

Chapter 7

1st December 2008 and we have just been to see Auntie Joy.
She has provided these jottings, just for you.

About Mary studying architecture---I don't know if she had any discussions with her parents but I do remember we were on holiday in Sweden, out for a walk and my parents said that Mary would study architecture, so she went to the AA as it was then called.

I don't remember meeting Mary Anderson in the USA-----I didn't know that Shepherd was a Swede also.

I may have got this wrong C.

Kipling lived in Batemans in Burwash---famous for the poem "If"
Now you know the answer! C.

My father was a genius—he invented a special cut for a jacket which is still used today. Apart from Maharajas A&S had many famous people including film stars. One of which was Douglas Fairbanks Snr (I have his tailors paper pattern). I wrote to him when I was in school and he replied that he would take me to tea with him, but then he was parting from Mary Pickford and married again so I never had tea---but he sent me a photograph, signed—which I have. Another famous person was Antonio Scotti, an opera singer, baritone, who sang with Caruso who was also a customer. Scotti was a long standing star at the Met in the USA.

Fred Astair was another good client C.

Wells our chauffeur was a lovely man, he lived with his mother and spent most of his time with us. He was with us for some time. On the front bonnet of the Minerva we had a Lalique St Christopher emblem which lit up at night, I expect it would be stolen in the present time. It would be very valuable now, but unfortunately it was somehow knocked off a mantelpiece by Ann, and broken in half. It could be invisibly mended for a few hundred pounds but I think it would not be worth the expense. There is a book, obtainable from the library, on Lalique in which there is an illustration of the St Christopher, it was one of the most famous of his works.

Mary's first car was a small Triumph, black and white so it was nicknamed "Nightshirt".

I remember Marjorie and Dorothy coming to England for good, we were having tea or something and I asked them if they would like some jam. They said "No" they would rather enjoy the taste of the butter!

Christmases were wonderful times with Uncle Ernie and family and Walter and family: we all played games like vingt-et-un (pontoon), having fun gambling with beans instead of coins.

On Saturdays my mother and I would have our hair done and my father would take us all out to dinner and dance at a lovely hotel, and of course Wells drove us there and back, the luminous St Christopher was a help in finding the car.

I will try to remember the name of one of Mary's co-students. He had a cottage (maybe Burwash but I don't remember where)—he had his lounge all in white.

Uncle Ernie's son John was divorced from his first wife and married again and is happy in Canada