

Received 24 June 2003

Acknowled receipt.
by e-mail

Loder Family holidays at Cambusmore; 1900 - 1909

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The following is a series of extracts from a privately published book of the diaries of **Brenda Cicely Loder**, a member of the Loder family of West Sussex. A branch of the family still live in Sussex at Leonardslee, and the successful race-horse trainer David Loder is also a relative. The home of Brenda's part of the family was at High Beeches near Handcross. Sadly the house was destroyed during the Second World War and only the gardens survive today.

The Loder family moved in the highest circles at the beginning of the 20th century, and many important people and events are covered in the diaries. Brenda was born in 1883; she married in 1916 and moved with her new husband, Arthur Lees, to Shropshire. She died in 1936 of pneumonia at her home in Hinstock, Shropshire. All her life she suffered from breathing difficulties, an inherited condition which also affects her surviving daughter, Rachel. Some allusions to her poor health occur in these extracts.

Her immediate family were as follows:-

Her father	Wilfrid Hans Loder	1851-1902 [died at Cambusmore]
Her mother	Sarah [nee Rowe]	
Her elder sister	Winifred	1881-1958
Her brothers	Giles Harold	1884-1960
	Norman Wilfred	1886-1940
	Hubert Sydney	1888-1938
Her younger sister	Edith Margaret	1892-?

[Brenda's brothers and sisters are usually referred to by their initials in the diaries.]

Rachel Lees, who has collated and published her mother's diaries, is now 80 and somewhat infirm; it would therefore be appreciated if you could contact me in the first instance if you have any enquiries about these extracts. We would be very pleased to hear about any additional information you could give us about people or events which are mentioned. As a result of our researches Rachel has already made contact with the Colville and Gurney families. Richard Colville, Rachel and myself have talked about publishing an expanded version of the diary, with explanations of the famous people and events which crop up on almost every page. Sadly the advanced years of two out of the three principals, and my own busy working life, mean that it probably won't ever happen.

Finally, to explain who I am. I am the son of one of Rachel's oldest friends - they have known each other for over 60 years. Since I first read the book I have been helping Rachel with further research about some of the people mentioned in it, and also the places; whence several visits to the Dornoch area. I have also created an index for it on my computer.

Dan Robinson June 2003

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Golf - Carnegie Shield open to members of a Golf Club - amateur

The Pirie family were visitors in Rogart up to the 1970s

DAKme

[Please note: my own explanations and notes about the extracts appear in *italics*]

[Preface]

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARIES OF BRENDA CICELY LODER 1893-1916

EDITED BY HER DAUGHTER RACHEL BRENDA LEES

PREFACE

I FOUND THE DIARIES OF MY MOTHER, BRENDA CICELY LODER, IN AN OLD TRUNK IN A LOFT AT HINSTOCK COURT; THERE WERE ALSO VARIOUS NOTE-BOOKS, AND HER COLLECTION OF PRESSED WILD FLOWERS. SHE WAS BORN IN FEBRUARY 1883, AND KEPT A DIARY FROM 1893 TO 1916, WHEN SHE MARRIED ARTHUR LEES. UNTIL 1907, THE ENTRIES ARE DAILY, BUT AFTER THAT SHE TENDS TO RECORD SEVERAL DAYS UNDER ONE DATE, AND 1914 AND 1915 ARE CONTAINED IN JUST SEVEN PAGES. I FIRST READ SOME OF THEM WITH MY ELDER SISTER ANNE, BUT DID NOT START WORK ON THEM SERIOUSLY UNTIL AFTER ANNE'S DEATH IN 1992. UNFORTUNATELY, BY NOW ANYONE ELSE WHO COULD HAVE HELPED WITH THE IDENTIFICATION OF PEOPLE, OR EXPLAINED EVENTS, IS ALSO DEAD. I HAVE OMITTED SOME OF MY MOTHER'S MORE INTIMATE THOUGHTS, AND SUMMARISED THE EVENTS IN PLACES WHERE THEY WERE SOMEWHAT REPETITIOUS, AND I HAVE ALSO LEFT OUT SOME OF THE LISTS OF THE VISITORS WHO CAME SO OFTEN TO HIGH BEECHES AND CADOGAN SQUARE; OTHERWISE IT IS IN HER OWN WORDS.

MY SINCERE THANKS ARE DUE TO MRS MARGARET WALKER FOR SO PATIENTLY TRANSCRIBING MY HAND-WRITING, AND TO MISS MONICA STRAIN FOR HER PATIENCE AND ADVICE AND ART WORK.

RACHEL LEES, HINSTOCK 1999

1900

On April 2nd "we had a tea-party of Gladys H-Brown, Gladys Hoare & Patience. Mother & Father went up to Scotland to look at the place Father has taken, Cambusmore, near Golspie in Sutherlandshire." Next day they went to the British Museum & saw the Elgin Marbles.....

On August 4th, Brenda was writing at Cambusmore Lodge, The Mound, near Dornoch. They had travelled up in a sleeping carriage "'The Noah's Ark' as Father called it." When Norman had recovered from mumps, he travelled up to join them, accompanied by Miss Webb, the lady's maid. They were all delighted by the beauty of the countryside and the convenience of the house and garden. After a week, B. had lost her cough, and she had had no asthma since they came up. They had various visitors, including Uncle George who had partly taken the place with Mr. Loder. They caught a few flounders and trout, but no salmon except by netting. "We sand-eeled on Friday! That was splendid. They come up under the sand every full moon, & are very good to eat." On Sundays they had a service in the drawing-room, "singing the hymns & canticles but reading the Psalms & Father reading the sermon out of a book. Golspie is a good-sized village, with several pretty good shops. The people are so nice up here, so hospitable & honest & obliging."

By August 20, they had shot four times, and got over 400 brace. "Dornoch is a pretty little place, with lovely golf-links." They went there to watch a match between two St Andrews pros, Aucuterlone and Kircaldy, which the latter won. The girls walked and fished on most days, occasionally going out with the guns, and B took numerous photos. They had brought their instruments with them, and had some musical evenings. They played games after dinner such as Philadex, Up Jenkyns, Spelling Games & Riddles. "Why is Brenda like a mushroom? Because she develops in a dark room; Why is Mother like a cloud? Because she always reigns (rains), or is always missed (mist)."

On Sept 7th, they heard that the Boers had released all their prisoners except a few officers. "We saw Lady Constance Mackenzie, the Duke's niece, who dresses in a kilt, shoots, stalks, breaks in horses & tries in every way to copy a man. I always feel sorry for a girl like that (she is only 19)." One day, 5 roe deer were shot in the alders, besides a varied bag of game.

The boys went back to school on the 18th; Norman had passed into fifth form. Miss Magill, French governess, arrived, and Edith started lessons again. Elsie, a visitor, "nearly had a bad accident on her drive back in the coach from Garve. The front horse tumbled & was trampled on by the other two, & the driver just stopped them from going over the bank!" B. was laid up for four days "with a cold on my chest. On Thurs evening my asthma was very bad; it was awful fighting for breath. Mother & Nurse were very good to me. However, they say that people hardly ever die of asthma, & I have recovered once more!" Aitchison, their butler, had to go back to Sussex with acute sciatica. They met the Duchess of Sutherland at Dunrobin and were very impressed by her. They bought a spinning-wheel at Rogart for 25/-, and had a spinning lesson from one of the cottagers. B. also learnt how to make real Scotch scones (on a griddle) with Mrs Dewar, the wife of their keeper.

A magazine cutting stuck in the back of this diary volume states that the rent for the shoot and house for the shooting tenant was £1000.

They were really sorry to leave on Oct. 9; they had evidently made friends with all the local people and greatly appreciated all the kindness they had received. It was a twelve hour journey to London, their carriage, saloon, being detached at Willesden and taken to Victoria. They arrived at Balcombe [*the nearest railway station to High Beeches*] at 11-30.

1901

"Aug 3rd & 4th. Our 'great journey north' in the Noah's Ark (a 45ft saloon, with 6 beds, servants' compartment & place for luggage) - the whole family this time, also 7 servants. I enjoy lying awake & looking out of the window. We were 2½ hours late, owing to a delay at Carnforth where the engine broke down. Our meals went off all right; Mother was perfectly splendid with the tea & boiled eggs! It was jolly seeing everyone here again. Dewar, Mrs Dewar, Gordon etc. Aug 5th. A quiet Sunday for our first day. We had our service at 11am. & walked towards the ferry, the Sunday walk, after tea. The laundrymaids have arrived up, also Mrs Aitchison," [cook?].

On Aug 12th, "four guns had a better shoot than expected, considering the grouse disease in Sutherlandshire." They fished, sand-eeded, climbed and walked. "Uncle Willie is to get back from Aden on the 18th. He did awfully well with the expedition against the Turks there, & was mentioned in all the papers."

On Sunday, they had twenty-six for their service in the house. They used Novello's chant book. "W & I had our Sunday class in the summer house from 2-30 to 3-0. The first time I had done that sort of thing, so although it was a very simple subject - Noah & the flood - my words did not always come very fluently, & I felt nervous! I have been praying for God's help. I had Johnnie, Nellie & Willie Gordon." Next Sunday, she told them about Samuel, and they made texts out of letters, and she found speaking to them easier. On one week-end, their guests were Ruth Brand, Mr W Carlile and Mr Dudley Ryder. They watched the golf championship for the Carnegie Shield, and went to the horse and cattle show at Dunrobin, "where they saw the local celebrities, the Duke and Duchess, Andrew Carnegie (I am quite sick of hearing people talk about his millions!), Lady Constance Mackenzie, Lord Rosebery etc." In the evenings, they had "a good deal of music & tiddlywinks. Mother went up to Kinbrace to see the Taylors & the others bicycled from there to Helmsdale, about 22 miles."

Aug 27th was W's twentieth birthday. "Long ago I used to think 20 a sort of grandmother's age, but now it seems very different, as I am nearly there myself." On the 29th, 32½ brace were shot, and in September "they got 11 roe-deer in the alders." Norman caught his first salmon, on his trout-rod. Harold's name had been put down for the Grenadier Guards. The three boys all went back to school on Sept 17, Hubert's first term at Eton with the other two. "Father & Major Oxley had a good partridge shoot - 25 brace. An earthquake at 1-30 am., that was felt all up the North of Scotland. Cousin Isabella painted an old fisherwoman on the estuary. The papers have been full of honors the last week - President Mackinley's assassination, several

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reverses in Africa, & the founding of the Cobra.” [The ‘Cobra’ was a destroyer which sank on the way from the contractor’s yard to Portsmouth, with the loss of most of the crew, on Sept 18th, 1901]. There is a good deal of small-pox about London, so Mother is thinking of having us vaccinated.”

“Uncle Colvile, Mother & I spent a day at Thurso, or rather 1 1/2 hrs there & 6 hours in the train. The Helmsdale valley is lovely, but Caithness is uninteresting - flat & cultivated land. Thurso is a pretty little place - with very fine cliffs & a view across the sea to Hoy, one of the Orkneys.”

On Oct 8th, they had a spinning lesson, “then good-byes to Mrs Gordon, the dogs, garden etc & a hearty send-off from the gillies etc. It was sad leaving dear old Cambusmore, but I feel that God has work for us to do elsewhere & He has sent us all many blessings since August! A very good journey down, but we arrived at one instead of 11-30, as the trains did not fit in well from Willesdon.

1902

“We packed into the ‘Noah’s Ark’ at 4-30pm. The train was late - only just caught the one at Croydon. Father & Harold passed us at Willesden in the first part of the 7-45 from Euston. We were put on to the 2nd portion. We were in high spirits & settled down to sleep at about 9-30. Sat Aug 2nd. Woke at 1 am. at the Shap Fell. Arrived punctually at Perth & Inverness. Got to the Mound at 1-30pm. Everybody looking very well. The grouse, gardens etc are backward owing to the great amount of rain. Father saw Dr Simpson; he is a friend of Dr Barlow’s & may do him good.

Sun 3rd - Father very poorly.

Mon 4th. Drove to Bray & sand-eeled. The Duke still nets at the mouth of the estuary, which we think a great shame.

Aug 5. We launched the new boat, a dingey[sic]. Dewar fell in - to the huge amusement of us all. W & I walked to the Ferry; quantities of sand-eels.

Aug 6th. Father shot at L. Ruggie, but he did not sleep well, & had bad cramp.

Aug 8th. We netted at the Sluices - got a good haul of 2 salmon, grilse & a good number of sea trout.

Sat Aug 9th. We slept through it all, but Mother had a terribly anxious night. Father could not sleep. Up till 2am, Mother & Nurse did all they could for his cramp, then he said he would walk to his dressing - room & bathe his face. He fell down in a dead faint, luckily only biting his tongue. He did not come round for ½ an hour. Dewar drove to Golspie for the Doctor, who quieted Mother’s fear of heart or a stroke, by saying it was simply exhaustion. It has only been during the last week that we children have realised how ill Father is. I cannot bear to think that Mother might lose him so soon. But he is in God’s hands. He stayed in bed until tea-time, then came down for 4 hours & played ‘bridge’. Esme & I drove to Dornoch where we came in for part of the Coronation service. W. planted two flags at the top of Cambusmore Hill. They look so diminutive 600 feet

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above us! I rowed Esme to Porson in the little boat. It rained too hard to see any bonfires.

Sun Aug 10th. The service as usual. Mother read the sermon. Father is very weak, but he walked to the garden. He hardly likes Mother out of his sight even for a few minutes. Our Sunday class only consisted of 4 - the other 5 did not come. W, Esme & I had a 5½ mile walk round Skelbo wood."

"Written Thurs 14 morning. We feel absolutely miserable about Father. Mother & Nurse were up with him all the time. We are creeping about on tip-toe & there are rugs on the stone floor of the hall. Every door has suddenly taken to squeaking - despite deluges of oil. Tues night, they tried 'packing' him (ie. hot bottle & flannels all round you) which answered well - he got 4 hours good sleep. He is really very ill, for added to his old kidney & digestion trouble there is this nervous shock to his system which the fall gave him. He can hardly lift his head or feet, & his neck has swelled up. It is dreadfully sad to see him in this state. The last few days have dragged horribly. I hardly feel as if I can settle down to anything. Dr Simpson is very nice.

Written Sun 17th. Father slept a little with the aid of a sleeping draught (very nasty smelling stuff mixed with milk), but to-day he is very bad. Mother took our little service. H. read the Psalms & Uncle Gerald read the Lessons. Ps. 86 was so very helpful & appropriate. Mother looked so brave & beautiful; she cried when reading the prayer for the sick. Merrick left this morning; he has been such a help. He & H. are both very good shots; 3 days' shooting they have got 39, 31½ & 39 brace.

Mon Aug 18th - Dr Barton arrived. Father can digest nothing, so they began feeding him on milk & water. A nurse came from Edinburgh."

"Written Fri Aug 22, 1902. Tues 19th was the terrible sad day of our dear Father's death. *[Rachel believes that her grandfather was a diabetic -- a condition which was not understood at this period]* W & I were dressing when we heard Mother & Dr Barton talking in low tones outside the door. Mother's voice was hard & dull, as if absolutely forcing herself to speak. She was speaking about telegraphing to various relations. We at once realised that Father was much worse, & Mother told us that he could only live a few hours more - that he was sinking through heart failure. W was quite calm - I cried - then we told the boys & E. We dressed & then came those long hours - from 6am to 1pm - of suspense & waiting. Mother knelt by his side, giving oxygen to relieve his breathing. We stood about in the passage or in the bedroom - all next day that heavy breathing haunted us. Harold broke it to Uncle Gerald - he cried bitterly. During the last hour, he had no suffering; when Harold & Dr Barton moved him in bed, he said 'I am afraid I am giving you a lot of trouble'. The end came at one o'clock. Only Mother, Nurse & Norman were in the room. He just said 'where is Mrs Loder?' & drew his last breath. Death is many times more beautiful than I thought, & now I know that he is very happy in Heaven. After a few minutes we went out of the room, & left Mother there. After a little while she went into the next room & lay on the bed for hours as if dazed & stunned. She liked us to go in & read a Psalm. She looked more beautiful than I have ever seen her before. Dr Barton had comforted us very much by telling us that the kidney disease he had was quite incurable, & that had his energy failed several months ago, & he had taken to his bed then, he would have been an invalid for many

years with much suffering. Thank God he did not. We were all brave for Mother's sake. There was so much to be done. There were dozens of telegrams to be written & sent. Uncle Gerald helped us to start making arrangements about the funeral, the journey down etc. Aunt Louise & John arrived in the afternoon. The Scotch have a saying that when near the sea the sick one dies at the turn of the tide - the tide turned to go out just at 1pm. The evening lights were glorious over the sea. I sat on the seat overlooking the Mound & God helped me.

Wed 20th. We had many things to do – the coffin to be ordered, telegrams to Mr Boyd about the funeral, notices to the paper etc. It seemed so strange doing it all without Mother or Father's help. Father looked so quiet & peaceful - I shall never fear death again. Mother went for a walk round the garden. The first terrible struggle was over & she was calm.

Thurs 21. From 2 till 5 o'clock we all stayed in the summer-house, making wreaths of heather. The coffin was placed in the drawing-room; it came from Inverness & was quite plain oak, with brass handles, with a tablet 'Wilfred Hans Loder. Born October 4th 1851, died August 19th 1902'. Edith made a wreath of white heather, & Mother helped us put wreaths of heather round, & the crosses & wreaths on top."

Fri Aug 22. W & I were up at 6.0. The laundry maids very kindly gave us tea. Then we put evergreens & bracken on the low cart for the coffin. Dewar, Danny, Gordon, Sandy, Angus, Willie & others carried it; Harold, Norman, Hubert & Uncle Gerald & Uncle George walked behind. Mother, Nurse, W & I drove on afterwards. I felt sad leaving little Edith behind, but it

was Mother's wish, & Aunt Louise & John are staying on. We had dinner at Perth, & were put on the 8-15 train. Sat 23rd. We went from Willesden to Croydon & from there (by the 10-40) to Balcombe. The officials were most kind to us - Father was well-known among them, & honoured & respected. Our two carriages were pushed on to the siding at Balcombe, & Mother, W & I got straight into the carriage. Chapman drove us up. Sjoquist had decorated the farm cart most beautifully with evergreens & white flowers & purple covering over the sides. The boys walked behind. They got up at 1 o'clock, & the coffin was taken into the drawing-room. When Aunt Amelia, Aunt Elisa, Uncle Colville & Uncle George came, we all knelt round the coffin, & Mr Boyd said a few prayers, which helped us all. It did Mother good seeing her sisters; she has been yearning to see them or Aunt Ethel. The numerous letters from friends & relations have been much valued by her, especially I think, those from Father's men friends, for all had looked upon him as one whom they could trust & ask advice of - which is the proof of a good friend. Mr Ryder wrote - 'He was so kind to me, & I liked him very much.' I miss him most terribly at every turn down here. We must do all we can for Mother.".....

They returned to Scotland on Wed the 27th. They stopped at Inverness, where Uncle George took them round the town & to Mackay's shop, "where most of the goods are stuffed." Harold had passed into Sandhurst. There were no celebrations for W's twenty-first birthday. On their usual Sunday Service, Mother read the prayers, Uncle George the Lessons & Sermon, Harold the Psalms, & W. played. W & B took their Sunday classes in the afternoon. Life went on quietly, with their usual activities, including fishing, walking & visiting local people. "The morning is spent in preparing

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my Bible lesson, reading, working & writing letters - answering the many letters of sympathy that we have received." She & W. were practising their music, and playing in the evenings.

"Thurs Sept 4. The King and his yacht arrived at Dunrobin, having been round the West of Scotland. A large cruiser 'The Liveley' is with it; they are anchored nearly a mile out. The midges are awful - not even repulsed by oil of cloves. We saw the King in a motor car with the Duke of S. on the way to Seibo Castle, & at the Mound Station, where he went by the Duke's special from Dornoch. "How Father would have enjoyed seeing the royalties about! The King looked very well. He went on the engine from Dornoch to Dunrobin. Mr Austen Chamberlain was with him." Uncle U, Harold & Norman went on the moor (Bray & the Home Beats).

On Sunday, Brenda struggled with her Bible class, but was determined to improve. They watched a glorious sunset. "Uncle G & Mother have long confabs about the legacy duties - probably about £40 & £50. At present the furniture & High Beeches & 49 Cadogan Sq [*the Loder's London house*] is being valued. Father is one of those rare cases of those who has more money than he thought he had - at first Mother feared we should not be able to live at High Beeches. Poor old Weller writes quaint letters to Uncle G about 'the beasts'. U.G. says 'Bother the beasts' & passes the letter on to Mother. Poor Weller! he feels the loss of a beloved master, on whose property he has worked all his life, most dreadfully."

"Mon Sept 8. W. after mighty struggling, has just made herself a blouse. I have not yet achieved that! W. & I visited 'Betsy' the Skelbo Shepherd's wife, formerly servant at Corriemullie & Amat. She knew all the Loder brothers; she saw Mother just after she was married & called Grandmama, Mrs Loder! "Next day they walked on the moors with the shooters & Dewar killed a large adder. On the 10th, they went by train to Dornoch "very slow & joggly." On the 11th, they collected "stag's horn from Braie for a wreath, & sat in Mrs Dann's cottage. The children are called Lily, John, Jemima, Yohema & Donald. Sailor, Dewar's dog, got badly stung by an adder near Dalnamaine; they think he will recover. They shot at 8 or 9 adders. We had tea at the Ferry & caught cuddies & carricks - also a devil-fish." Sjoquist, the High Beeches head gardener, arrived for a week.

On Sep 15. "We drove Skelbo Wood for roe-deer with H, N, Sjoquist & Dewar as guns - 3 roe, also a fox." Harold left for Sandhurst on 16th. "He has been such a help & comfort to Mother, & I know she felt very low." Aunt Annie & Felix arrived. Dewar & N caught two salmon, nine and eight pounds. Hubert was allowed a gun for the first time; he shot a duck.

On Sun 21st "Mother read the service; she almost cried when reading the 1st Lesson - 'Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?' (11 Kings 1) How we all want Father!" B. took her little class, & afterwards read Kingsley's memoirs.

Sep 22. "Norman & Hubert simply love Cambusmore, the people & the surroundings. N. amuses us in the evenings - he is as good as a comic actor about 'Georgie Murray & the wee truitees', 'those girls (W & me) fishing' etc. I watched Mrs Dewar feed the puppies on tripe, horse meat & soup, with greens & barley. Our

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dogs, Foannag & Jock grow visibly." N & H & Aunt Annie & Felix left, & the house seemed very lonely. "W & I went to Rogart with them, & drove back. I occasionally have a spinning lesson from Mrs Campbell. The wool has to spin, double & twined. I am knitting Miss Magill's mittens - the oily wool is good for chilblains, Harold's daily routine at Sandhurst is - get up at 6, - 6 to 6-50 dress, & clean clothes, buttons, bayonet, belt etc. Fall in in front of College for 1st Parade. 7-8 Breakfast, 9-1 Work at Engineering, Topography, Tactics etc. Luncheon. 2nd Parade. 2-3 Languages. 5-15 - 6-15 Gymnasium 6-30 - 7-30 Mess 8. Lights out 10-30 or 11."

Uncle Alfred & Aunt Mabel, also Uncle Colvile & Gussie came to stay. They fished & walked, once about seven miles along the estuary. B felt happier about her Bible class; the children were more attentive, The harvest had just begun - a very late season. N. wrote about their journey back to Eton, describing "Felix's eating capacity, & the Earl of Stafford's drunken footman!! I have joined the 'Writing Mission'. My girl is Bridget Gymn, & her address is 27 Baltic St, Golden Lane, St Lukes, London EC. I fished with Aunt Annie, but am no sportsman (or woman?); my arm aches after about 10 minutes! Have read 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' by Conan Doyle. It interests me intensely.

On 29th, the guns shot in pouring rain." Next day, they were up at 5-30am. to see Aunt Annie off. She had to go to Perth, & then up to Fulchan, a twelve hours journey. "Harold has begun riding & 'digging'. Ernest has failed for the Civil Service. I feel so sorry for him & Uncle Colvile is bitterly disappointed. A roe-deer drive in Skelbo. 2 deer."

On Sun the 5th, they climbed up Cambusmore after service. "I usually funk it because of my breath! I told my class about David & Goliath. I sang after dinner - I think my voice is getting stronger! I am so glad Norman has asked me for a motto. He is 17 now. 'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt', was the motto I gave him, & I wrote a few words about it!"

"Written Sun Oct 12th. W & I are learning to milk the cows. We get up at 6-30, then sit in Mrs Dewar's kitchen in front of a blazing fire & have hot tea & toast, & then we milk. On Thurs I watched, yesterday I milked - spilt a good deal & my wrist ached, but it is not as hard as I thought. The early mornings are lovely - a crisp frost & the sunrise glorious colour over the sea. W & I are learning this for our farm. Norman has been elected a member of the Debating Society - he says 'I made a magnificent speech among cheers of laughter'. Also Harold's camel back, as he used to have, is getting quite straight. Gussie has explained to us a good deal about money matters & chaffs us about his 10/- interviews! W. has had to settle a lot about her Giles Loder Trust money, & Gussie is her solicitor. The roe-deer shoot in the alders was quite a triumph (3 bucks & 9 deer) & haunches were distributed round to the crofters etc. 4 were sent to Bookless (Leeds) where we send our grouse. Yesterday W & I walked with the drivers to the 1st line of butts. Gussie & I stalked rabbits at 6pm, but it got almost dark, & G only had shots at stones which looked like rabbits.

On Fri, W & I visited Angus Perry, the well-known weaver - he is in a consumption, poor man! I can't understand how people in this pure air can develop that vile disease. His old mother was spinning. He dyes, weaves & washes the stuffs all himself - doing the whole process from the plain sheep's wool to the cloth for dresses or suits. He reminded us of Silas Marner. Our return home has been postponed to the 21st, owing

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to the bad state of the drains at home.

Sunday Oct. 12th. We have been simply drinking in the fresh air all day. How strong & well I feel. After service we climbed up a steep part of Cambusmore Hill, & later we got to the top of Ben Tarvie. Gussie explained a lot about the trust money & various other things that muddle me a good deal."

"Sun Oct 19. This week has passed happily & quietly, but I have such a longing to have Father with us. W & I have milked cows every morning. We read aloud, work & have music after dinner. Fishing was no use, so Dewar shut the sluice at the rock pool. Willie caught 10 sea-trout (average 6lbs) in a net at the bottom of the salmon ladder. The salmon, we think, go up at night. We have given a flannel petticoat to each of the crofters. The venison was much appreciated. I got on better with my class - we had questions on Jesus', David's, Sampson's & Daniel's lives & I was surprised & pleased at how well they answered. I have at last finished my table cloth, & have read the 'Life of Napoleon III'. Just heard from Gussie - he chaffs us about W & my farm in Norfolk, but we are really serious about it! Norman writes that he spoke at the debate 'whether motor-cars should be allowed to go faster than 12 miles an hour'. Of course, he voted against greater speed 'because I love horses so'. Mon & Tues. Said good-bye to the crofters. Spinning lesson (9lbs wool - 4d yd, 10-15/- for blanket)."

They left Cambusmore on Wed 23rd. "Mother looks so bad. She has been obliged to realise now that the disgraceful state of the drains at HB (put in by Basset-Smith only 12 years ago & now leaking in every pipe) aggravated Father's illness. She seems quite crushed.

1903

"Wed July 15th. We left Balcombe at 4-20 in our Noah's Ark, ie. the 42 ft L & NW saloon - via Croydon (1/4 hour wait) to Euston, where Audrey met us. We stopped at Inverness - lost 1/4 hour between there & The Mound, arriving at 2-0. Stilwell & the two horses arrived on Tues. We have our own wagonette. Fri & Sat 17 & 18. Caught a few brown trout & sea trout. Sun 19. Usual service at 11-0 - only one male voice, the footman Alfred, who sang very well. Mother read one of Kingsley's sermons - her voice broke when she read the last prayer. But she loves being at Cambusmore again - everything is so very dear to her because of Father." After service, some seeding grass brought on B's hay fever, which affected her badly; she had to go back to blue goggles again. Next day, they fished from a boat & "saw Dewar's 'Massacre of the Innocents', ie. the black backed gulls.

July 21st. How kind & hospitable the Scotch people are! Macbeath, the head shepherd, shook me warmly by the hand, inquired after 'Mistress' Loder, & talked hard about his family - one in America another in S Africa, one going to College, & how he would like to end his days in S Africa. He showed us some most interesting photos of America. We have been asking children to our Bible class next Sunday. They seem keen to come."

During the next week, they fished, & sand-eled. "New moon, so this is one of the 3 times the eels are thrown up under the sand. It was a pretty sight seeing the men, women & children grubbing them up. Mother & I walked back from the sea - nearly 5

miles!"

During the next few weeks, they fished and walked on the hills. On Sundays, more children attended their Bible Classes, and they were especially encouraged when the carpenter, Leslie, brought his two little children, as he had been known as a drunkard. W. and Audrey were making a list of the wild flowers in flower, more than 50 so far. They drove to Dunrobin and Dornoch. B. was feeling weak, and had a bad attack of asthma at 3-0 one morning, which left her "washed-out & floppy all day." By Aug 19, she was beginning to feel stronger, but it was a great disappointment to have so much asthma and hay-fever in the wonderful air of Scotland.

On July 28th, "Audrey & I rowed up the river in our little boat 'The Salley'. We only stuck once - having to punt across a sand-bank. Miss Magill thought she was going to the bottom more than once! I am very keen about my smocking! The new 2nd keeper, Hugh Frazer, is lodging at Dalnemaie. Aug 1st. I met Sybil on the 3rd portion of the King's Cross train, which was run in 5 portions, the night before. Dewar took several pointers out & was fairly satisfied with the number of birds."

By August 3rd, all three boys had arrived. On one day they netted at the Sluices, getting eight grilse and sea trout, flounders and grey mullet. Kenneth had won a scholarship to Oxford worth £120 a year for five years. On the 9th, they walked up the monument hill; the monument was sixty-five feet high, with a sculptured statue of the 1st Duke of Sutherland. Miss M left and Edith was free from lessons for the holidays.

"Tues Aug 11th, Sybil, W E & I went for a long drive, down to Rogart, up on the moor, down Dunrobin Glen, & back through Golspie, 16-18 miles. V& brought back Uncle George from the station. The moors were looking lovely with the heather almost at its best. We saw a herd of deer some way off - the first I have ever seen. W, Sybil & I made a mad attempt to walk through the alders & got wet through. Foannag hunted & nearly got drowned in the rushes & water." On the 12th, Uncle George, Harold & Norman shot fifty brace, which was satisfactory; there were a good many 'cheepers'. The grouse sent to Bookless Bros, Leeds, fetched 5/- a brace. The weather was too wet to go out on some days, & they "danced Scotch reels, read, worked, played music etc. indoors. The others enjoy accompanying my Bellman Sonata. Uncle G. has brought up a piano score of the 'Valkuries,"

On the 15th, they fished for codling at the Ferry and chatted to the Embo fisher folk. They talked Gaelic among themselves and hardly understood English. "One boy, after a lot of pushing by the others, said 'Gi' us a baubie'! I told the men we had caught 8 fish, & one said 'Ye ought to have caught 9, Miss, 3 to fry, 3 to boil, & 3 for bait' - according to an old song. They played "Up Jenkyns" and other rowdy games after dinner. They were saddened by the news of the illness of Weller, and feared he had the same illness as Mr Loder. August 19th was the anniversary of his death.

Fri 21st. The house was full again with family visitors. On Sunday, W had five girls, B. three boys and Edith three little ones at their Bible classes. On Tues, B. had asthma badly again. Aug 27th was W's 22nd birthday; Mother gave her a chinchilla fur boa, and B. some carving wood. On the 31st, Aunt Louise and son John, eight years old, left. "He said, 'if

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Aunt Sarita asks me to come back to-morrow or next year, I should say to-morrow'!"
He and E. had had great fun together.

It was too wet to shoot on Sept 1st, so they all went to Dornoch, where the boys played golf, and they came back by train. "There was a drunken man being hauled about - a horrid sight - makes me realise what a sin drunkenness is." Uncle Reggie and Aunt Maggie arrived; their train was two hours late.

On Sep 2nd, they had great excitement trying to shoot a seal that appeared at the Sluices; various people shot at it and finally N. got it with a shot at about fifteen yards off. They looked for it next day; the gillie said it would float in eight days time; he said that a human body floats up-stream, and upright.

"Fri. Sept 4. Neuralgia (or rheumatism?) in my neck bothered me a good deal. The boys played golf at Dornoch. On Sunday, we sang 'Onward Christian Soldiers', but not pianissimo. Stilwell has a good voice - also Alfred, the 1st footman. The rain is unending. Our river was six times in spate during Aug. On Monday Hubert caught his first salmon, at Torbol - 8½ lb. - he played it for an hour On Sept 8th there was a grand opening of the Technical Institute at Golspie by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Mr Carnegie, the Duchess etc. We saw 4 cormorants sitting on Frazer's boat; another time one had a live flounder in its mouth."

On Sept. 9th, B. drove 'Jockey' back after taking the shooters to Dornoch wood; they got seven roe-deer Uncle G and Hubert caught sixteen salmon and six sea-trout. There was sympathy for Nana, their original nurse, whose husband had died. On Fri Sept 11th, E and B fetched the first post letters, their usual occupation after breakfast, and then walked up Cambusmore Hill. "Mother returned Lady Albert Lewson-Gore's call. It was an effort for her to go in, but I'm glad she did. We have a great rage for chess now. Edith plays about 4 games a day. We had a game v. Mr Campbell; it is much more interesting playing against a person who really knows about the game.

Sun 13th. Tried a new Te Deum chant, which went very well. 14 children at our class. Mon 14. E & I 'mounted' Cambusmore Hill to see the snow on the Grampians. The whole view was beautiful with the lights & shades of the setting sun. The bag was 25 brace. Tues 15. N. went back to Eton. Hubert has a boil on his face, so Mother is keeping him back. Sept 18 I had asthma again yesterday, but better to-day - it is such a relief to go through a day quite without asthma. We met Dr & Mrs Simpson in Golspie & he showed us all over the hospital. There were 5 patients, 2 dear old women, 2 girls & a man. It is all most beautifully fitted up (except the pictures, which were 'willed' there!!!) We inspected even the fire-pump. He showed us the operating-room - the many little instruments that are used - the gut for sewing up - the liquid that stops any bleeding at once - the sterilizing utensils etc (for everything to do with bandaging & all the instruments etc used in hospital are all sterilized now.) A doctor's work always interests me - had I been a man, I always think I should like to have been either a Dr or a clergyman. Then he explained to us all the Rotgen rays process. What a wonderful invention - found out about 1896. It was interesting seeing the bones of one's hand & wrist. A child's hand has a white line (space) between the joints. We saw a photo of a needle stuck in the hand. I think that

Dr Simpson & Mr Boyd are the nicest & best men we know. They are such Christians!"

Sun Sep 20. "14 children in our class. A good ramble by the 'precipice' & waterfall. Wed 23rd. We 'drove' the moor to Braie & walked in line back by Torboll. The guns were U. George, Mr Huth, Harold & Dr Simpson. The latter had a look at my eyes before starting - but said he must come again '& overhaul' me! Fri 25th. The shooters got 19½ brace off the Ach Veich beat, walking in line, & working two pointers. Dr S has now set my mind at rest about myself - I have been worrying at being so easily 'defaite'. He sounded me thoroughly - said my lungs were no worse (there is one weak spot) & gave me some iron tonic. He said he would rather I did not walk much for a little time - then I shall soon be strong again."

On Sat Sep 26th, the guns had a half day, getting 32 partridges, and other game. W and B had their 'class' children's party. Fifteen came and had tea in the servants' hall, and played drop the handkerchief, nuts & may, thread the needle, potato races and oranges & lemons, and hissing & clapping. They all had sweets and the non-prize winners had ½d each. "Who should drive up while we were playing the ring & string game in the courtyard but the Duchess of Sutherland, so we bundled the children off to tea. W. whispered to me in a stage whisper 'The Duchess', which at once made me think of 'Alice in Wonderland'. However, Mother was not in, so she only left her cards. We are so glad she has called, & it is such an honour. I am sure it is because she really wants to know Mother having heard how good she is - from all sides. Curious that she came just at that moment - I wonder what she thought of us!"

The seal they had shot over three weeks before surfaced on Sep 27th, and was extremely smelly and devoid of hair. B. was taking three iron tonic pills a day "nasty things - just like boot-buttons." Next day, Frazer took the three girls for a long row on the estuary, and sailed back. "He is very fond of reading & has a knowledge of many subjects. He is a staunch Christian & loves his Bible. Sept 28th Mother returned the Duchess' call, but she was out."

During the next week, Harold and the Uncles shot partridges and roe-deer, Norman had his eighteenth birthday, Mr Crofts [a visitor] was laid up with a swelled leg caused by midge bites, the boys played golf, and the girls had their last Sunday School with eleven children. On Oct 6th, Harold left for three days rabbit shooting at the Middleton Campbells. The girls picked rowan berries for rowan & apple jelly. Next day, "our old spinning lady quite danced a jig round the room when I gave her a most gorgeous green & violet crossover. I tuned my 'cello down to the library piano pitch & played to Uncle Colvile after dinner - but it was quite too frightfully out of tune! Mr McBeath is very irate about his corn being eaten by the black game, & Mother will have to pacify him somehow." W, who was staying at Fulchan, had "thoroughly enjoyed her first day with a stalker!" This is the first mention of stalking anywhere in the diary.

"Sat Oct 10th E & I distributed crossovers & ½lb packets to the crofters along the 'strate'. It did me good to see such happy contented people & to receive their good wishes & god-speed - also to feel they look forward to our return next year. E & I practised the hymns & chants for tomorrow's service. On Sunday, we had service in

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the library as the other piano has gone back to Inverness. I kept up quite well & followed Stillwell's voice, he sings very well & in tune! We finished with 'O God our Help'; I always think of the day we sang it at Father's funeral. The game (some of the items) for this season has been - 1263 grouse, 114 partridges, 88 snipe, 23 roe-deer, 83 hares, 14 rabbits, & 9 salmon, 12 grilse, 137 trout. Harold shot his first stag at Fulchan on Sat, a large one, weighing 17st 6 lbs."

After a very happy three months at Cambusmore, they were seen off at 11.42 by Mr & Mrs Dewar and all the men on Mon Oct 12th, "We had a corridor saloon, which we did not like as the windows only opened at the bottom!" W. and Nurse met them at Perth; Mother and W left them at Victoria and Miss Magill joined them. "I felt quite important getting the tickets & marshalling the whole lot of servants about at Balcombe, & I had to keep an eye on my 'cello all the time! At High Beeches, I unpacked, saw Sjoquist, did flowers etc & was glad when bed time came."

1904

Cambusmore again on July 29th. During the next eleven weeks, the boys shot and played golf at Dornoch; "we girls acted as caddies & 'marked' the balls they hit about." They had their usual services; "we sang a new Te Deum tune - Hollins. I sang valiantly & the others soon managed to follow." About eleven boys and girls came to the SS class. They walked and fished a lot. "Dr Simpson did not get a snipe, - it is every man's ambition to shoot one."

After a pleasant week en famille, there was the usual succession of visitors. W. caught her first salmon, 6lbs. They inspected the local school, one teacher with forty children. "The teacher rushes from one class to another - correcting & setting them something else to do. They were learning geography, grammar, writing & singing while we were there. It was such a picturesque scene - the bare-footed, untidy, tawny-haired children, & most of the girls had coloured blouses & skins. It reminded me of Constable's School pictures! We saw a motor marked A P, (East Sussex)." They went to the Crofters Show at Dunrobin. "Before lunch, I had my first attempt at golf on 'our' links below Cambusmore."

On Aug 22nd, B and B got soaking wet "coming back from Porson's pool through the alders. Sandy brought us back his 'patent' way which consisted of wading through water up to our knees, & ending by being 'put' over a brook by Sandy. But it was all great fun!" Next day, "we netted at the Sluices & in 2 hauls got 25 salmon & sea-trout, averaging 5 lbs." W, B and B played trios most evenings; Uncle George, Mr Carlile and Guy Rowe were an appreciative and musical audience. W's twenty-third birthday treat was a ride in Mr Carlile's car; it was "a very large one, almost a racer. I had my very first ride - short indeed - only from the house to the stables, but it was simply delicious!" They managed to persuade the mothers of the local children that it was all right for them to come to the SS classes without boots and stockings, so three more boys came without any.

On Tues Sept 7th they heard that Pretty Polly [*owned by Eustace Loder who lived in Ireland, and was a successful race-horse owner*] had won the St Leger. "We carried a white flag up the hill as a signal to the shooters. They fired a volley & had 3 cheers. We are glad for Uncle Eustace. He deserves it, especially as he never bets & only has

race-horses for the real sport. Quinton and Rachel Gurney came to stay; the latter had a special train (3 coaches & an engine) from Nottingham to Grantham, as the officials had forgotten to stop the other train! Thurs 16. Uncle Reggie shot a stag in the alders, 7 stone 5lbs (cleaned). The bag also included rabbits, partridges, 8 roe-deer & 2 foxes. Dewar can think of nothing else now but stags; he said he had heard one roar, but this happened, however, to be either a donkey braying or the tootling of a motor-car!" Mr and Mrs Millais came to stay; he was writing a book on British animals and had been studying whales at a whaling-station in the Shetlands. "He told us at dinner all about how they are caught & would flourish his knife about. I, sitting next to him, longed to offer him a spoon instead!"

Sun 18. They had twenty-seven at their Sunday Service. B. had very bad hay-fever. On 20th, they worked the pointers on the moor and shot 21½ brace. Hubert went back to Eton on his own, the first time he had been parted from Norman since he went to St David's, their prep school. "The fleet is at Invergordon. We have heard their guns booming since early morning."

"Good-bye to this diary book!" [*Brenda's diaries amounted to many volumes*]

Sept Fri 23rd was a day's 'interregnum' between the departure of Mr and Mrs Millais and the Gurneys and the arrival of fresh visitors. 49 Cadogan Sq had been let to Lord and Lady Valentia, a great relief as they could no longer afford to keep up London, country and Scottish houses at the same time. B. went to stay at Fulchan, with Nurse. "I saw stags for the first time. This is a deer-stalking place. I rode on a sturdy pony to the top of Minegi, with lovely views & the glen dotted with fir trees." They met the Hargreaves-Browns, & G Huth. B and Isla went in the pony cart to the Spittal of Glenshee, about twelve miles. "Our pony refused to cross the ford on the way back, but was eventually forced through backwards by the groom. I thought we should see all our cloaks, Kodaks etc. float down the stream, but luckily the cart did not upset." B. returned to Cambusmore on the 4th, and next day they had a visit from the Duchess of Portland, Grahame and Lady Maud Rolleston in their motor-car to look round the garden and grounds. "The Duchess seemed very nice. I only wish all Duchess' were as thoroughly good women as she is, & she is so beautiful too, & one could see there was no 'making-up' about her." On Sat 8, they gave their eighteen Sunday Scholars a large tea, games, races and presents. The high mountains had snow on them.

On Thurs 13, they said good-bye to the old crofters. "I feel so honoured that everyone tells us how glad they are we are coming back next year. Our old women shower blessings on our heads when we produce petticoats & tea. I like their quaint expressions such as 'good lads to you', & 'haste ye back'. Mrs Macdonald wanted to give Mother a present, but the only thing she had was a swarm of bees!" B and W had been milking the cows every morning, and N had been playing golf or shooting. Back at High Beeches on Oct 20th. "N is off to Mr Maiden's near Tunbridge Wells, where he is to read for Cambridge. The Russian-Japanese war is too awful. Thousands killed on each side, & the Russians being pressed back."

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“Thurs & Fri 4th & 5th.(August) Our journey North. Real Scotch weather - high wind again at intervals, but we thoroughly enjoy getting back into Irish tweeds & thick boots again.” Their usual routine began of golf for N and Hubert, a succession of visitors, long walks for Mother, W, B and E, and visits to the crofters, Sunday services and classes, fishing, and, after August 12th, shooting. Also, music every evening - “once Uncle George accompanied me, & sang the songs I have set to the ‘cello.

Aug 29th. We saw the Duchess present the golf prizes at Dornoch. N. was 3rd for the Carnegie shield - out of 94 players. His handicap was 7 & his score 81. Sad news of Grandmama Loder, who is dying - just worn out & a slight stroke. We shall miss her so much. We are amused at our visitors - Cambusmore seems to make them thoroughly happy.” Several extended their visit, or would like to have done. “we think we ought to put up a tin shanty for the visitors who wish to stay over their time!! We saw the eclipse (solar total) quite well, through smoked glass.” On Sept 3rd, the house party was Mrs de Montmorency, Uncle George, Mr Ryder and Mr Sam Hoare; this made it a hard week for W. On Sept 14th, B and E stayed in to develop their photos. “We get such excellent results from the Daylight Developer.”

On Sept 16, “Aitchison came up to Mother’s room about 1/4 to 12, & told her that the Duchess of Portland & a lot of other people were downstairs. The Duchess is charming, good & beautiful. Everyone has a good word for her - rich or poor. We all ‘processed’ round the garden, two by two (rather like a girls’ school). The D. looked at the puppies & chatted with Mrs Dewar, & they stayed about an hour” Harold had joined them on the 13th, and on Wed 18 “W & I joined the array of drivers on the moor, us, Dewar, the gillies & several crofter boys. The midges swarmed round us in millions. We simply had to tie our heads up tight & all looked such comical objects - & of course everyone had forgotten the midge preventatives except for my 2 wee bottles. But we had great fun, all the same.

Sun Sept 24th. We had 21 children, & invited them to tea on Tuesday. Having heard quarrels between the Gordon & Leslie children, I said a lot about being kind to those weaker than ourselves, & hope it may not have been in vain. I won’t be conceited, but Aunt Maggie told E. that she liked having me at Maidwell, because I am unselfish & seemed to take an interest in everyone.” Mr and Mrs Boyd came to stay, also Cousin Isabella, who was always good at amusing people. She, E and N played golf on the Ladies’ links at Dornoch, and helped with the children’s party. “Pronging apples with a fork amused the boys, & they sang us the Skye Boat Song very well, except that I started them in too high a key!”

On Oct 1st, B. was kept indoors, as she lost her voice. Cousin Isabella did some sketching between the rain storms. Norman left for Cambridge, Hubert had been made 1st whip to the Eton Beagles, and Harold passed his signalling course so well that he was now qualified as an “Instructor of Signalling” Before they returned home, they distributed tea and crossovers to the crofters as usual. In 1904, the number of grouse shot was 1486, and in 1905, 1295.

They were back at High Beeches by Oct 22.

1906

They travelled up to Cambusmore on 1st and 2nd August in their usual large saloon,

arriving late 2-15pm. "Everything is so grand & beautiful here - we love it more & more. Such a hearty welcome from everybody. Mother is very wrathful because the Duke & Carnegie have planted an infectious hospital only a short distance from here & a horrid eye-sore along the Ferry road. She never heard a word about it, & expects compensation! Fearful storms have wrought havoc with some of the farms in England & Scotland. Uncle Arthur Rowe has died suddenly - desperately sad for Aunt Ida & Aunt Idita. We have put off Lord & Lady Denman & donned semi-mourning clothes, which is horrid. W & I inspected the schools, & we went fishing & caught an eel, which Mrs Homer skinned - just like taking off a stocking." Norman had been to Goodwood for two days. "I saw the King walking about the lawn of Goodwood House, followed about by a man with a chair, to put it down whenever his Majesty looked inclined to sit down; also there were detectives hiding behind the trees." The three girls caddied for N and Ruben on the Dornoch links, and they walked on the moors and had their usual house services and SS classes.

Aug 12th was a Sunday, and there was a thick mist on 13th, but N and H got fourteen and a half brace of grouse. On 14th. Braid and Vardon were playing golf at Dornoch. The family joined a throng of several hundred who were following them round. "We had a picnic lunch with rain & sand & under umbrellas." Braid won. There were "Armoured cruisers" at Invergordon & two officers from "Dido" were invited to shoot. "Being in mourning, Mother could not accept the invitation to luncheon at the Castle before the Crofters' show. Mr Pitman arrived, & his 4-cylindered motor-bike." Sybil and B visited Helmsdale, "a typical little fishing village, with, as yet, no hotels for summer trippers! We found no herrings, only conger eels, which are packed in ice to be sent to London."

On Tues 2 1st, N. lost the Carnegie Shield by one stroke "as he played the wrong ball on the seventeenth green." Next day, they attended the Golspie Bazaar in aid of the new Free Kirk there. On 24th, the bag was nearly a hundred brace. A full house on 25th, "Clifton & Eirene, Uncle George, Uncle Eustace & Mr Pitman"; other visitors to lunch and tea. "I have been nursing a cold all week, my voice is like a thin squeak!" Harold came up on Oct 1st, and they were able to play family cricket on the terrace again.

On Sept 11th, Brenda refers to some event that caused her deep distress, but in such guarded terms that it is impossible to do more than guess what it might be. She concludes the entry with - "Mother has told me that I have behaved most honourably - now I suppose I must forget about it all."

Their life at Cambusmore continued as usual, with visitors, including Mr Boyd, shooting grouse and roe-deer, long walks and playing golf. Partridge shooting on 24th, and a visit to "Cameron's farm, looking fascinating with its acres & acres of stooks of corn." Norman won a golf competition at Dormoch, and B and W had twenty-two children for tea and games. Dewar was training three dogs, Baltic, Ruby and Pretty Polly, "they are learning well, except that the latter rather disgraced her

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namesake once or twice!

On 9th, we acted as Lady Bountifuls, & paid farewell calls & distributed warm clothes nearly all day; mostly flannel petticoats this year – Mother has made them all - one a day!, & diminutive girls' frocks, & tea & sugar. I love the crofters' genuine thanks. Wed. Oct 10th. Mrs Dewar showed us how to pluck & prepare a chicken for cooking - rather fun, except taking the inside out, which is decidedly nasty! The poor old 'yellow man' who is dying, at the lodge, asked to see me, so I couldn't refuse to go in & say a few words to him."

"Fr-Sat 12 & 13. South again. They put our saloon on to a luggage (fish) train to Inverness, so we sailed down in great style to Perth, only stopping twice.

1907

They went up to Cambusmore on July 31st. They were a "very cheery, jolly party" with Uncle Eustace, Uncle George and Mr Ryder. Uncle O arrived with a motor, chauffeur and a box of photo materials, for which he set up a dark room in the stables. They got 89½ brace on 12th. Thirty children turned up for SS. "I let the pony down yesterday - ignominiously up-hill! & skinned one knee; am therefore avoiding Dewar & Mrs D's wrath! Two days ago, Mr Ryder tipped the cart into a ditch. He was ballyragging with H & N. Luckily no harm done beyond a cracked splash-board! Mother & I helped price bazaar things at Dornoch; I was struck by how everyone referred to mother as knowing best!" The weather was often wet, but they walked and climbed as usual, and B had a fly-fishing lesson from Uncle O - Harold was unable to be with them; "he is very busy with manoeuvres & signalling."

Sept 4th and 5th was the bazaar at Dunrobin Castle. "It must have been a great financial success - crowds of people - band - grounds thrown open - pipers - palmistry & every attraction. E. did a roaring trade with the sweets. The Duchesses of Sutherland & Portland sold both days. They are so beautiful. The Duke of S. amused us - he did look funny."

Sept 6th. A wet day's shooting in the alders - "I came back at 7-30 absolutely drenched, but popped into a hot bath, so am none the worse." Next day some of them went to the sheep-dog trials at Langwell. On 13th, they watched Massey and Herd play golf at Dornoch. "Sun 15th. A record number, 35, at SS. Midges awful. I anointed my 11 boys with oil of cloves. It got into John Ross's eyes, & I am sure he would have preferred the midges." E was riding with friends, "they ride cross-legged, barebacked etc. Even W cantered round Dewar's field astride the Arab pony - I funk'd it!" Mr Boyd was staying, having a much needed respite from

parish matters; the use of the Pease Pottage Mission Room was being denied to him. "We chaffed him on one day, as one could see his head & shoulders sticking out of the butt from far away. His defence was that he absolutely could not 'crouch' any longer!" W. went to stay at Fulchan, so B. had to take her 55 girls as well as her own boys. "I think it is the first time I've ever taught girls; I quite enjoyed it. E squeezed her 12 tots into her side of the summer house. We sang 5 hymns, (some very high, some very low!!). We play bridge every night - a game I never feel but partly proficient in! We still have strawberries & gooseberries galore, & roses & carnations. Jack nearly had a tramp's leg while were at tea. Hence shrieks from the united family

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& visions of compensation! Luckily he, the tramp, retired very quickly!

Oct 4th. Lady Rosemary came to lunch & afterwards E & I rode round & round astride her 2 lovely horses - it was such fun. I clung on by my knees & was very stiff afterwards!" Sat 5th was their SS party for thirty-nine children. Cousin Isabella came to stay. "On Sunday, I officiated as organist & valiantly attacked 'The Sower' as it was Harvest Festival at home - also played a lengthened voluntary while the little scullery maid played General Post for a chair!"

Home again on Oct 18th, after the usual round of present giving to the locals. The trains were very late, arriving at Willesden 9-0 & Balcombe 12-45. "I slept with Mother & kept her awake as well as myself, with bad asthma; such a bore as I like to enjoy the journey but one cannot without breath."

1908

The family was back at Cambusmore for 12th Aug. "The shooters did far better than they'd expected, getting 65 brace. There is so little water that Dewar feared a bad season." However, Harold promptly caught a 4½lb grilse, his first, at 'The Stones', and they netted there and had two good hauls; "so have been living on the best of fish ever since!

Aug 16, Our first Sunday School - 25 children. I had 7 boys & thoroughly enjoyed teaching in the little garden summer-house again. 'Wed 19th. A day full of sad memories; we could see Mother's sad face, & feel how she was living over again those long sad hours. Thurs Aug 20th. W & I watched the Dornoch games, while Mr Ryder & E played golf Harold is delighted at having his leave extended indefinitely." B. much enjoyed a visit to Glen Lyon, near Loch Thy, "the family being Aunt A & Uncle S, Clifton & Irene, Loulie & Alick, Elsie, Isla, Cedric, & the visitors - Mr & Mrs Mount, Hon A Agar-Robartes, Guy Gibbs, Mr Eversfield & Mr Rigg." I was allowed to travel as far as Blair Atholl on the way, alone, & then met Webb, but looked out the wrong train on the way home, & had to stay a night & ½ Sunday at Inverness. On Sept 1st we found a splendid fat seal, shot, thrown up by the tide. Dewar is boiling down the fat for oil for the dogs." Shortly after this, two of their much loved dogs died of distemper, despite devoted nursing. "Douglas & Violet's baby came through the Red Sea, packed in ice (2 months old) & was all over sores & boils when she did arrive, but is getting on quite well now. Webb & I went to a very nice English service at the Inverness Cathedral on Sunday.

On Fri Sept 4th, we went to the sheep-trials at Dunrobin Glen; so interesting. It reminded me of 'Owd Bob', The Portlands & Sutherlands were there & a good many tenants of lodges & others. The Duke & Duchess entertained us to lunch - nearly 200 in a huge tent. Very few grouse left for the second time over, no doubt due to the long drought."

The weather had broken by the 10th and "the alders were under flood, & any amount of fish jumping up the salmon ladder." Some local bridges were washed away. Merrick Burrell and his new wife Coralie came to stay. "Such a frank, good-hearted

typically Irish girl - not another Mina, thank goodness." *[these are kind words; Merrick had cased quite a scandal by getting divorced]* Hubert shot his first stag at Kintail.

"Fri Sept 18. How can people paint their faces? It made me quite sick to see the Duchess' beautiful face all messed about, when Coralie & I were ushered into the hotel to have lunch. Afterwards, C & I walked round the golf course with Lady Headfort & Lord Algernon Gordon Lennox. Coralie has been giving us hair-dressing lessons, I reduced myself to tears when practising, for I cannot get the twirls right - & always have to descend from the lofty heights to my homey 'bun' again! I am sure I was not born to have my hair gazed at, & must thank God for having given it to me curly." They caught a 13½lb salmon & eight large grilse and sea-trout near the salmon-ladder. At the Sunday morning service, "Mother gave Uncle George the wrong lesson to read, & he had to read 3 verses of hard names in the middle (which he did most nobly; I should have left them out!) A very nice school; the children are so keen, 37 of them."

On 22nd, all the family was together; with Uncle O, Patience, Wattie and Cousin Isabella, the house was full up. "Oct 1st. We drove to Golspie to see the big ship 'King Edward VII' anchored outside Dunrobin. How huge she looks!" Harold had been on manoeuvres, and was delighted to receive a silver cigarette case and a letter from Brigadier Gen. Henniker complimenting him on his work as signaller to the Brigade. "We get more & more proud of our soldier brother." He was now assistant adjutant at Wellington Barracks.

On 2nd Oct, his twenty-third birthday, Norman was persuaded to take his sisters to the Dunrobin ghillies dance at Golspie. "What enthusiastic dancing & shouting. We did not partake of the reels. Some of the officers & crew of HMS King E. VII were there, which made it all the more lively." Next day, Lt Chilton showed W, Arthur and B over the ship. "I think one's impression is of wonder at everything being so beautifully fitted in, & kept. She was built 3 years ago. We were explained the Marconi workings, guns & torpedoes. As our thanks for all his kindness, Mr Chilton is to be asked to shoot partridges if the ship returns."

On Sun Oct 4th, they had a record class of thirty-eight children. B. had thirteen boys. "It is quite delightful to think how, in these few years, our Sun. Sch. has increased & got on." Norman had hoped to be made huntsman of some Cumberland hounds, under Lord Leconfield, but this fell through and "now he is saving up to become Master somewhere else. Mother & W left cards at the castle, while cousin Isabella & I sat on the links, she painted, & we laughed a great deal; she is such an untidy dear.

On Oct 10th, we had our SS. party with 40 children. Heaps of games, including musical chairs & dumb crambo. Oct 17th. W & I have had two mornings' fishing at Pawson pool. I caught only 2 'whales' but W 4 half pounders. I had great fun landing them, then comes the operation of killing them before extracting the fly! Dewar entertained us in his kitchen last evening, with his violin - such delightful Scotch tunes - & Mrs Dewar chants some of them in such a sweet voice. Our usual garment distribution has been going on."

B and her mother returned South on the 20th. "I was very snug in the sleeping car

Loder Family holidays at Cambusmore; 1900 - 1909

with my 'cello - not much extra room to move!" They went first to 49 Cadogan Sq, where Harold and Norman were staying, and then B. went to High Beeches to inspect the installation of electric light. "It is a big job choosing all the fittings & shades. The engine is being fitted into the enlarged gas-house. Harold has such charming taste about it all."

1909

[July] Brenda and Mother had a fortnight at Cambusmore, making inventories and preparing the house for their tenants, the Gladstones. They got back to Euston at 7-45am., and were home, after two hours shopping, by 2-0pm.

[There is no mention in the diaries about the reasons for sub-letting Cambusmore, but presumably they were financial. Brenda continued to visit Scotland, but as far as we know never went back to Cambusmore. I have included a few paragraphs from the autumn of 1909 to serve as an example of Brenda's hectic life in London and at High Beeches]

On Fri 24th [August], B. was off to Scotland again, on the 11.35 pm. train. "Slept a good deal but it shook terribly." She was staying at Clunes, Struan, N. Berwick, this time; she had been to Scotland three times this year; Nurse travelled with her. She spent a fortnight, walking and going out with the guns, grouse and partridge shooting.

"Thurs 7th. Came straight to Grandmama's & Nurse went on in charge of the 3 little pups (from Cambusmore). I was left in charge of G.ma. Quite a busy time, as her sight is failing. Writing, reading aloud & strumming the piano. I also officiate at Prayers, & we drive out solemnly & slowly in the Victoria, & sit close below the pulpit in church; with such a number of old ladies all round. (I felt quite youthful & conspicuous, especially as they all sat down during the Psalms)." On 13th, she got to 49 Cadogan Sq. before 10-am, to find W and Mother still looking quite green after a rough sea crossing from Ireland, where they had had an interesting time. Norman was doing well. Harold had passed top in his Captain's exam, so they were very proud of him. He was master of the draghounds.

Sat Oct 23rd. "W & I instructed 10 little girls in the art of Morris dancing & action songs, ie. she jumped about & shouted & I thumped the well-worn school-room piano. 27th. Pouring rain, & this & Budget are the great topics now. Our shooting guests arrived, Mr Chalmers, Uncle George, Charlie & Millie, Capt Tempest, Mr Kinnaird, Adine & Chennie Barclay. Next day, they shot 120 ducks; we lunched in the cricket shed, & danced after dinner, Some of the morning was spent in rescuing a bullock that they found upside down in a ditch! 29th. A hum of satisfaction went up from the breakfast table when we heard that Mr Dumphreys (U) is elected for Bermondsey. The out-&-out radicals are getting few & far between now."

B. went to stay at Maidwell, after retrieving her luggage from the Bath Club, where a Mr Kennedy had taken it in mistake for his.....