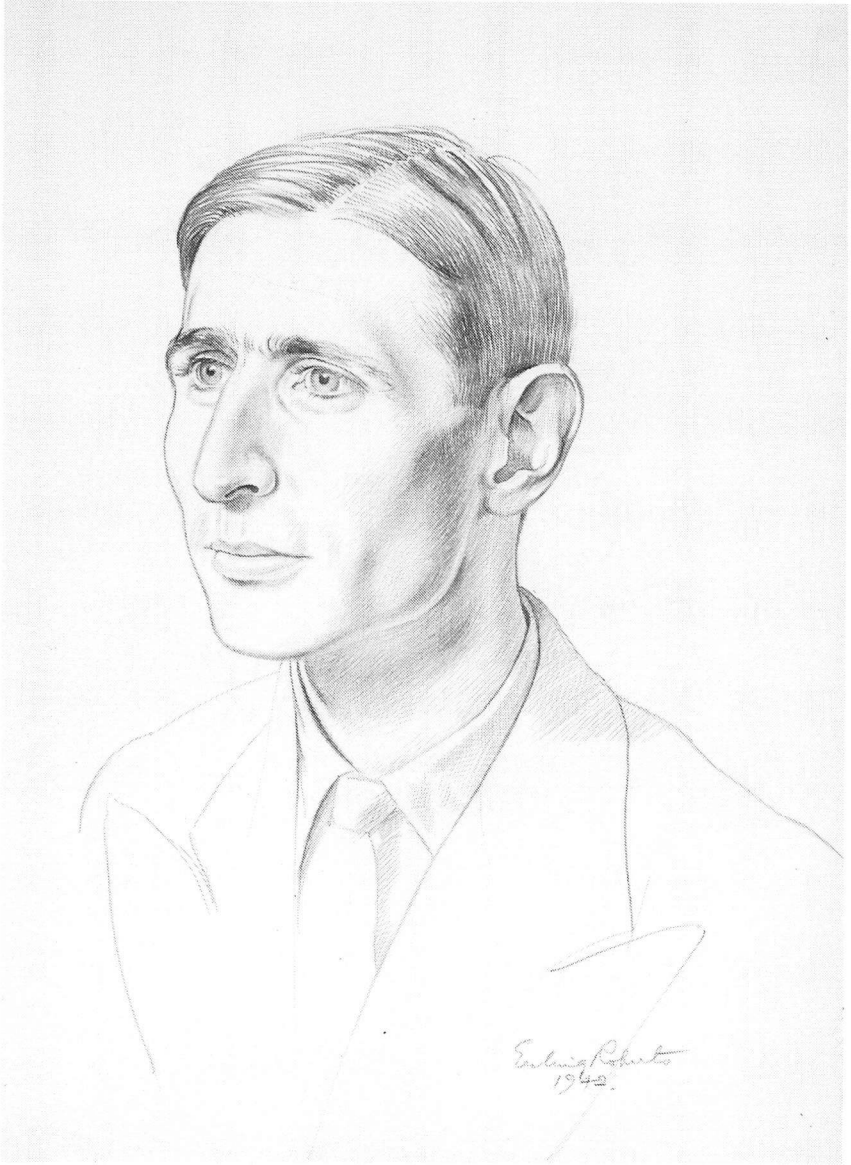


Paul Petrocokino
A Man of Many Loves

A memoir prepared from Paul's
own manuscript
by Harry Addison

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Paul Petrocokino: Portrait by Erling Roberts

PAUL PETROCOKINO
A MAN OF MANY LOVES

Paul Petrocokino's many friends could find only one word to describe him – "unique." "He was gloriously unique, one of God's precious originals," wrote one who had known him intimately for over fifty years. Unique he was in a score of ways, not least in the fact that two cultures and two temperaments mingled in him, with delightful and often unexpected results.

His mother – as Paul recalls her, she was "six feet tall and never weighed more than eight stone" – was a gifted musician, who played the piano beautifully and loved the English countryside and everything about it. His father, on the other hand, was Greek and Paul remembers him as "stocky and muscular, and a remarkable combination of cricket-playing, lesson-reading, fox-hunting English gentleman and Odysseus, except that his family came from the island of Chios, not Ithaca". He had been brought up in England and educated at Harrow; but he had fought for the Greeks against the Turks, and then for the British in the Boer and the First World Wars. He was also a fearless and indefatigable traveller. He had explored the Amazon from source to mouth, crossed the Andes, and traversed the Great Wall of China. They were a well-to-do family. Paul, an only child, was born in 1910 in a large country house, built by his father, with spacious gardens, situated in the heart of the English countryside, near the village of Pangbourne, not far from Reading. As

a small child he had nannies, one of whom he loved dearly, then a governess, and in due course was sent to a preparatory school and on to Harrow.

These details and many others he reveals in a typescript memoir, running to 290 pages, to which he had given the title, 'Paul Petrocokino, a Man of Many Loves'. The title exactly describes him. He loved the vagaries of the weather, the unfolding beauties of the English spring, and the changing face of the countryside. He loved wild flowers and birds. He loved the contrasting landscapes of many countries. He loved music. He loved Aston Bury, the beautiful old house in Hertfordshire where he and his wife lived for many years. He loved people – people of all ages and every class and race – “he opened his heart to everyone,” recalls one of his oldest friends, “and within minutes a person whom he had just met felt that he had found an abiding friend.” He loved Madeline, the American lady who became his wife. Above all, he loved God, who gave meaning and purpose to all his other loves.

All his loves were for life. They were not transient affairs. They were not hobbies. A man turns to his hobbies for relaxation at moments of leisure. They were not enthusiasms, which can blow hot and cold. They were, all of them, lasting commitments. Paul was no mere gifted amateur or cultivated dilettante. To all his loves he brought a serious dedication which he sometimes concealed beneath a nonchalant and carefree manner reminiscent of a character from one of the stories of his favourite author – P. G. Wodehouse. Nor did he keep them in separate compartments. They were like the contrasted and blending themes in one of those Handel Organ Concertos whose balance and symmetry gave him unending delight. So when at the age of twenty-two he found the master passion of his life, the love of God, he did not feel called upon to renounce or to push on to the periphery any of his earlier loves. Rather he gave them all to God; and then for the rest of his days he was able to use them, joyously and unselfishly and most effectively, to His glory and the furtherance of His purposes.

This did not in the least mean that he made no sacrifices. He loathed living in London, with its noise and crowds and petrol fumes. But he spent several years there quite cheerfully because he was convinced that it was the will of God. He hated being abroad during the English spring; but his work with Moral Re-Armament took him to

America for seven years, and he came to love the country. He was always ready to go anywhere at any time in pursuance of God's Plan. It was a real sacrifice for him to be parted from his piano; but for long periods he was out of reach of a piano. Sacrifices like these simply enhanced his delight in his loves when they were restored to him.

It was Paul's mother in particular who implanted in him his early loves – his love of the weather, of the English countryside with its flowers and birds and especially of music. "She was a genius in her way," he recalls. "This genius lay in her ability to impart an air of magic and adventurous discovery to so many things." She must also have had a sense of humour. During the first World War, to ensure that they would always have fresh milk, "she acquired a Guernsey cow which she called Persephone. Just as in Greek mythology Persephone had to divide her time between periods on earth in the company of Orpheus, and in the underworld in the company of Pluto, so our Persephone spent most of her time munching away in our field, but used every so often to have time in the Rectory meadow with old Parson Hopkins' bull."

His mother encouraged him to watch the clouds. "Black on white means thunder," she would tell him. "So do clouds with sharp edges." "The West is the rainy quarter." Soon he began to test these axioms from his own observations. Thunderstorms had a peculiar fascination for him. He describes quite a number in loving detail, including one in June 1923, which, he tells us, "made meteorological history".

At Harrow, where he was never happy – both his parents died while he was there – he found "a haven of refuge in the Vaughan Library, with its wonderful smell of old books and leather". "There I discovered," he recalls, "some informative books about the weather. One was called 'Cloudland', by the Revd. Clement Ley, a classic no longer obtainable. This book introduced me to my favourite type of cloud. To this day I get excited when I see it." He called it "line cumulus". "Today it is popularly known as 'turret cloud'." A friend who was with him at Harrow writes, "Paul taught me how to recognise cloud formations. I have always thought of him when I have seen turret clouds rearing their heads on the horizon."

He became a skilled cloud photographer. During a long vacation when he was at Oxford, he wrote a book on clouds and weather predicting, illustrating it with his own photographs. "They were quite

good," he claims modestly. "I never got round to publishing it; but it makes quite interesting reading, illustrating the truth of the saying that there is no one who knows quite so much as a young man of twenty, except perhaps a girl of seventeen. In my book I seemed to imply that most other men who have written about the weather apparently omitted to use either their eyes or their minds, presuming they had the latter."

Throughout his life Paul constantly astonished his friends by the uncanny accuracy of his weather forecasts. He would look up into an apparently cloudless sky and then, with the air of a conjurer announcing that a rabbit was about to emerge from his hat, predict that there would be thunder within the next three hours. Almost always he was right. But behind this apparently happy knack there was a lifetime of meticulous observation, and close study.

Again it was Paul's mother who gave him his lifelong love of flowers. From his very early years he recalled the meadows through which the River Pang flowed, "the golden kingcups and delicate mauve cuckoo-flowers in the spring and the meadowsweet, purple loosestrife and fragrant water-mint in the summer, also the heavenly blue water forget-me-nots". And like Wordsworth, he had a special word of commendation for the lesser celandine – "a very ordinary flower, but bright and cheery, the harbinger of summer days to come". Wherever he travelled he noticed in detail the wild flowers and learned their names. "Spring in Virginia," he concedes with surprising generosity, "was almost as enchanting as in England" – and he launches into a long list of wild flowers and trees in blossom.

Shortly after the war, when he went to see Alan Thornhill's play "The Forgotten Factor" in one of London's few surviving theatres, the Cripplegate, near St. Paul's Cathedral, he remarks how, "amid an ocean of ruins, pink rose bay, willow-herb and yellow ragwort gave a touch of colour to the desolate scene". "At Marathon, famous for one of the decisive battles of history," he records, "I picked some of the brilliantly coloured flowers from the dry fields, pressed them, and sent them home to Madeline." Strolling by the lakeside at Nicosia, he noticed "the anemones of early spring – *anemone coronatus*, to give its botanical name. Here they were purple, mauve, pink and white. In other parts of the island they are also scarlet, crimson and streaked."

And he comments, "These flowers are believed to be those that Jesus referred to as the 'lilies of the field', adding that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

When he and Madeline moved into Aston Bury, he acquired a wood of nearly fifty acres adjacent to the house. "In the spring," he writes, "it was a joy. The graceful wood anemones and the primroses would be the first to appear, then the wood sorrel with its emerald green shamrock leaves and small hanging flowers of infinite delicacy. In May the hornbeams with their fluted foliage would be clad in a bright spring green; and under the trees there was a carpet of bluebells in parts of the wood. There was a marshy pond ablaze with golden kingcups." And he continues with a list of birds and their songs.

To his study of birds he brought the same thoroughness and attention to detail. When he was in the United States he spent some months at Santa Monica in California. "I had time to study bird life," he writes. "I resolved that no bird should be seen or heard by me without my discovering what it was. I had no field glasses. So it involved stalking, making mental notes, and then looking at an illustrated book of Western birds until, by eliminating what it was not, I was able to discover what it was. I especially remember the ubiquitous song of an elusive but delightful little bird called a coast wren-tit, the beautiful descending scale of the song of the canyon wren, and the 'Hoo' of the little Western gnat catcher."

At Redlands he noticed in particular the Californian woodpeckers, "which had the extraordinary habit of drilling innumerable holes in telegraph poles and stuffing them with the acorn of the California live-oak. They would use the telegraph poles as larders and dining rooms, attaching themselves to them and eating the acorns." He also points out that American cuckoos "mate and pair up, build their nests and raise their young quite normally, which is most moral of them". But it rather spoilt things when one of his colleagues from Britain wrote a song about 'The Cuckoo in the Nest', which fell with a distressing thud on the American audience. "The American bird which behaves like the European cuckoo is a chunky starling called the cowbird."

When he and Madeline were staying at a guest house on the lower slopes of the Helderberg, in South Africa's Cape Province, he was again fascinated by the birds. "There were Cape turtle doves that kept enquiring, 'How's father?' There were sunbirds that resemble

humming birds except that they cannot fly backwards. There were Cape sugar birds, slender birds with long bills and enormously long tails, yellow-breasted birds of the shrike family called bokmakies. What was most particularly interesting about them was their habit of singing, not as individuals but as a chorus. One would strike up and others would chime in, each contributing his best to the sum total."

Inevitably he responded to all the beauties of landscape. He saw them with an artist's eye and described them in often-memorable prose. From his earliest days he remembers a hill called Baldon, near Dawlish, in Devon. "We were driven to it in a horse-drawn cab, by a red-faced, red-necked man called Mr. Voisey. Sometimes where the gradients were steep, we had to get out and walk. But when at last we got to the top we were rewarded by finding one of the most wonderful places imaginable, honey-sweet with purple heather. Below us was the sea of almost Mediterranean blue. There was the coast line, brick red as far as the cliffs to the right of Exmouth, then changing to white chalk by Beer, Seaton and Lyme Regis. On a clear day you could see Portland Bill directly opposite, like the shore of a foreign land. Inland were the typical Devon hills, with their patchwork of dark green and light green and gold, and, where the fields were ploughed, rich red."

Just before he left home for the first time to go to his first boarding school, there was a memorable picnic on the Berkshire Downs, "at a place called Lowbury Hill where one could still pick up bits of Roman remains, including oyster shells left by Roman soldiers when they occupied Britain. Though, I think, only between five and six hundred feet above sea level, it seemed on top of the world, and the sweet-scented wind that had travelled over miles of downland made the grass ripple. There were marble white butterflies and chalk-like blues (the latter not a depressing type of twentieth century dance but a species of lepidoptera), also red and black burnet moths and both light and dark purple toadflax."

In his late teens, when he was living in Deal and being "crammed" for Oxford, he got to know the county of Kent. Later, in 1933, when he was compelled to live in London and loathed it, he would escape again and again to Kent. "I fell in love with everything about Kent," he tells us, "the orderly hop-gardens and beautifully planted groves of Kentish cobs, like something from Virgil's Eclogues, the red-brick oast-houses – real operative oast-houses with white cows, the weather-

boarded, timbered or half-timbered cottages, the Georgian houses, the churches with their distinctive 'Kentish Towers' with a small turret on the corner."

In stark contrast with Kent was the Sequoia National Park, where he and Madeline spent a holiday during the first year of their marriage. "Never in the whole of my life in any part of the world," he writes, "have I seen anything surpassing this. It was of a grandeur and on a scale altogether stupendous." As for the "Big Trees", "These have to be seen to be believed. It is not only the colossal size but the limitless dignity of these trees that is such an experience. The oldest was a sturdy sapling at the time of Abraham."

"One takes in a landscape," he remarks of his trip, "not only through the eyes but through the nose – the scent of the pines and the sage brush, and through one's ears – the song of the birds, especially the wren-tits, and the sound of the wind in the pines." He tried to recapture the spirit of the landscape in music – "music not at all in my usual baroque style, which could not describe the American Far West". And he concludes, "I also got a longing to serve more effectively the God who had created this masterpiece and had given us the privilege of seeing it. God's artistry is shown alike in his works on the grand scale, as in the mountain heights, monumental trees, valley depths and the overall inspiring atmosphere, and in the perfection and delicacy of the pink gilia which abound here."

Deeper and more passionate than all these loves was Paul's love of music. Again it was his mother who fostered it. She herself played the piano beautifully, and music was an integral part of their family life. It was soon discovered that he possessed the gift of almost perfect pitch. He remembers that during the first World War his mother took him to Reading to hear the Polish pianist Pachmann, whom she considered to be greater even than Paderewski. "The old man was becoming senile at that time," he recalls "and every so often he would stop and start talking to the piano. But the way he pounded the piano and his fingers scampered and rippled over the keyboard made me try to emulate him. Our house became rather noisy at times."

After such a sheltered childhood, it was a shock to be plunged into the rigours of a boarding preparatory school. Paul never forgot how, at the end of his first day, the lights in the dormitory were extinguished



Paul at the piano in the Hall at Tirley Garth

by “a quick-walking woman with a face like a police constable – the formidable, iodine-using matron”. There were not many blankets and it was cold. But musically he was fortunate.

A fine professional pianist, Miss Dorothy Muggeridge, gave piano lessons to the three or four most musical boys in the school. He learnt pieces by Cesar Franck, Schumann, Beethoven, Mozart and Bach. “At that time,” he recalls, “Bach was the brightest star in my musical sky.” He played one of Bach’s preludes and fugues at a school concert. “After it, Miss Muggeridge put me on to a straightforward little piece called ‘Corcule in F’, by Handel. It had something in common with Bach, I felt; but it also had an exhilarating sunny quality that I absolutely loved. Such was my simple introduction to the master whose music has been an inexhaustible source of delight, inspiration and wonder ever since. Now, over fifty years later, (he is writing in the 1970s) I am still discovering new marvels in his music. It was almost as though Bach himself had personally introduced me to his great contemporary, knowing that he was tailor-made for me.”

At Harrow music was in those days regarded as a disruptive element in the time-table. But there was a prize for an essay on music. The subject set was 'The Age of Bach and Handel'. Paul won it easily. He comments, "It was like bowling me a slow full-pitch to leg. I could hardly help scoring." During the holidays he continued to play the piano. The passion for music was there and growing – "not so much a passion to shine as a musician, but a passion for the music itself". His father had an Aeolian organ – "a cross between a harmonium and a pianola." Through it he got to know Handel's Organ Concerto No.1. "I had been taught at Harrow," he writes, "to appreciate the wonderful balance and structure of classical Greek sentences; and this organ concerto, especially the last movement, seemed to me to have this property. It was also brimming with the joie de vivre which is such a characteristic of his music."

Later still, while he was living at Deal in Kent, "another wonderful thing happened. I was to have music lessons every Wednesday afternoon from the organist of Canterbury Cathedral, Dr. Palmer. It was a marvellous thing to be in the hands of a teacher who really took trouble and made me work." And it was during these months that he had what he calls "one of the aesthetic experiences of my life" hearing a performance of Handel's 'Judas Maccabaeus', conducted by Dr. Palmer in Canterbury Cathedral. "The combination of this majestic dimly-lit building, the string orchestra, and the wonder of the vocal music overwhelmed me. I had been transported out of this world. That evening decided my musical taste for the rest of my life."

As an undergraduate at Oxford he found, through the Oxford Group, the central love of his life – the love of God, and the commitment to His will. It did not in the least involve a renunciation of his passion for music. On the contrary, this transforming experience enhanced and gave meaning to all his loves. But it did mean that for considerable periods he was separated from his piano and his growing library of Handel records. "This exile from the realms of music," he admits, "was a sacrifice. However, my association with the Oxford Group had inculcated into me some measure of application and discipline, so that I now systematically wrote down the music I created."

It was during walks in the Kentish countryside that the 'Kentish Suite' came to birth. He regarded it as "one of the best things I have

ever written". "If there is any of my music that could truly be called great," he writes, "it would be the final movement of that Suite, a sarabande in the Handelean style, descriptive of Canterbury Cathedral in all its towering majesty."

The seven long years in America meant another "exile from the realms of music". But it was in America that he wrote what has become his most widely-known melody. He spent the Christmas in 1940 as a guest in a friend's home in Pasadena. "There," he tells us, "I had an experience that I have had only two or three times in my life. I went to sleep and dreamed vividly that I was hearing some most beautiful music – almost heavenly music. I woke up with the music still in my head, turned on the light, and wrote down enough of it to be able to remember it. Later words were put to it, and it is known as 'The Workers' Carol'". And to his great delight, at his wedding on Mackinac Island in August 1948, the Mackinac Singers, a fine choir consisting largely of whole-time MRA workers, sang Bach's 'Jesu, joy of man's desiring', and Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus'. He recalls, "I half-turned my back on my bride and automatically started to conduct the chorus."

His return to England ended his musical exile. At 40 Charles Street, in the west end of London, which he and Madeline leased after their marriage, he once more had a piano. And one evening he was invited to a Promenade Concert in the Albert Hall devoted to Bach and Handel. "At this point," he writes, "the mighty personality of George Frederick Handel came striding back into my life." And he adds, "This re-introduction of Handel into the forefront of my life made me see London through new eyes. It was no longer the insufferable 'Great Wen' with unbreathable air. It was Handel's home town for fifty years – for forty years of which he had lived within half a mile of Charles Street."

Paul never kept his love of music for his own enjoyment. He used it in his inimitable expansive way, to give pleasure to his friends and to further the purposes of God, the Creator of all order and beauty. At the Westminster Theatre in 1968 he heard a lecture by the well-known musicologist Joseph Cooper, called 'The Schumann Story'. "He made Schumann live for me in a new way, both as a man and as a musician. Then I drew the obvious conclusion: 'If he can do that for Schumann, why cannot I do it for Handel?'" He began to study Handel's life. "I found myself confronted with a figure of even greater stature than I



Paul,
aged about twenty

had realised, a man of Churchillian strength of will and also of endearing human qualities such as a lively sense of humour, and a capacity for compassion, affection and gratitude ... And in an age notorious for its licentiousness, his integrity shone out."

From this study in depth he created a lecture on the life of Handel which he gave in many countries – on one occasion in the residence of the British Ambassador in Tunisia, with many members of the diplomatic corps in the audience. After one of his recitals a student of music came up to him and said, "We keep having it rubbed into us that an artist's moral life doesn't matter. Thank God for one man who really stood for something."

He expressed his own convictions about Handel in these words: "In one sense Handel was a humanist, in so far as he was intensely interested in people – both real people and the central figures in his operas and oratorios; and it is because of this interest in people that his music is so instantly appealing. He would have thought it ludicrously academic to write something comprehensible only after it has been

heard a considerable number of times, and then only by a sophisticated minority. But he was also a man of strong Christian faith, which is reflected alike in the integrity of his character and in the strength, purity and uplifting quality of his music."

After Handel, Paul explored still further the riches of baroque music – Mattheson, Handel's rival and later his friend, Lalande and Charpentier in particular. He did extensive research into their lives and characters also, and created lecture recitals about them. "The result," he remarks, "was that music heard at these recitals became for the audiences the creation of living personalities. For myself, I feel that I have made in these composers a host of new friends."

In the early seventies he went through all his own music and had the best of it printed and published. The first volume appeared in June 1975. In a preface to it he presented what might be called his own philosophy of music. "Character without virtue," he wrote, "is bad character. Similarly, in my view, art without beauty is bad art. Beauty is not the only ingredient in good art, but it is an essential ingredient.

"The fine eighteenth century Hamburg musician, philosopher, diplomat and writer Johann Matheson called music 'this beautiful and perfect creation which a beneficent God has given us men for our own pleasure and as a model of the eternal harmonious splendour'. J. S. Bach put it more pungently. He wrote, 'The aim and final reason of all music is none else than the glory of God and the recreation of the mind. Where this is not observed there will be no real music but only a devilish hubbub.'"

He published three volumes of his music, and finally a long-playing record in which the pianist was the gifted young Australian Penelope Thwaites. In the preface to his last volume he wrote, "I hope that my volumes will give an additional push away from the strident, the restless and the negative, and towards the beautiful, the orderly, the uplifting, and the inspired – and not in music only, but also in painting, sculpture and architecture. There is nothing revolutionary about conforming with the trend of the age, especially when the trend is an evil one. What is revolutionary is to reverse the trend."

During his last years Paul was looking forward eagerly to the Tercentenary of the birthday of Bach and Handel in 1985. His last published work was a suite in nine movements dedicated to them

both. He described it as “a musical offering of love and gratitude to two men, both of profound faith, writing in an age when Reason, that unreliable substitute, was supplanting Faith, and an idolotrous worship of human intelligence was taking the place of worship of, and obedience to, Almighty God.” “My hope,” he wrote, “is that the tercentenary year will honour them both equally, and also that the occasion will produce a rebirth of the masterly, disciplined and exalted craftsmanship that characterises Bach’s work, and the majestic, strong and soul-stirring euphony that is the hallmark of Handel.”

All Paul’s loves found their place and meaning within his central love – the love of God. He shared the convictions of Mattheson and Bach about music. But he goes even further. “I have a great love for the beauties of nature and look on God not only as the indirect or direct inspirer of all truly great human art, but also as the Supreme Artist in His own right. His masterpieces can be on the majestic and the rugged scale, as on the sun-drenched lands of Greece and Cyprus, the American Far West or South Africa, or take a more tranquil and gentle form, as in much of the countryside of England; or else His artistry can be revealed in the perfect shape of a tree, or the infinite delicacy of a wild flower, whose leaves and blossoms so perfectly suit each other: and there is the fact that we are so made as to appreciate these things.” From his earliest days God had been real to him. First his nanny, and then his mother, taught him to say his prayers at night. “It seemed to be the most natural thing in the world, though I had little idea of what the words meant. The point that registered was that there was a most important being called God, that He was both kind and powerful and though I could not see Him, He was there and in charge.” His mother also told him the great Bible stories.

But at his prep school “the Bible was taught in the same way as any other subject, which was a pity. The aim was that you should do the work, whereas when my mother taught me Bible stories, the aim was that I should get to know more about God. All the same, we did pick up a sense of the robustness of the Bible – the ‘mighty men of valour’, the kings who did ‘that which was right’ or ‘that which was evil’ in the sight of the Lord – which after all is the correct interpretation of history. We were also taught to appreciate the magnificent dramatic English of the Authorised Version.”

He was confirmed into the Church of England, by the Bishop of

London, Dr. Winnington Ingram, in the school chapel at Harrow. "The occasion," he recalls, "meant a great deal to my father, who was a devout churchman. The housemaster prepared the candidates for confirmation. He was a kindly man, but he missed a trick with me. We were on the subject of moral problems and temptations. These were as prevalent at Harrow as anywhere else where there were young people. I remember asking him, 'When I get confirmed and receive the Holy Spirit (which was what I had been led to believe confirmation was all about), will I find a new power to resist temptation?' 'Oh dear me, no, old man!' I think he answered. However, he gave us each a nicely bound copy of Henry Drummond's 'The Greatest Thing in the World'. I was impressed at the time by the way the Headmaster, Lionel Ford, took us, two at a time, to his study, and had us go down on our knees while he prayed for us. I felt in the presence of a man of God. At confirmation I made an earnest resolve to turn my back on what I knew to be wrong – blue stories included. But the resolve was rather like the seed which fell on the road. Within a week the birds had gobbled it up."

At Oxford he found to his relief, after the unhappy years at Harrow, that he could be himself again, as he had been at home. He was not a diligent student. He tells us that in one term of eight weeks he did an aggregate of two hours of academic work. Most of his time he spent cycling furiously around the countryside on a red sports model Royal Enfield bicycle with a ram's horn handlebars and a speedometer, or gossiping with his friends about trains, or the weather, or the more attractive girl under-graduates. It was while he was engaged in this pastime one morning that he heard someone mention the Oxford Group. At that time the Oxford Group, as Moral Re-Armament was then called, was very active in the University. In both junior and senior common rooms it was the subject of lively gossip and often of heated argument. "What on earth is the Oxford Group?" Paul asked. "They are a group of people who aim to live constantly in the presence of God," was the astonishing reply from an undergraduate whose life had been considerably changed through it. Paul was shaken. "The conviction was somehow implanted in me," he recalls, "that if ever I

wanted to bridge the ever-growing gap between my highest ideals at my best moment and the way I actually lived, the people who could best help me to do so would be the Oxford Group."

Then there was the affair of the "dog-girl" – a vivacious undergraduate who had earned that name by her habit of cycling slowly down Cornmarket Street with a small black and white dog on a lead. One morning Paul asked a fellow student who was known to be her friend, "Seen the dog-girl recently?" "Haven't you heard?" was the reply. "The Oxford Group have got her, and she has turned Christian." "This made me think," writes Paul. "If a miracle like that could happen to someone whom I had looked on merely as a subject for gossip, could not a miracle happen to me, 'halting between two opinions'?"

He got himself invited to a meeting of the Oxford Group in the Randolph Hotel. He arrived "in a somewhat prickly and apprehensive frame of mind". But he liked the atmosphere. "There was none of the awkward constraint that one feels at some religious meetings, but rather the eager anticipation that precedes the raising of the curtain on a really good show. He recalls that one of the speakers was Canon L. W. Grensted, Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and well-known as a psychologist. "But it was not so much what was said that struck me as the appearance of the speakers and the obvious relationship of camaraderie that existed between them."

A few days later something decisive happened in his own heart. After a long walk followed by supper with a friend, he walked back home alone. "On the Banbury Road," he recalls, "between the time I

Paul, with Frank Buchman, Bunny Austin and friends in America



left my friend and the time I reached my lodgings, my life had been changed. Exactly how it happened I cannot say, but I decided with my whole will – or, alternatively, God intervened in such a way as to cause me to decide – to turn my back completely and permanently on all evil and to live my life according to His will." As soon as he reached his lodgings he burnt all his dirty pictures and decided to pay immediately all outstanding bills. Then, he writes, "after I turned in, a more vivid picture than ever before came to my mind of the kind of life I had been living (and God judges people not only by their acts and words but also by their thoughts). The realisation of the pain I must have caused my father and mother swept over me. I wept copiously, and at the same time experienced a remarkable sense of reconciliation to God."

Soon afterwards he went to tea with the man who had led the Randolph Hotel meeting, Roland Wilson, who was to become one of his closest friends. Wilson told him more about the principles of the Oxford Group, and particularly about the absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, and the practice of listening to God early each morning. He decided to make the experiment. He had one thought, to call on one of his guardians, Major Porter, then living in Reading, and tell him of his decision. The Major listened with interest, and suggested that he should call on another man, who had been the very successful manager of a small lead works owned by Paul's father, and was now dying of cancer. They had a heart-to-heart talk. Paul discovered that he loved the music of Handel, and promptly went out to buy for him a record of excerpts from the Messiah. "I remember," he tells us, "on my way back to Oxford, feeling strangely uplifted, grateful that I had been able to help someone else, as far as I can recall, for the first time in my life."

During the Easter vacation, at Wilson's invitation, he attended an Oxford Group House Party at Cambridge. There he confirmed his decision, and began to work it out in detail. "Because of the early death of my parents," he writes, "I had at my disposal more money than many undergraduates; and I came to see that I must no longer look on it as my property but as God's, held in stewardship for use as He directed, to help others who had less, and to provide the sinews of war for the work of the Oxford Group." He stopped smoking and spending money on expensive pipes. But he began to spend more on clothes – "as I used to dress rather sloppily, and one cannot represent a God of

order and dress sloppily".

Probably there is no single person who knows the full extent of Paul's giving over the years. He was immensely generous. But his giving was never sentimental and always directed to a single purpose. And for a few years, while he was living in America, he himself was often without money. "With the outbreak of the war," he recalls, "I could no longer get money out of England, so I made arrangements for my resources to be available for the advance of Moral Re-Armament in Britain; but in America I was very definitely on the 'receiving' end, one of the 'have-nots'. This was a salutary experience. Once I arrived at a meeting in down-town Seattle. I had spent my last nickel on the bus fare and was reduced to a few State tax tokens. During my early morning Quiet Time it had come to me to pray for ten dollars, which I did, most enthusiastically. After the meeting an English colleague came up to me and said, 'How are you off for money, Paul?' 'Well, not exactly rolling in it,' I conceded, 'but I do have about three tax tokens.' 'How would ten dollars suit you?' he asked. He named the figure, not I. The basic economic belief of Frank Buchman (initiator of MRA) that 'where God guides, He provides,' seems adequately to fit the facts."

For a year after his change, Paul remained at Oxford. I was one of those who shared lodgings with him at No.8 Keble Road. It had once, I believe, been the home of Sir Hugh Allen, Conductor of the Oxford Bach Choir, and it had a large music room with French windows opening on to a lawn. Our landlady was a well-known Oxford character, a large red-faced lady who cruised around Oxford on a tricycle.

I remember Paul in those days as an exceptionally tall, very thin and slightly drooping figure, with jet black hair, a nose which he liked to call "aquiline", long arms which he used constantly in conversation, and slender fingers, which stabbed the air as he emphasised his points. There was an eager liveliness about everything he did. He had a habit of darting rapidly from point to point, like some long-necked bird hurrying through the grass. Occasionally a look of mischievous amusement would creep over his face. Usually it indicated either that he was meditating an unexpected witticism, or hatching a practical joke. In these respects he changed little over the years. Not long before he died, we were walking together in a comfortable silence when he suddenly remarked, "Now that we're in the E.E.C., I suppose we had

better start calling Brussels sprouts 'Common Market cabbages.'"

He was a delightful and very unpredictable companion. The winter of 1932 in Oxford was hard, and we decided we needed something to build up our strength. We noticed a chemist's shop which was putting on a window display of a fashionable brand of Malt and Cod Liver Oil. At the centre of it was the largest jar that I have ever set eyes on. Paul marched into the shop and bought the jar. For the next several months we were slowly digging into its contents. Finally we had to give it up, because we could not find a spoon with a handle long enough to plumb the depths.

If I remember rightly, it was during that period that he and I went for a brief holiday together in one of his favourite haunts. Darkness had fallen when we arrived. He had arranged for me to have a room with a particularly beautiful view. Next morning he knocked at the door, came into the room, flung back the curtains with a dramatic gesture, and called on me to admire the view.

The Bible was a constant source of inspiration to him; and it soon emerged that he was a brilliant and entertaining teacher. Scores of people owe their love and understanding of the Bible to the study groups which he led. A Scottish couple who had been brought up from childhood to read it wrote, "It was Paul who gave us a lasting love of it." A Sheffield steel-worker recalls, "His Bible studies were done in a fascinating way which always intrigued and challenged people." His aim was "to make the Bible come to life – not just as a venerable body of Holy Writ, to be approached with a mixture of awe and non-comprehension, but rather as an exciting book about people engaged in the same kind of life's work, and committed to the same battle as ourselves." One of his secrets as a teacher was his highly original humour. As one friend put it, "He had the gift of being able to make a roomful of people dissolve into happy laughter."

He was no proselytiser, but he was a most effective apostle. His chief weapon was a quality of friendship which was never sentimental and always completely undemanding. His faith embraced the world and led him into many countries. And because all his loves were dedicated to God, he was able to use them naturally and unstintingly to the furtherance of His purposes.

"When I made my decision to give my life to God, 'boots and all'", he records, "I knew it meant putting into His hands the whole question



Paul and Madeline married in Mackinac in 1948

of marriage. It was when I was in Seattle in 1940 that one of the MRA secretaries, a girl from New York called Madeline, came to my notice." During the months that followed he found himself increasingly drawn to her; but he gave her no indication of his feelings, and she remained completely unaware of them. Only in the summer of 1944, one day when he was walking by himself in the countryside around New Kent, did the thought come to him, "quite clearly and unexpectedly, 'You will marry Madeline'." He shared the thought in confidence with one or two friends, but he still made no approach to her.

Then, for a brief period he began to question, not the reality of his love for her, for that was never in doubt, but whether after all God meant that he should marry her. In great agony of spirit, he handed

back the whole matter to God, ready to let it go, if need be, forever. "Then I went to bed," he writes, "woke up early, and had a powerful and vivid experience. Being deeply in love, I was admittedly in a highly emotional state. In a way, I suppose, the central regions of my heart, which had been frozen up ever since my mother's death, were now being dramatically unfrozen; but it seemed to me that Jesus Christ was somehow in my room and that I had received a categorical assurance that I would marry Madeline. I felt that I was, as it were, enveloped and embraced by the strong and heart-warming love of a powerful Personality, who was quite unmistakable, but different from my conception of Him. I felt a new understanding of the phrase, 'through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord'. I also felt that this encounter with the Lord was more important than the assurance that I should marry Madeline. It was almost a foretaste of Heaven. After that experience, people said to me, 'What happened to you? Somehow you seem to have a new interest in us as people; before, you were only interested in our plans and our ideas.'"

In the spring of 1946, when Frank Buchman returned to England with a large international group, Paul was one of them. Madeline remained in the United States. Next year he was invited to return for a conference at Mackinac, but he did not feel it right to accept. It was only in the spring of 1948 that he wrote to her from England proposing marriage. The letter followed her around for some days. When it finally reached her, she replied at once by cable, "Yes: a million times, yes." They were married in the middle of a vast concourse of their friends at the MRA centre in Michigan on Mackinac Island, in August 1948.

"In those days," writes Paul, "the ways of the world with regard to marriage were mostly based on romantic love, or something cheaper. 'A' is attached to 'B'. 'A' goes after 'B', and either does or does not succeed in getting 'B'. But in MRA one's first commitment is to God's will. If one believes that 'marriages are made in heaven', it means that one needs to take great care that it is God's will, not only one's own inclinations, that one is following. In the Greek world there are often 'arranged marriages'. The MRA way is for God-arranged marriages. He does actually make people for each other, so that they can serve him better together as well as care for each other for life."

"During the first months and indeed the first year or two of our

marriage," Paul confesses, "the sea got decidedly choppy at times. We were both about forty when we married, and though we were trained to turn to God, and though we had so much in common, we were different personalities with our own ways of doing things." They had also to contend with the problems of settling into a new home. On their return from America in 1949, they took the lease on No.40 Charles Street, adjacent to Berkeley Square. It was a beautiful and historic Queen Anne house. But during the war years it had been badly run down. The task of refurbishing it was lengthy and tedious. Moreover neither Paul nor Madeline enjoyed living in the heart of London's West End. But they felt that it was God's will, and their faith was amply vindicated.

"People from all over Britain and all over the world passed through our doors," writes Paul. "Perhaps the most significant event was the visit of a West African statesman, then rather persona non grata with the British Establishment. He was brought to our home for dinner by an outstanding student from his country. To meet him we invited the distinguished Ceylonese singer, Surya Sena, and his wife Nelun, and Major Stephen Foot, a cousin of Sir Hugh Foot (later Lord Caradon), who was British Governor of Nigeria and of Cyprus. We gave our guests for dinner West African ground-nut stew, a piquant dish. After dinner, the MRA chorus came and sang songs, and we showed our guests coloured slides of the MRA centre at Caux in Switzerland. Then he asked if he might speak. He expressed his gratitude for the occasion. He said it was the first time that he had been received in a British home and treated as a man with a taste for good scenery and good music. He told of the rough ride that he had had in dealing with the British, but in a way that was remarkably free from bitterness and recrimination. Major Foot then spoke. He said he knew how insensitive his countrymen could be, and recalled how he, when at Cambridge, had never bothered even to say 'Good Morning' to an African who was not only in the same college but lived on the same staircase.

"This moved our guest, who had never heard a Britisher speak like that before." The African statesman accepted an invitation to Caux. There he made certain decisions which saved his country from violence and assisted its peaceful transition to independence. The guest in question was Nnamdi Azikiwe, "Zik", who became the first

President of an independent Nigeria.

So, amid struggles and miracles, "God managed," says Paul, "to pilot us through the stormy waters; and all the time our love for and understanding of each other deepened."

They celebrated their Silver Wedding at Aston Bury. They invited a varied company of neighbours and friends. "One difficulty about inviting people to your Silver Wedding," writes Paul, "is that you are virtually asking people to give you something silvery – which they most certainly did – and not only silvery. I felt the least I could do in return was to share with them the secret of our married life, which has unquestionably become better every year. The secret is that it is not Madeline's will nor my will which must come out on top (they are about equally strong), but the will of God, who brought us together in the first place." And he adds characteristically, "I rounded off the occasion by playing a record of the Gloria from Handel's Utrecht Jubilate. It is one of his early works, but has a sublimity that leaves one feeling, as someone expressed it, that there is nothing more that can be said."

Paul was always aware of his Greek origins, and proud of them. Inevitably, of course, he was taught classical Greek at his prep school and took to it immediately: he was reading Xenophon and Thucydides at thirteen. When after three times he came top of the form, he received as a prize a beautifully bound copy of 'Stories from the Iliad'. "These stories," he remembers, "stirred me far more than any of the exploits of England's heroes." When the family went on holiday to Dawlish, his father pointed out "those Aegaeon-looking rocky islands on the horizon off Torquay. One of them, he said, answered to Homer's description – 'like a shield in the wine-dark sea'." And when he heard that unique sound made by the water from a wave that has just broken, as it rushes back over the shingle to become part of the next onslaught, he said it made him think of Homer's onomatopoeic phrase, '*polyphlosboio thalasses*'. "This," he notes, "marks the beginning of another of the great loves of my life, the passion for Greece, her past, present and future."

During his first term at Harrow a distinguished member of the Greek community in London addressed the school on the plight of the two million Greek refugees displaced by Turkey after the first World

War. Paul was so moved that when the bag came round in chapel for a collection in their aid, he put into it the entire fortnight's allowance which his father used to send him – “practically all of which,” he notes ruefully, “usually went on sweets, ice-cream, cocoa or orange squash, as I was permanently thirsty and ravenously hungry”.

His experience of change at Oxford gave point and purpose to this, as to all his loves. One day in 1937, while he was in Geneva, he climbed Mont Salève with a couple of friends. “There, on the top of the mountain,” he recalls, “I had an experience that affected the course of my life. It was a warm and sunny afternoon. I think that in addition to short grass and rocks, there was wild thyme. I began to think about Greece, almost to imagine myself in some sun-drenched spot in Arcady. It dawned on me – almost exploded on me – that I was Greek. It was on the top of Mont Salève that I decided that from that time Greece should both have and be an important part of my life.”

He started to teach himself modern Greek, and found himself marvelling at the continuity of the language over the centuries. Next year he went to Greece with Frank Buchman and an interesting group of people, which included two distinguished old ladies – sisters, one the widow of a former Viceroy of India, the other a former lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria – and an ex-Communist from East London. It was his first visit to the country. In Athens, on a walk with a friend, he saw for the first time “the mighty columns of Olympian Zeus, and behind them, silhouetted against the moonlit sky, the graceful and majestic outline of Mount Hymettus. Then I turned round and saw, floodlit by the moon, the Acropolis crowned by the Parthenon, with a magic silver light upon it. With all this was the eternal dry smell of Athens – a mixture of the aroma of bay, cypresses and pepper trees, and mortar.”

During his stay in America he met and made friends with the considerable Greek communities in cities like Seattle and San Francisco. And at Aston Bury after the war he and Madeline gave hospitality to many Greeks from the mainland and from Cyprus, including the distinguished Greek-Cypriot leader, Zenon Rossides.

It was just before Christmas 1958, while he and Madeline were on an extended visit to Athens, that he received a telegram from his friends Peter Howard and Roland Wilson, suggesting that he might fly to Cyprus and see if there was anything he could do to help in an

increasingly critical situation. With the independence of the island drawing near, tension between the Greeks and Turks was mounting; and British troops, trying to keep control, met violent hostility from both sides. He wondered how a man with a Greek name and a British passport would fare in Cyprus. But he felt it right to go; and on Boxing Day he flew, alone, to Nicosia, where he was met by a British journalist friend. He spent several days there. Looking back on that visit he wrote: "I had gone to Cyprus reluctantly. I let God tell me what to do, with no human steer as to how to operate. When I reached Cyprus, I tried to follow His leading. The result was, for me, the birth of another deep love, the love for the torn, suffering, wilful, but irresistible island of Cyprus, and for all her people, Greeks and Turks. From that time on her experiences of joy and hope and pain have been mine." He was captured by the beauty of the island. "I had expected to find a picturesque Mediterranean island, but was totally unprepared for this noble landscape of wide dry plains and majestic mountains. I also got a sense of the importance and destiny of Cyprus in God's plan. To the north-west was the Greek world; to the north, Turkey was her nearest neighbour; to the East, south-east and south, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Egypt."

Next year he met the Cypriot leader, Archbishop Makarios, during his exile in Athens. "I found him," he recalls, "a gracious and apparently tranquil man, not the fire-eating nationalist I had expected. I told him that I had lost my heart to Cyprus, and also that I had recently attended a Moral Re-Armament conference in England, one of the aims of which was to produce a new kind of Briton – humble, not thinking he always knew best and free from the will to run other people's lives and push them around. I added that this gave me hope there would be a new kind of Britain in the making for him to deal with."

Then he and Madeline flew to Nicosia; and there, from the roof of the Nicosia Palace Hotel, they witnessed his triumphal return. Soon afterwards Paul was received again by him in the Archbishop's Palace. On this visit he also met leaders of the Turkish community, including Rauf Denktash, now President of the Turkish part of the island. He accompanied a delegation from both communities to the Moral Re-Armament centre at Caux. Zenon Rossides was also present. At one of the meetings, Paul recalls, "a Greek Cypriot got up and publicly

apologised for his hatred of the Turks. This brought Denktash to his feet, and a most moving personal reconciliation took place between him and Rossides – the former asking forgiveness for having lost his temper, the latter for his attitude of cold intellectual superiority. They took the next meeting together, Denktash introducing the Greek speakers, and Rossides the Turkish. Two of the Greek speakers were girls who had fought with the freedom fighters in EOKA.”

Later that year he realised a long-cherished dream and with Madeline visited Chios, the island in which his father’s ancestors had their roots. In their day they had been great land-owners, but their estates had long been broken up. He was told that there was a church called “the Church of St. Isidore of the Petrocokinos”, and was disappointed to learn that this meant, not that one of his ancestors had been a saint, but that the church had been built on the family’s land.

He and Madeline were in Athens when Gagarin, the first Soviet cosmonaut, visited the city amid much acclaim. Among Paul’s friends was Professor John Theodoropoulos, one of Greece’s foremost philosophers, and President of the Academy. It fell on him in this capacity to give Gagarin an official welcome. Later the professor told Paul that he had said to him, “You have come to a nation that is historically dedicated to a great idea – the idea that next to God the most important thing in life is the freedom of the individual.” Gagarin had looked very thoughtful at this.

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus was for Paul “a physical pain”. “For some reason,” he confesses, “I felt the suffering of this needless Cyprus tragedy more than almost anything else I have ever gone through, except Madeline’s various illnesses.” He drew up a list of friends, and also of leaders, in both communities, and prayed for some of them each day of the week. “God Almighty cares for these people,” he writes, “both those who have committed their lives to Him, and those who still have to make that decision. He cares a thousand, or rather, infinity times more than I do; but I believe that as I “mention them in my prayers”, as St. Paul put it, so, in some way I cannot explain, God’s power and protection are brought to bear upon their lives and the life of Cyprus. It is also my hope that in the next world one will be able to exert a greater influence on this world than when one is more obviously among those present. I should like, among other things, to bring something of God’s recreating and reconciling power



Aston Bury, Paul and Madeline's Hertfordshire home

to bear on the life of Greece, of Turkey and of Cyprus, as I now try to do by prayer and any other means to hand."

Among Paul's loves must surely be counted Aston Bury, the beautiful Tudor manor house in the Hertfordshire countryside, which he and Madeline made their home for twenty-one years. It had been built on the site of a Benedictine monastic building which had stood there for four hundred years, from 1140 to 1540. Parts of it are still visible in the walls of the house.

Paul loved everything about it – its magnificent staircases, its drawing room with mullioned windows and oak panels, its gardens, and not least the wood adjacent to it which they soon acquired. They bought the house in 1951, when they gave their house in Charles Street to Moral Re-Armament and left it in the hands of their friends Ken and Stella Belden. "After all those years of moving around or of living in London," he writes, "it was a wonderful gift to be based in the country." The word "based" is well chosen. For it was never either a castle or a refuge. "We had acquired it to be a welcoming home for people of many nations," and so it proved to be. "In the course of those twenty-one years people from eighty-six different countries visited us,

and some of those visits made history." All who did so became their friends, and were delighted to open their homes in their own countries when Paul and Madeline visited them.

For some years Major General George Channer, a distinguished officer in the Indian Army, and his wife shared the home with them. Diplomats, military men and statesmen, from India, Pakistan, the Far East and the Middle East, came to visit them. "They felt that it was the real old England, only with the difference that instead of keeping them at arms' length, it opened its doors and its heart to them." Another member of their household for some time was a young Japanese who had been trained in the war to be a human torpedo.

They made friends with their neighbours and the villagers, especially the Wiltshires. Mr. Wiltshire had been gamekeeper and woodman at Aston Bury for thirty years. He and his wife would often entertain Paul and Madeline for tea in their little house just outside the estate. They got to know members of the Council – from both political parties – of the rapidly growing Stevenage New Town. After Paul's passing, one of them, a Labour man and trade union leader, wrote to Madeline, "Your home at Aston Bury was a real community centre for people from every level of our society, from trade union leaders to employers and the village folk from Aston. There is no doubt that my pattern of living has changed as a result of having known you both and accepting your genuine friendship and example." Their guests found not only friendship but faith. One of them recalled, "It was at Aston Bury that I found my way back to the Good Road of a faith in God after many years of following my own way." There were informal conferences for people from both sides of industry, and for teachers and students. Sometimes Paul and Madeline would find themselves giving breakfast to coach-loads of people from the shipyards and coal mines of Scotland who had travelled through the night on their way to see one of the Moral Re-Armament plays at the Westminster Theatre in London.

One Christmas they entertained a party of Australians on their first visit to England. They arrived late on Christmas Eve. "It was breathtaking for them," Paul remembers, "as they came in out of the cold night air and saw the blazing fire in the great fireplace, the oak-panelled walls, the stags' heads looking benignly down upon them, the holly, the tree and the crib, and all the decorations."

For some time they played host and hostess to a small school for the small children of whole-time MRA workers who were campaigning abroad. Paul loved children, and they regarded him as a friend and equal. "It was a joy," he recalls, "to pass on to them some of the countryside pastimes I myself had had – to cultivate their own patch of garden and watch the badger setts in the wood." "To see the badgers," he explains, "one gets into position on the leeward side of the sett half an hour before sunset. The badgers will in all probability cautiously emerge, and after some initial scratching will horse around with their cubs, then amble off in quest of food. To a badger the ultimate delicacy is a good juicy wasps' nest." A friend recalled one evening when "he and the gardener and I sat out in the wood to see the badgers at play. Then Paul gave a tremendous sneeze, after which we gave it up." Paul was a champion of the badger. "It is the gardener's and the householder's best friend; and anyone who badgers badgers is, in my opinion, not only a skunk but an ass."

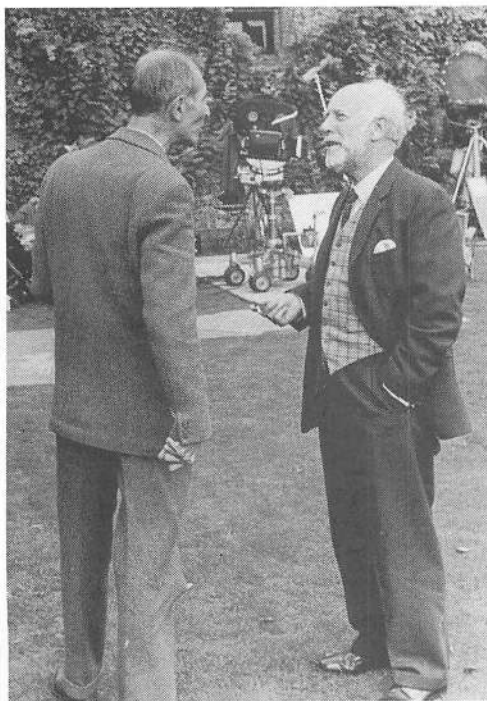
Then there was the hidden panel in the wall of the drawing room, which opened on to a secret stairway. "For some years I used to keep in it an old tiger's skin, and when someone succeeded in finding the panel and pushed the wall at the right place, the door would swing open and he would be confronted with the head of a big tiger with open jaws and ferocious, glowing eyes."

In 1968, it was decided to film Peter Howard's last play 'Happy Deathday'. Paul and Madeline offered Aston Bury as a location. The director felt that October would be the best month to do the filming. It was a risky decision, as Paul knew better than most, since October is usually the wettest month in the year. But the weather was remarkably fine. "For five week Aston Bury was full of actors, technicians, cables, arc lights, and all the paraphernalia of film-making. The cast and household had lunch each day in the big raftered barn. I wondered what part I could play in the proceedings. The thought came to me that I should get to know as many of those coming as possible, give them my heart and be a host to them all, and do everything in my power to make their time at Aston Bury enjoyable." He quickly discovered that the man who was playing the lead role liked predicting the weather,

watching birds, collecting postcards of steam trains, reading and chortling over P. G. Wodehouse – and listening to the music of Handel. They became fast friends.

He and Madeline invited all the film crew to come one Sunday afternoon with their families and friends. They had an enormous tea, and the children went back laden with conkers. When the filming was completed they had a banquet in the barn, with white table-cloths on the trestle-tables, silver candlesticks and all. He told them how much he and Madeline had enjoyed having them and said he believed that they had not only participated in making a film, but in creating something which would be instrumental in saving human life.

A year later they invited them all back to an anniversary reunion. Paul gave them an account of the places where the film had been shown. A girl student of science said that she, like the daughter in the



Paul with actor Cyril Luckham, filming "Happy Deathday"

film, had been in such despair that she had attempted suicide. The film had not only pulled her up in her tracks, but had given her the hope of finding something great and satisfying to live for; and she had found it.

Reluctantly in 1972, Paul and Madeline decided that they could no longer maintain Aston Bury. Early in 1973 they moved to Tirley Garth in Cheshire. It is a large modern country house – Paul compared it to the house near Pangbourne in which he had been born – with extensive gardens famous for their rhododendrons. It had been the home of Miss Irene Prestwich, the daughter of a Manchester businessman, who handed it over to a Trust to be used as an MRA training and conference centre. They settled in at the Lodge, a tiny cottage at the foot of the drive, which had been the home of Miss Prestwich's chauffeur and his wife. They had it enlarged and modernised, with a spacious lounge in which Paul installed his grand piano, records and radiogram.

There they continued to give hospitality to their friends from many lands. Paul presented his lecture-recitals in the great hall of the "big house". He had Bible studies for the young people who had come for training and invited them to tea to listen to Handel and the baroque composers. There were always several small children around, and his tall stooping figure, gesticulating eloquently as he unfolded the beauties of the garden to them, became a familiar sight. Paul's old friend from Oxford days, Roland Wilson, whose two grandsons regularly joined him on these walks, has written, "They often spoke of him. He transcended age and was simply a fascinating companion, with a fund of interesting facts and ideas."

He was also able to give public expression to another of his lifelong passions. "One love", he writes in his final chapter, "I have not sufficiently stressed. I have derived a source of refreshment and uncontrollable mirth from the writings of Sir Pelham Wodehouse. Many of his books are best read aloud. Then one is not so caught up in the excitement of the plot that one misses the subtlety of the humour that is packed into every sentence.

"The news of his passing gave me a sense of personal loss; and he is the only writer about whom I feel that way. Part of his charm is his love of his characters and the refreshing absence from his humour of any trace of malice." One of the letters which Madeline received after Paul's passing was from a lady who had served as a cook at Tirley

Garth. She wrote, "I can still recall him reading P. G. Wodehouse aloud in the big Tirley kitchen while the rest of us peeled apples or stoned plums." (The recitals were often interrupted by the fits of laughter that overtook the narrator).

After what proved to be a last visit to Cyprus in 1974, he had a slight coronary. Later it was discovered that he had cancer. He was always very sensitive to pain and he shrank from surgery. But his faith triumphed over the ordeal of operations, as it did over the shock of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. And as always he made friends with doctors and nurses. He records that after one period in hospital he was almost sorry to leave because he had made so many friends.

During these years he also did a good deal of writing, in addition to publishing his music. He wrote two studies on the Bible – one on the Beatitudes, the other on St. Luke's Gospel – both of which were published. It was during the '70s also that he wrote his unpublished memoirs – from which this appreciation has been largely drawn.

He had developed a mature and serene Christian philosophy of life. "My times are in His hands", he writes. "So for that matter is the question of where I land up in the world to come. What I should like to happen would be for the time of separation between Madeline and myself to be reduced to a minimum, though God will enable us, whichever of us survives, to endure bereavement. Then I would like to experience a great coming together and reunion, a gathering up of many loved and golden strands in a new dimension and in the presence of God. I also hope for a reunion on the basis of a perfect relationship with all the people who have meant much to me in the course of my life. Of course one does not know how things are organised on the other side – only that they will be just right; but I cherish the hope that I may be able to meet some of the people who lived on earth long before my time, but who have immeasurably enriched my life. Away at the top of the list comes George Frederick Handel and then there are Johann Mattheson, Michel Richard de Lalande and Johann Sebastian Bach, the first composer whose music I really loved and who prepared me for all the other baroque masters – a selfless thing to do, and most typical of him.

"There is another aspect of things in the world to come. Plato, I believe, had the idea that the things of this world are a mere reflection

of a greater reality in the other world. So I hope to experience the counterpart of what are to me aesthetically the most glorious things this world can afford, for example the final chorus of Handel's Dettingen 'Te Deum', the 'Amen' chorus in 'Messiah', the chorus 'Dona Nobis Pacem' in Bach's B Minor Mass, Canterbury Cathedral, the Parthenon, the majesty of Sequoia; and also to experience them not just passively but also actively, with one's creative faculties totally uninhibited and unimpaired, and used, as Bach put it, 'for the glory of God and the recreation of the mind'. I hope the much derided notion of 'harping' is not so far removed from reality as has become fashionable to believe.

"Now all this may be on a lower level than what is the true Christian hope. People are apt to rattle off 'faith, hope and charity', without having given much thought to what they mean. I have read that the Greek word translated 'charity' or 'love', *agapē*, was a word coined by the Christians to describe a new phenomenon for which no existing word was adequate. In Greek, human affection is *storgē*, friendship is *philia*, and love in the sexual or romantic sense is *erōs*, but in New Testament Greek *agapē* means the divine love which God has for us and which he puts into the human heart, where it does not naturally reside. It means a love for people that is a passionate, affectionate, resolute and sacrificial concern for their highest good. I have often been on the receiving end of this and occasionally on the other, but in either case it is a wonderful experience, and is the stuff of which the new world order, Heaven on earth, is made; but it is most definitely not a part of my natural make-up. It comes from God.

"Similarly, 'hope' does not mean a vague optimism that both in this world and in the next a good time will be had by all (except the people we don't like!). What it means is that our essence – that of which our personalities consist – will change to become the same as that of Christ Himself, though without His omniscience and omnipotence. The Orthodox Church has a saying, 'He became like us, so that we might become like Him'. That is the Christian hope and the heritage that awaits us. The process can and needs to start in this world, but is fulfilled and perfected in the next.

"What about this world and its future? It was Frank Buchman's strong belief that miracles could happen which can transform the lives not only of individuals but of nations. The world is quick to forget the

magnitude of the economic miracle that turned the pulverised, dismantled, starving ruin that was post-war West Germany into a thriving industrial and industrious giant. Cannot a miracle of equal magnitude, a moral miracle – a miracle of the spirit, as Frank Buchman called it – transform Britain in such a way that it will amaze and impact the world?

“The forces of evil are active, organised, and clever; but it is God who is at the helm of history, and, as it were, holds the ace of trumps. Anyone who is familiar with the Hallelujah Chorus in ‘Messiah’ will know the words, ‘The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever’.

“Let it be added that, just as at the time of Christ the word ‘Father’ connoted not only the source of affectionate, provident and responsible care, but also of commanding authority, so the word ‘kingdom’ meant not a limited, constitutional monarchy, with the Sovereign as an honoured figurehead, but rather an absolute monarchy, where the King’s will is law, and is carried out.

“I think constantly of Frank’s words, ‘A world philosophy will be brought to power through the cumulative effect of millions of people beginning the experience of listening to God.’

“For the record it is worth mentioning that those whose sole preoccupation has been with this world, with the ‘brotherhood of man’ but without the ‘Fatherhood of God’, have mostly succeeded in sowing a crop, not of genuine human brotherhood, but of dragons’ teeth. ‘Liberty, equality and fraternity,’ with human reason and without God, produced Robespierre, Marat, tumbrils and the guillotine – and anyone who wants to draw twentieth century parallels will not find it difficult. On the other hand, the pioneers whose eyes were most constantly fixed on eternity – St. Paul, St. Benedict, St. Francis, John Wesley and Frank Buchman – were also the men whose influence in redirecting the course of the world’s history has been the most effective, the most constructive, and the most enduring.”

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