles; I was given a bicycle by him. Aunt Edith was only too pleased when he gave it to his own relation”.

Esther remembers before she herself was engaged to Standish (O’Grady). “Standish had gone to stay with some relative in Brighton. We were staying with Aunt Edith and we met [Uncle] Harry for lunch.

“We went with Standish to the flower show and who should be there but Harry. He came up to us and said ‘who is this?’ – I lied and said it was someone else, because he would write and send the most awful letters. I told Standish afterwards that he was quite mad”. Elizabeth says: “The soap stories were that some ladies came to stay and afterwards they got beautiful boxes of soap, like chocolates with notes, saying ‘Please to use’”.

Esther continues: “Edith went to live in Horn Road and took the two maids from Norfolk Terrace, Harriette and Charlotte”. Elizabeth remembers Charlotte at Aunt Edith’s: “Edith had an awful time, she used to sleep with a revolver. It was very unpleasant”.

Elizabeth asks “how many of the aunts visited Holloden?” Esther replies “Aunt Alice, Aunt Mary married and died, she never came over, Mrs. Walker. Aunt Connie, Edith, Amy, Hilda, they all came. Aunt Maud used to come quite often and Cathleen used to come with the young ones.”

Elizabeth says: “Mrs. Cholmondley-Clark talks about them”. Esther replies: “I recently went and had tea with her in Buswells Hotel [Dublin]. She is now living out in Dalkey.”

There is mention of Bobby Dillon and the tape recording ends.

Mrs. Cholmondley-Clark was an aunt or grand aunt of Lady Sinola Dillon, wife of Sir Robert Dillon of Lismullen, Tara, Co. Meath, now Opus Dei Institute. The Dillons were neighbours of ours at Skryne and Sir Robert was Caroline’s Godfather. Our mother often remarked that Sinola Dillon (nee Cholmondley-Clark) was the only living person who would remember her (Elizabeth’s) great grandmother. This was in the sixties presumably after Esther had died.

A letter from Esther to Elizabeth in 1941 is interesting. Our mother had obviously lost touch with Esther but was in touch with her grand Aunt Amy.

*Holloden  
Bagenalstown  
Ireland*

*Sept 21st 41*

*My Dear Elizabeth,*

*Aunt Amy has sent me your address and says you are married, do write and tell me about yourself, when and who you married and what your husband is doing. I presume he is Irish, it is such years since you stayed here. I wonder if you even remember doing so and riding the donkey.*

*Gerald is married and both he and Philip are in the R.A. and Faith near Belfast a F.A.N.Y.*

*I was so sorry to hear Hamish is "missing". Where are the rest of the family and your mother. With train services so bad, I seldom go to Dublin and am always very busy.*

*With love,*

*Your affectionate cousin,*

*Esther O'Grady*