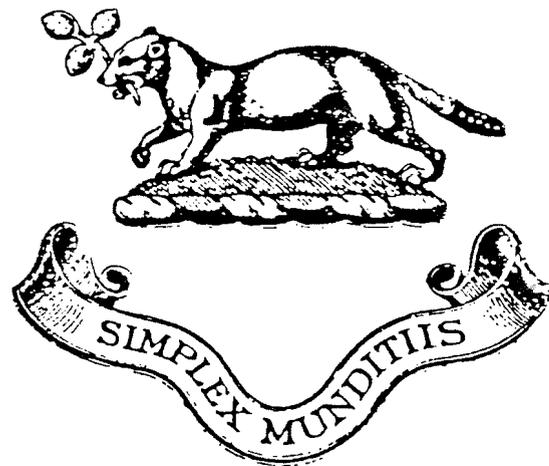


TO MY SONS, RAYMOND, COLIN, GAVIN
AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR SIMONDS DESCENT



Eric Duncan Simonds.

George Blackall Simonds commissioned from the College of Arms a "Pedigree of Simonds in Berkshire". After four years of research this was completed in 1927, and was accompanied by a comment from the Garter King of Arms at the time - Sir H. F. Burke - that the evidence was absolutely reliable and would be accepted without hesitation by the House of Lords Committee even if it were a case of claiming an extinct Peerage.

G B S forwarded the Pedigree to his cousin Francis May Simonds in New York (my great-uncle Frank) with the happy boast that "we are descended from Christian de Wudecida, a Berkshire landowner who lived in 1228. We are still county landed gentry in Berkshire after 700 years".

In a later letter he added "We are probably the oldest landowners in the county after the Royal Family. Without great wealth we always seem to have been quite well off and to have been good sportsmen and county gentlemen".

Such is the background of the Simonds family to-day, and such is the light in which a leading member of the family saw fit to view it some 60 years ago.

Francis May grafted on to this Pedigree the massive results of his own subsequent researches into the family of his mother, née Sophie Elizabeth de Luze, tracing her forbears back through their American history to their roots in England, France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland.

Much of what follows is gleaned from these two sources and I am most grateful to both my predecessors for their diligent pursuit of their ancestry.

Garter may well have enthused about the Wudecrida descent, but his College depended largely on satisfied clients - and what client more satisfied than one who has had his family descent authenticated for 700 years. In truth the connection is tenuous, but there were certainly a number of Symonds living at or near Woodcrythe, or Woodcra as it is now known, a mile or so south of Wokingham, during the 14th century.

The first definite link is probably to my 12X great grandfather Robert Symondes, of Erly near Reading who was assessed for subsidy on Jan 2 1525. In historical perspective this was at about the time when Henry VIII was tiring of his childless Queen, Catherine of Aragon, and seeking means to rid himself of her in favour of Ann Boleyn - events which led to the break with Rome and great changes in the course of history.

King Henry's subject, Robert, was probably no more pleased at getting his assessment than we are nowadays when the rate demand flops on the doormat. But, in the way that subjects everywhere tend to, he had to be content with his lot and had no thought of changing the course of his own family history. His grandson Humphrey (yes - Humphrey!) lived at Erly Court, which may give some indication of contemporary affluence; and future generations stayed put in the neighbourhood.

Robert also had a nephew Symon who achieved a certain fame. He was the

only member of the family on record to embrace the Church, but his wavering allegiances and determined self-preservation do not mark him down as its most honoured member. Kenneth has done some research on him for which I am most grateful and it is included as an Appendix, titled "The Vicar of Bray - Sir!"

The cradle of the Simonds family was indeed that small area of East Berkshire where our forebears were small Squires and landowners for certainly over five hundred, and possibly up to seven hundred and fifty years. The names of the Villages and Market Towns of that area crop up frequently in the Pedigree - Hurst, Arborfield, Wokingham, Binfield, Barkham, and, of course, Reading itself. They not only for the most part lived out their lives in this neighbourhood, but married local ladies and fertilized the local churchyards liberally with their bones.

Occasionally a Simonds ventured out of the family enclave to become a minor court functionary; William, of Hurst, who died in 1597, was a servant (whatever that may mean) of Queen Elizabeth and his grandson Thomas, also of Hurst, was a Page of the Presence to the hapless Anne of Denmark, widow of King James I. He became Keeper of Windsor Great Park, possibly as a reward for his services.

At this point I would like to record, for the benefit of any future researcher, that the Record Office at Berkshire County Council offices maintains the old Parish Registers in a most comprehensive manner. They have been transferred to many miles of microfilm which are available on request and may be viewed at length and in comfort. It comes as something of a surprise to learn that all the microfilm has been prepared and

donated by the Genealogical Society of Utah - probably a symptom of the intense interest which Mormons have in their roots. I discovered minor variations, in some cases, from the information contained in the Pedigree - particularly in the matter of spelling our name - but I would not regard any of these variations as significant.

The nephew of that Thomas, Keeper of the Great Park, was another Thomas who was born at Arborfield Cross in 1700. The family in the sense that I have known it in my lifetime may fairly be said to have started with him. Typically, he was baptised at Wokingham, owned land at Binfield, and was buried in 1765 at Hurst. The spelling of the name in its modern form seems to have stabilized with him, and his two elder sons Thomas and William became respectively the progenitors of the "Banking" and "Brewing" sides of the family. The former is now represented principally by David and his brother Patrick, and their cousins Peter and James and by Richard, son of Dick Simonds. It is a measure of the gregarious nature of the family that I have to go back seven generations to find a common ancestor with David, yet we still live within two miles of each other.

It is the son William with whom we need concern ourselves. He was born at Arborfield in 1733 and married Mary Blackall, daughter of William Blackall, at St. Mary's Church, Reading in 1765. They must have been people of some substance for William inherited from his father certain farms and lands in the parish of Sandhurst, and the Blackall family, who came from Rotherfield Grays, near Henley, were clearly well endowed. William seems to have turned his back, to some extent, on the country life and focussed his attention on Reading where he set up a malting business, and started in conjunction with this a small Brewery in the centre of the town in or about 1774.

William died in 1782 aged 49 and left his malting and brewing business to his son William Blackall, who also inherited £1000 from his Blackall grandmother. William Blackall came into his inheritance at the age of only 20, and at once set about making good use of it; he had money, youth, vigour and the family's first flash of entrepreneurial skill. In the following year, 1783, he married Elizabeth May on September 28, in St. James's Church, Pangbourne, she being the daughter of Thomas May, who endowed her with £2000; her family were probably millers in Pangbourne, and founded a Brewery in Basingstoke which was ultimately acquired by H & G Simonds in 1949. W.B.'s portrait, with that of Elizabeth, hangs in the drawing room at Winloed; these were probably wedding portraits, and as a young man he seems, both in his demeanour and in his stylish turn-out, to exhibit a cocky selfconfidence. If one is tempted to feel that, as a family, we owe a great deal to this man, then one should reflect on the presumptuousness of tracing family fortunes only through the male line. Assuredly his Blackall mother brought with her not only money, but some very refreshing genes, and in this respect successive generations of Simonds', right down to the present day, have been fortunate in marrying ladies of character who have maintained the momentum. I am delighted that the name Blackall has been revived in the latest generation. It could be a good omen.

W.B.S. had visions of greatness for his father's embryonic Brewery, and in 1785 bought a substantial site by the River Kennet in Reading, on what is now Bridge Street. It is a measure of his self-assurance that at so young an age he commissioned the foremost Architect of the day - Sir John Soane - who had the Bank of England to his credit - to design not only the new Brewery on this site but a fine spacious Georgian family home to

go with it on the same site. In a modern small family business the cash register is the most important item of equipment; W.B.S. foreshadowed this by including in the design for his home a counting house next door to his study. The plans of both house and Brewery are lodged in the Sir John Soane Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, but unfortunately I recall none of the original buildings as they fell victim to the expansion of the business over the following century.

W.B.S.'s interests were not confined to his Brewery, for he also became Receiver-General of Taxes for Berkshire and Town Treasurer of Reading in his early thirties as well as being Lay Rector of Caversham. More importantly he took the initiative in founding two banks, in the second of which he was in partnership with his cousins John and Charles. This bank traded as J & C Simonds for about a century until it was absorbed by Barclays in 1912. The brass plate at the entrance of Barclays Bank in King Street, Reading still records its origins.

Meanwhile his wife Elizabeth did her duty by bearing him four sons two of whom, Henry and George, gave their initials to the Brewery business when it was incorporated as H & G Simonds (Ltd.). W.B.S. retired from his Reading interests aged only 55, and, after serving his term as Mayor, lived on for a further 18 years at 40 York Place, Baker Street. He was buried at Hurst among many of his ancestors and successors. Elizabeth survived him by 8 years; she died in 1842 in her 79th year and was also buried at Hurst.

Within a couple of generations the offspring of both Henry and George had either drifted away from the Brewery, or failed to produce sons. We have to concern ourselves with another brother, William May, who does not

appear to have interested himself with the Brewery, but proved a more reliable sire. These accidents of nature probably account for the fact that the management of the Brewery enterprise ultimately devolved into our branch of the family, whereas much of the financial interest was dissipated down other increasingly remote lines.

Very little is known of William May Simonds; even the dates of his birth and death are not recorded. But he must have been of a venturesome turn of mind, for in 1814 he turned up in St. Petersburg aged about 25, and there, on May 6 of that year (barely two years after the Retreat from Moscow) he married a 20 year old English lady, Ellen Hearn. Ellen was the daughter of a widow, Mrs. Joseph Hearn, whose husband must have lived in Russia long enough, and have been in such a position as, to find favour with the Imperial Court, for on his death she was appointed governess to the family of Tzar Alexander I - possibly the most totally autocratic of all the Tzars. At her marriage Ellen was presented by the Tzarina with a necklace of yellow sapphires and diamonds - which was worn by my mother at my own wedding 133 years later - together with other gems. One must speculate that the Hearn blood again improved the Simonds stock, for the Hearn's were clearly people of enterprise, who are on record also as having business interests in Malta.

As the story gets closer to the present day, the reader must be getting increasingly puzzled about the generations. I hope it makes things clearer to point out that William May was my great-great-grandfather; add one "great" for Raymond and two for Johanna!

The young couple returned to England and settled first in Hampstead. Portraits of them at about that age survive in Peter's ownership in

America; we only have photographs of these showing William as a dark and rather heavy-featured young man, she wearing her Russian gems. They had seven children in eleven years of whom four only survived beyond infancy, and Ellen died with the seventh. The children were all brought up by their aunt, Mary, and one cannot even speculate what became of their father.

Of their four surviving sons two, Alexander Blackall, and Henry Adolphus went to Eton in the 1830's, where they were good scholars; Alexander (named for the Tzar) became Newcastle Medallist and went on to King's College, Cambridge. But A. B. died in his early twenties, and H. A. (of whom more anon) lived to a great age and died childless.

So once again we have to look to a third son to carry on the line - Frederick William, who was born in 1819. He went to Rugby together with his cousin Maurice, son of Henry, under the famous Dr. Arnold, and was a contemporary of Matthew Arnold. He seems to have inherited the urge to travel, for, after studying languages and spending some time in Germany he set sail for America at the age of 22.

There is some mystery as to why this was; Uncle Gavin refers darkly to a financial crash in the family and suggests that he emigrated in the hope of making his fortune. If there really was such a crisis it did not seem to affect his brother H. A. who was always comfortably off. His daughter states that when he landed in New York on November 24th 1841 he had no intention of making his home in that country.

At all events, Frederick William landed on his feet. On the voyage he met and made friends with Abraham Ogden, whose sister Sarah had married Louis Philippe de Luze. The latter had many years earlier, met the Simonds

family when he was a young man in England learning the language. So it was natural that he should be introduced into the de Luze home where he met Louis Philippe's daughter, Sophie Elizabeth, then aged 16; and, naturally, he married her 5 years later!

The Ogdens were an enormous and influential clan, and well-connected. William B. Astor had been a witness at the Ogden - de Luze wedding - and again at their golden wedding 50 years later. When F.W.S. set up in business as a merchant one can fairly assume that he had Ogden backing.

Louis Phillipe de Luze then lived (for the benefit of our American cousins!) at 54 Seventh Street, and he stretched family love and community to new boundaries, for the young couple moved in with him and Sarah, and lived there for 17 years, the first nine of their eleven children being born there! These boundaries now seem to have contracted greatly, although the family spirit lived on for a century and more at Cohasset. Nine of the eleven children lived into middle age, and most for much longer, and all, of course were brought up as American citizens. Several of the sons went to Harvard and we too would all be American citizens to-day had it not been for the failure of their great-uncles, the afore-mentioned Henry and George, to produce a sufficiency of Brewery-oriented offspring.

Much of the early life of this large and happy family is charmingly recorded in a little book of memoirs compiled by the elder sister, Ellen, as an old lady in 1925. The section which appeals most to me, and which may have most relevance to our family to-day, tells of the family home at College Point, Long Island, in these terms:- "Along the front - facing

the water which was so close that sometimes in storms the spray dashed up on the terrace - were several porches as well as one at the end of each wing. A little way, on the left, was a long dock with a platform and seats at the end and steps going down into the water. The bathing beach and large boat house with porch beyond this. The view across the water was lovely, and there was plenty of boating, swimming, and fishing - altogether an ideal place for young people, and here most of us grew up and had a wonderful time". It always seems to me that, give or take a porch or two (and porches were so much more important to the American way of life than to ours), my great-aunt Ellen could have been describing Seaview - or Cohasset! One other reference to her father appeals greatly to me - "His word was law, and never disputed!"

Of this large family, note in particular the second son, Louis de Luze, born 1852, my grandfather; the fourth son Henry Adolphus born 1855, who became a partner in his father's business and was father of "Gramp", and grandfather of Susie Page et al; and the seventh son Francis May born 1866, family historian, grandfather of John Verdery, and of Terry Simonds (Francis May Simonds 3).

Meanwhile, back to the Brewery in Reading. The management in the second half of the nineteenth century had devolved principally on Henry Adolphus who, as we have seen, had no children, together with two bachelor sons of the original George, namely Blackall and Arthur.

Though not neglectful of their responsibilities, there is no doubt that the principal interest of this generation lay in shooting and fishing which were absorbing passions and largely fashioned their life style.

This applied especially to Henry Adolphus, of whom uncle Gavin gives a delightful account in his own autobiography - thus, "for the last fifty years of his life he devoted himself with single-hearted energy to fishing and shooting. He was one of the first Englishmen to go salmon-fishing in Norway, and there were few years in which he did not make a pilgrimage to Norwegian waters. When he was 82, he fell into the river Orkla, and, as the fish were moving, he took off all his clothes, put them on a rock to dry, and went on fishing in his mackintosh. Shooting was his second love, and his homes at Red Rice, and at Audleys Wood, provided ample sport. I have a vivid recollection of seeing him with his twenty bore guns bringing down high pheasants in his 86th year".

Blackall Simonds had another absorbing interest - Bradfield College. In 1850 he was the first pupil at St. Andrews College - later to become Bradfield. His young brother George joined two years later as boy number 19. By the time Blackall left in 1857 there were 94 pupils. His obituary in the Bradfield College Chronicle of 1905 records "so wrapt up was Mr. Simonds in his affection for the College that he took up residence in the early eighties at Bradfield House, immediately opposite the College gates, and showed the liveliest interest in all the successes of the boys, whether in the field of scholarship or athletics". He was indeed a substantial benefactor of the College over many years, and in a variety of ways, some of which are still remembered there. He also shared in the thin vein of scholarship which ran through the family at that time, for Blackall won the Principal's prize for Latin Verse at King's College, London. This small vein now seems to have petered out in solid rock!

Young brother George showed early artistic talent and pursued his studies

at the Academy in Dresden, and later in Rome. Blackall died in 1905 and willed that George should assume his name, which he did, and so is known to posterity as George Blackall Simonds, sculptor and artist. We are fortunate in having three of his works at home.

G.B.S. had a prolific output but it would seem that he kept a high proportion for himself - perhaps not having the financial need to sell it. He made his mark in Reading in 1886 when the monumental lion of his creation was set up in the Forbury Gardens which it still dominates. This was commissioned by the County Regiment to commemorate its gallant role in the long-forgotten battle of Maiwand (at a time when it was we, and not the Russians, who were meddling in Afghanistan). Less happy, to my mind, is his statue of Queen Victoria, commissioned in the following year to mark her Golden Jubilee, and which still stands outside the old Town Hall in Reading. Time and the starlings have, I daresay, not improved it, but the old Queen gives the impression that G.B.S. still had the lion on his mind when he crafted her.

G.B.S. married an American lady, Gertrude Prescott, whom he met in Rome and returned with her to live at Bradfield House which had been the home of his mother's family, the Boulgers. They had one son, George Prescott, born in 1881.

Soon after, in 1884, there was founded in London the Ark Workers Guild, which has just celebrated its Centenary; G.B.S. became its first Master, which must indicate a high recognition of his quality as an artist. The Guild was formed by a group of young architects who, inspired by the ideals of Pugin, Ruskin and Morris, wished to create a forum where

architects could meet artists and craftsmen; it was a response to a widely felt crisis in the Arts.

G.B.S. said of the Guild, "it differs from all Art Societies in that it is not formed for the propagation of any one branch, or style, of Art. It is not a School; it is not a Club; it is not a debating Society. I find something of the spirit of the Studio life of Rome".

An indirect compliment was paid to him by a much later Master, C. R. Ashbee, who wrote, "The Masters of A.W.G. have all been interesting men. They have not necessarily been great artists. They have usually been fine craftsmen, and there has been scholarship and genius".

Many years later G.B.S. was brought into the Brewery as Chairman, which provoked the tart comment from Uncle Gavin in his auto-biography that "it would be regarded as a deplorable piece of nepotism that lucrative employment should be found in a family business for one who had no previous training. Nor could I deny that in the case of H & G Simonds the appointment of a chairman who had been a sculptor of indifferent merit..... was open to criticism". This stricture derived, of course, from Gavin's own intense professionalism. I know not what kind of a chairman was G.B.S., but I hope I have relieved him of the charge of "indifferent merit".

In addition to his art, the other great love of G.B.S. was the sport of falconry. The two are combined in the elegant bronze statue of the Falconer, which was shown in the Royal Academy of 1875, and which we still have. His portrait by Sir Oswald Birley, in falconer's rig, with bird to hand, against a background of Salisbury Plain is by far the best

of the family portraits which I foolishly allowed to be taken over by Courage in 1960. It has now been moved to London, and I would be surprised if that Falcon does not return one day to scratch out some Imperial eye.

G.B.S.'s life had one great tragedy. His only son, George Prescott, was killed in action in France in September 1914, serving with the S. Wales Borderers. His servant wrote of him that "he died like a hero", and with his death the male line of George Simonds was extinguished. It must be recorded that G.B.S. was so keen to continue his name that he made the son of his sister Mary Shea (she had married a schoolmaster at Uppingham) his heir on condition that he assumed the Simonds name. So Stephen became Shea-Simonds and moved into Bradfield House (and the chairmanship of the Brewery) on the death of his uncle in 1928. He in turn was succeeded by his son Patrick, when the huge store of G.B.S. works at Bradfield House was dispersed, many of them finding their way to what is now the Child-Beale Trust in Pangbourne.

Sadly, the Henry Simonds line had by this time also died out for want of male children; however Henry had one son, Maurice, of whom it is only recorded that he married Sarah Pike in Australia. It is tempting to suppose that the Simonds brothers of Sidney, owners of the Soling "Serendipity" against whom we sailed in the World Championship at Poole in 1970, are his descendants. I leave this particular piece of research to a later generation, who are likely to travel more widely than I am, and I can give a clue in that a letter dated 19.10.49 was received from one W. H. Simonds of 4 Ceicel Street, Benalla, Victoria, claiming to be the grandson of "Moritz" Simonds and Catherine Pike. The letter was ill-written and ill-spelt, and I fear it was never answered. Maurice

eventually returned to England, for the Rugby School archives record his death in Cheltenham. One senses an unhappy story.

The lack of a younger generation to carry on the Brewery was clearly becoming a worry; in 1872 Louis de Luze, aged barely 20, was plucked from the family bosom and brought back to England where he made his career with the Brewery and his home with his uncle Henry Adolphus at Barton Court, Kintbury. H.A. moved later to Red Rice, near Andover, a beautiful and historic house with a large sporting estate, and Louis joined enthusiastically in the pursuits of an English Country Gentleman. In 1880 he married Mary Elizabeth Turnbull, daughter of an army surgeon, of whom I have already written a short note. Whatever other quality she may have brought into the family she seems to have been responsible for an increase in stature; until her arrival the Simonds had been short men, but her sons and grandsons were for the most part notably tall. Louis' father and mother came over from America for the wedding - one of many visits.

In that same year Blackall Simonds visited America, and brought back with him another of the brothers, Fred, to help carry on the Brewery. It is an apt commentary that he is said to have chosen Fred because, of all the brothers, he was the best duck shot! Fred maintained his childhood interest in the sea, and until the Second World War always kept a yacht at Cowes; he too failed to produce any offspring and died in 1952 aged 94, thus spanning six generations, including our Raymond and Colin.

Let us digress for a moment and travel back up the lineage of my great-grandmother, Sophie Elizabeth [de Luze] Simonds (1824-1910), which,

thanks to the researches of her son Francis May, provides a great store of interest.

We have already noted that she was the daughter of Louis Philippe de Luze (1793-1877) who was Swiss Consul in New York from 1837-1872. His mother was Sophie Elizabeth von Bethmann, who provides the link with the von Bethmann banking family who still live in Frankfurt, and with Liszt and Wagner - a link of which you already have a record.

The de Luzes were a French Huguenot family by origin, and it was Louis Phillippe's great-great-grandfather, Jacques (d. 1734) who left France in 1688 following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. This led to the wholesale persecution of the Protestants, the demolition of their churches and closure of their schools. H.A.L. Fisher describes them as the most industrious and deserving subjects of Louis XIV and they included leading figures in the fields of finance, industry and science. In a few years more than 200,000 of them left France, taking their talents to neighbouring countries.

Jacques de Luze settled at Neuchatel in Switzerland where he, followed by his son and grandson, set up a prosperous printed linen industry, and became leading citizens.

It may have been natural for younger sons of such families to make a career in the Swiss Guards, but in any event two of Louis Philippe's uncles set out to do so. On August 10 1792 Jules Alexandre de Luze was a Captain, and his younger brother Frederic Auguste a 2nd Lieutenant, in the contingent of Guards defending King Louis XVI at the Tuilleries when

they were attacked by Revolutionaries commanded by Danton. The 800 gallant Swiss Guards were hacked to pieces; Jules Alexandre was killed and Frederic Auguste was severely wounded; the action led directly to the capture and death of the King and of Marie Antoinette. The brothers were not forgotten. Their names were recorded in Lucerne in association with the famous statue, the Lion of Lucerne; and Louis Philippe stood and drank a glass of wine with great solemnity to the memory of his uncle and the Swiss Guards on August 10 in every year until his death 85 years after the event.

Louis Philippe's younger brother, George Henri Alfred (1797-1880) returned to France - the country of his ancestors - and lived at the Chateau de Rivière near Bordeaux. In 1872 my grandfather and his sister Ellen, as teenagers, paid a prolonged visit to their uncle who by then had been created a Baron and founded the great wine house of de Luze. They stayed at the Chateau de Rivière, and at the Chateau Paveil for a part of the vintage season. The de Luzes had forgotten and forgiven the events of nearly two hundred years before, for several of Alfred's sons served their country in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, one of them, Francis Charles, being killed.

The mother of Sophie Elizabeth de Luze was born Sarah Ogden, one of the eleven children of Thomas Ludlow Ogden (1773-1844), and we will trace both the Ogden and the Ludlow lines back for a few generations.

The Ogden family came originally from Hampshire, but were early settlers in America, John Ogden, great-great-grandfather of Thomas Ludlow (and my 8 X great-grandfather), leaving England to settle there in 1640. He seems

to have been a man remarkable for his energy and his fecundity; he was a founder of the town of Southampton; he lived in many parts of Long Island and at Stamford and New Amsterdam; he married off one of his twin sons, David, to Elizabeth Swaine, grand-daughter of William Swaine, deputy-Governor of Connecticut in 1644; he held many positions of trust, and became deputy-Governor of the province of New Jersey under General Carteret; he died at his home at Elizabethtown, N.J., where he was a substantial landowner, in 1682 aged 73.

By 1907, John Ogden's descendants numbered over 13,000, scattered over many States!

The Ogden family seem to have had a great talent for the law, many becoming judges of the Supreme Court. Thomas Ludlow Ogden was himself a lawyer and was associated with Alexander Hamilton; he was one of 13 children of Abraham Ogden, a U.S. District Attorney; Abraham in his turn was one of 11 children of David Ogden (1707-1798), a Supreme Court judge. (The latter's wife, incidentally, was Gertrude Gouverneur, which accounts for Gramp's second name). Ellen records that several of the Ogdens were friends of George Washington.

Thomas Ludlow Ogden's mother (the wife of Abraham) was born Sarah Frances Ludlow (1744-1823), her family coming originally from Somerset. Her great-grandfather was Gabriel Ludlow of Frome in that county and his cousin was Sir Edmund Ludlow, one of Cromwell's generals, and one of the presiding judges at the trial of King Charles I. It was Gabriel Ludlow who settled in New York in 1694, but he had been preceded by his great-uncle Roger Ludlow, who was deputy Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634.

We will consider just one more family in the Ogden line - that of Sarah Frances Ludlow's mother who was born Catharine Le Roux in 1725. The interest in the Le Roux family lies in the fact that - like the de Luzes - they were Huguenot refugees from France. The great-grandfather of Catharine (my 8Xgreat-grandfather) was a goldsmith, whose father had migrated to Amsterdam. He was of some prominence there, but in 1680 he moved to London and became a naturalised subject of King Charles II in 1682, and later a member of the Goldsmith's Company. His son Bartholomew accompanied him to London, but settled in New York in 1688. In the same year he married Geertrüyd van Rollegom (Leonora Van Grieken Simonds please note!) by whom he had 11 children. He continued his trade as a goldsmith and banker in New York, and was known as a man of substance and probity, dying in 1713.

The foregoing digression represents only a brief digest of what is known of the de Luze/Ogden families, but is enough to show that they possessed many members, in many generations, who were talented, energetic and enterprising. I hope this part of the story may be of special interest to our American cousins of to-day, who of course share the same descent - and many of the same qualities.

Back now to Louis and Elizabeth in England, who produced 5 children. The eldest was my father Frederick Adolphus (Eric) who arrived, an 11 lb. baby, on January 2, 1881 in a blizzard. We shall return to him.

In the same year, on November 28, was born Gavin Turnbull, who, of course, became the family's greatest luminary. As Viscount Simonds of Sparsholt he died in his 90th year in 1971, full of honours in his chosen profession of the Law, of which the highlight was his term as Lord Chan-

cellor in the first post-war administration of Winston Churchill from 1951 to 1954.

Fortunately for us, the years between are fully described by Gavin himself in his auto-biography (never published) which he entitled "Random Recollections of an Idle Old Man". I do recommend a reading of this to any of his successors who are sufficiently interested; not only does it record his career in good detail, but sheds light on the man himself. He comes through as an essentially uncomplicated and modest person, but with an underlying confidence in his own professional abilities. Just as clear is his marvellous grasp of the language, both in its structural organisation and in his ability to use it in a simple and straightforward way to convey his meaning. Look at this, for example, speaking of his boyhood years, "If I try to look back to those days, I am impressed by the serenity of our lives. The South African War had begun before I left school, but it did not touch us nearly. The shadow which for 50 years has overhung every young life had not begun to appear. We had our troubles, our fears, and disappointments, but war, and the image of war, were not among them". And this, speaking of his appointment as a judge in 1937, (by Lord Chancellor Hailsham, father of the present Lord Chancellor) "Judges can only be chosen from the closest circle of the Bar. The man who is chosen because the Lord Chancellor thinks he is the best man for the job must do his part. Thus only can the administration of justice be maintained at the highest level, than which nothing is more important". A man does not spend his life committing judgements to paper for nothing.

With this record available I need not record Gavin's life and career in any more detail. It need only be said that in 1912 he married Mary

Mellor, daughter of a judge, whom he adored for the whole of their long married life which fell just short of 60 years. Twin sons, Gavin and John, were born in 1916, but tragically John was killed at Arnhem and Gavin died a few years after the war as a result of illness contracted on active service in East Africa. Gavin deals with these sad events with typical and admirable restraint in his memoirs.

Outside the Law, his great interests were in shooting and fishing, and perhaps above all in Winchester College. He had been a scholar there himself, his sons were there, and he identified with Winchester (and its sister New College, Oxford) all his life. In 1933 he was co-opted as a Fellow having already made his country home at Sparsholt a few miles away. In 1946 he was appointed Warden of Winchester - a position very similar to that of Provost of Eton, who at that time was Sir Henry Marten, just one of Gavin's legion of personal friends. His five-year term of office was strenuous and conscientious, and possibly gave him more pleasure than any other high office which he filled.

On his death many nice things were said of him; I choose to quote the following by Lord Reid in the House of Lords, "Gavin Simonds has taken his place as one of the great masters of the law of recent times, and he has done so by reason of a unique combination of strength of character, clarity of vision, felicity of language, and mastery of every branch of the law", and this, "he set us such an example that I look back on that period as a golden age". And finally by his successor, Lord Hailsham, "The fine presence, the command of English, the fastidious style of utterance are in my imagination as I speak. Every inch a gentleman, every inch a scholar, and a scholar of Winchester at that".

The third child, and only daughter, was Louise; of whom her cousin Sophie Brewster Taber wrote, over seventy years later "she was quite beautiful, and sang beautifully". This impression must have been a deep one, to have endured so long. She married Gavin's great friend from Winchester, Charles (John) Hare and also had five children, the youngest of whom was Dick, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford and the University of Florida.

It is a little unfair that most of the brains of the Simonds family should have been concentrated in that generation, and that Louise should have married into a family at least as talented, with the result that Dick and his own family have more than their fair share.

Dick was left an orphan at the age of 15, and my mother, with her endless caring capacity, made him an extra member of our family. We are very proud of him, and of his son John who has followed his footsteps being now Associate Professor of Philosophy at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. and having reverted to U.S. citizenship. Dick, with great fortitude and mental discipline survived unimpaired the horrors of five years as a prisoner of war of the Japanese in the Far East.

The third son, John de Luze (Jack), like his elder brother, was educated at Winchester. I recall my tutor at Magdalen, the Rev. Adam Fox, who was their contemporary, telling me "it was a great shame that your uncle Jack chose to go into the Army, as he was an even better scholar than Gavin". This would seem to be born out by the fact that he achieved the first scholarship on the entry roll at Winchester in 1897.

At school he switched from classics to mathematics and science, and in

due course passed into the Royal Artillery. He served with the Garrison Artillery in Malta and later was posted to Hong Kong as ADC to the C-in-C, General Sir Charles Anderson. While there he made, in 1910, his Journey among the Loes of Hainan, of which we still have his diary in its original form, with photographs, and the same printed as a pamphlet. It must have been a strenuous 5 weeks exercise which he relates with a kind of dry and disciplined hilarity.

He was posted to France in 1914 with an Indian Mountain Battery, of which Gavin records "nothing showed more clearly the straits to which British arms were reduced than the despatch of this unit to the front. It did its gallant best, but was wholly unsuited to trench warfare".

While in France he published, privately, a little book of poems, which are strongly reminiscent of Rupert Brooke. An air of romantic melancholy haunts them. I give you two - the second being a prose poem; judge for yourself:

THE DOUBTING KING

Open stands the doorway,
Brightly gleams the fire,
Dark the night without is,
Dark in wood and byre.

In there sits a sparrow,
Flying to the spark,
Soon it goeth forth again
To the unknown dark.

Life is like the sparrow,
 Into light we're born
Have our joys and sorrows,
 Then of breath we're shorn.

Coming from the darkness
 To the dark we go,
Whither, whence, unknowing -
 God has ordered so.

THE SMITH

A cunning Smith of old wrought in his work-shop, and forged him chains of wondrous fineness: as he worked, he exulted in his pride and sang, saying, "Never was Craftsman such as I." And all the while the chains grew apace. Then at the last he grew weary of his toil and fain would away, but as he sought to go, his chains constrained him. Then laughed he scornfully, and said in his pride, "Of such wondrous fineness have I wrought, that these mighty hands of mine will burst away." Yet when he would tear one asunder, ever another twined about him and withheld him, till perforce he forebore. Thus struggling, strength and pride alike left him, and in the humility of his soul he cried, "There is not one way out". But Death echoed grimly, "One way out".

It is hard to imagine nowadays a young officer engaging himself in poetic composition, but very much in tune with the mores of the times.

He returned to the Garrison Artillery, and was awarded the DSO on January 1st 1917 but was killed shortly afterwards at Mazingarbe, I was told many times that a life full of varied talent and rich promise was thus cut short.

He died a bachelor, but the infant Verdery was born shortly afterwards and was christened John in his memory.

Jack was, to the best of my knowledge, the only member of my family before myself to be a Freemason, being a member of the Old Wykehamist Lodge, and the Lodge of St. Peter and St. Paul in Malta.

The fourth son, Henry Duncan, (Harry) was born a bare five years after the first - with a daughter in between. They wasted no time in those days. Duncan was a new name in the family, said to come from a sailor ancestor of his mother; that may be why he entered the Royal Navy as a cadet.

By the beginning of the war in 1914 he was lieutenant in HMS Formidable, which, by one of those classic errors of judgement regularly committed in war, was part of a cruiser squadron sent without destroyer escort into the North Sea known to be full of enemy submarines. On New Year's Eve 1914 Formidable was torpedoed and sunk. Captain Loxley and his little dog Bruce went down with the ship and it is recorded that his last words to his Lieutenant were "you have done well, Simonds". Harry narrowly survived as he too went down with the ship but was somehow thrown clear and rescued.

This was followed by a spell in the "Q" ships - those innocent-looking

disguised tramp steamers whose role was to lure U-boats to their destruction.

The Battle of Jutland found him in the Grand Fleet as Lt.Commdr. in HMS Warspite, which was hit by enemy gunfire and staggered back to base.

Harry's great talents - quite unlike his brothers - were histrionic, theatrical, and humourous, and the reputation which followed him from the Navy was as a great provider of entertainment and fun. He was officer in charge of the Grand Fleet Concert Party at Scapa Flow and produced and played in a great number of shows to cheer up the bored sailors. In 1940 the then Captain of the new Warspite wrote to him, "Those who were with you in the Grand Fleet at Scapa have cause to remember all you did to make life more bearable there".

Harry retired from the Navy after the war and joined the Brewery where he was Director in charge of transport - a task well suited to his organising experience.

He rejoined in the second war, most of which he spent at Portland, Maine, organising the Atlantic convoys. After the war his health broke down and he died in 1950. He is survived by Tom and Sam, but sadly their brother Jim was killed in the Korean war in 1955 serving with the Fleet Air Arm aboard HMS Ark Royal.

Now at last back to my own parents. Father's arrival in this world was portentous, and ever after he tended to make his presence felt.

For the first nineteen years of his life he lived with this very happy family at The Point - a comfortable house which still exists on the western outskirts of Reading. It is now the Gate House Hotel, and father ever after enjoyed saying that he was born in a pub. All this time close contact was maintained with Henry Adolphus who was in loco grandparentis to the family and was always known as "the Grandpater". Holidays were spent at Barton Court, and later at Red Rice where the children learnt to live the country life.

A memorable event occurred in 1892 when the family, returning from church one Sunday morning found the house on fire. This was described in a long, rather breathless letter from my grandmama to the American cousins. Father was eleven years old and is reported thus "Eric handed books out through the smoking-room window as cool and unmoved as if it were an ordinary spring-cleaning and was afterwards seen in the kitchen, filling his pockets with biscuits" - "a policeman saw him and nearly ran him in - till informed with great majesty who he was".

The child is indeed father of the man. It was just as well that he was born the eldest because he did not take kindly to playing second fiddle in any organization.

Like Gavin, he tried for a scholarship at Winchester, but failed, so he was sent off to Eton in the steps of his two great-uncles. His diaries indicate a normal, happy, quite conscientious boy with a special interest in the OTC - perhaps the trigger for his life-long fascination with the

Army. A letter to his mother in 1898 describes his part with the OTC at Gladstone's funeral - obviously a hugely enjoyable event; "We had a record time yesterday, whilst my duties about took the cake. I also had time to rag the Bobbies and gorgeously arrayed Flunkeys. I saw all the swells there, but not Mrs. Gladstone, Chamberlain or Rosebery".

He went on to Magdalen College, Oxford, but after a year there he volunteered, aged barely 19, to go off to South Africa and fight the Boers with the Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. A long letter to his grandmother in New York written on January 31, 1901 from Glen Siding, Orange Free State, survives. He records that "one can never leave the railway any distance, or any town either, without running the risk of being fired at by some bandit belonging to one of the many roving bands that are the curse of the country". On the other hand, "As far as living is concerned we live off the fat of the land and drink of the best. It is certainly a good thing to live up to the motto "eat, drink, and be merry etc. in these troublous times". He contrived to get himself briefly captured by the Boers, but none the less his superior officer wrote of him on September 30, 1900 "Young Simonds joined us here (Bloemfontein) with a draft of volunteers and we were all delighted to see him. He fell into our ways at once and you would have thought he had been with the Regiment for a couple of years 2 days after he joined. He is a plucky young fellow, though apt to overdo it. At the fights we had 20 miles out of Pretoria on August 2nd, when we had about 40 killed and wounded, I don't believe he took cover once. The Volunteers got into a fairly warm place too and did jolly well supporting Captain Pasley's company to whom most deservedly the honours of the day fell". War, and the attitude to war, has changed dramatically since those days, and perhaps nothing marks this more than the way in which it began for him -

by a telegram from the Adjutant of the Volunteers dated April 11, 1900, saying "A draft of one subaltern and 20 NCO's and men required for S. Africa to embark about 1st May; if selected by Colonel would you like to go. Think it over and let me know to-morrow". How gentlemanly it all was.

His return on the Avondale Castle with the Volunteers a year later is chronicled in full, and in the vogue of the day they got a hero's welcome. Half a column in the local paper describes his reception at the family home, which, since his departure, had been established at Audleys Wood. The style merits some quotes:- "Brightly shone the sun and merrily sang the birds on Monday evening, and correspondingly gay was Lieut. Simonds' welcome home" and "the men employed on the estate, some thirteen in number, awaited the waggonette and immediately on its arrival the horses were taken out, and ropes being attached to the carriage the young hero was hauled in triumph up the winding, leafy, carriage way" and "what a waving of hats and handkerchiefs there was, what laughter and pleasure and, in fine, what unalloyed delight". It was indeed, and so undoubtedly was the 8-course banquet thrown at the house a few days later. And all this only 84 years ago!

He returned to Magdalen, but was clearly unsettled by the break in South Africa, and on November 19, 1901 wrote to his father "it is clear to me that I owe it to you and myself too that I should start on my career and give up a life which is not the best preparation for it".

So in 1902, he joined the brewery, living at first in digs in Zin Zan Street, Reading, and concentrating on organic chemistry and water analysis. But I guess that these studies could not hold him for long; he

was essentially a front man and he wanted to manage the company and its products. The Brewery had been selling its beer to the Army since before Waterloo; father's intense interest in the Army developed into a great sales campaign and extended into the Navy. In the first few years of the century he made various trips to the Mediterranean, and I have letters to his mother from Gibraltar, Malta, Alexandria, Cairo, and from ships and ports in between. He was a regular and faithful correspondent - always ending his letters "from your affectionate son, F. A. Simonds". These trips ensured that Simonds beer followed the flag wherever it flew.

The essential details of his business life have been recorded by Professor Corley in a lengthy entry for the Dictionary of Business Biography, and I do not intend to cover this aspect. Corley also wrote articles on "Simonds' Brewery at Reading" and on "The Old Breweries of Berkshire" for the Berks Archaeological Journal, which have been valuable source material.

On February 17 1909 he married Amy FitzGerald Hill, my mother, whom he had known a few years and who was in fact distantly related. The wedding was in St. Alban's Abbey and mother delighted in saying that she walked to the altar up the longest aisle in England. They settled at Pensdell (the house was named for the farm at Audleys Wood) in Murdoch Road, Wokingham - barely a mile from Woodcray Farm where the Simonds saga began 700 years before. It was a modest house - comparable to 8 Bolton Road - and there my brother Louis was born in 1910, followed by a sister who died, and myself in 1917. In 1920 when Kenneth was becoming evident, the family moved to a much larger house, Mertonford, about 300 yards away.

We will consider for a moment my mother's family descent. She was born on January 17 1883, the second child and eldest of four daughters, of John Sherriff Hill by his second marriage, to Amy FitzGerald. He already had seven children by his first marriage, the eldest of whom, Charles Hill, became a Bishop (of Hume, Manchester), the only recorded cleric in our family other than the outrageous Vicar of Bray, and thereby hopefully squaring our account on high.

John Sherriff Hill was born in 1836 at Lamb's Hill near Glasgow. He came south as a protégé of his uncle-by-marriage Sir James Duke Bart., a wealthy city merchant, and made a considerable fortune in the city himself. This enabled him to maintain an enormous house, Hawks Wick, near St. Albans where all his twelve children were brought up.

I have already written a lengthy account of the FitzGerald descent but for the record I attach it to this as a further appendix. It is good fun, but I may have made it a little hard to comprehend. Consider it as a quick run up the ladder into the attic of the past, followed by a slow descent examining the rungs in turn.

John Sherriff Hill lost most of his fortune in the Australian bank crash of 1893; the great house was sold, his health was broken and he died in 1897 on my mother's 14th birthday. The four daughters moved to London with their mother and lived in much reduced circumstances, first in Onslow Gardens and later at 22 Tregunter Road. My mother was the only one of the daughters to marry, and my cousin Bridget is the daughter of her only full brother, Walter, who died many years ago.

It is worthy of record that one of her half-sisters, Maude, married

Walter Frith, son of the famous Victorian artist William Powell Frith, and, as a little boy he featured in a number of his father's pictures including, as you will recall, the Railway Station.

J. S. Hill was a devoted father, and a number of his letters to his daughter survive written in the last years of his life when he was clearly failing; they are full of great charm and tenderness. This mixture of Scottish and Irish blood brought a new dimension into our genetic heritage and is responsible for Kenneth's fair hair and blue eyes - unusual for a Simonds.

The year after my parents' wedding, 1910, the Grandpater died aged 88, followed six years later by my grandfather Louis de Luze:- of pneumonia in a very cold wartime winter, which was hardly surprising given the nature and structure of Audleys Wood. These two events must have enabled my father to strengthen his grip on the management of the Brewery, but not, unfortunately, on its finances.

He was a man of dominant stature and personality and tremendous enthusiasm; all aspects of his life called for whole-hearted involvement. These included, in addition to the army, a passion for horse-racing which was exploited in the same way, so that by the time I joined the Brewery in 1938 there was no race course from Newmarket southwards which was not supplied with Simonds beer. Politics (the Conservative branch in Reading), The Brewer's Society, The Royal Warrant Holders, shooting, legions of friends, but overshadowing these at all times the Brewery itself with which he completely identified; all of these interests felt the full imprint of his leadership, and sometimes reeled under his

displeasure.

From the earliest days of their marriage he swept mother along in his enthusiasm for the Reading Conservatives of which he was Chairman for sixteen years. They were soon involved in a by-election which created considerable national interest, and which brought him his most enduring friendship - with the Conservative candidate, the then Captain Leslie Wilson. Reading had been held by the Government party, the Liberals, in the person of Sir Rufus Isaacs, who became Marquess of Reading, since 1904, and this by-election was a great test of Liberal strength. Wilson was elected in a record poll by a record majority, which caused the Reading Chronicle in December 1913 to warble ecstatically of my father that "it would not be saying too much to state that his features and something of his personality, are known to a very large newspaper-reading public throughout the whole of the United Kingdom and even beyond that sphere to distant lands beyond the seas". Well, Well!

Mother duly became Chairman of the women Conservatives and in time was rewarded by the gift of the beautiful George I walnut desk now at Winloed, and with the OBE of which she was intensely proud. Her up-bringing had not really suited her to this sort of life and it says much for father's coaching and her own determination that she overcame a natural diffidence to undertake this work.

Captain Wilson later became Chief Whip in the House of Commons and as Colonel Sir Leslie Wilson later on Governor of Bombay, and twice Governor of Queensland. He was my godfather, and a real hero to me. Father and he carried on an immense correspondence on at least a weekly basis during

his service overseas.

I always regard Audleys Wood as Home, but in truth it was an accident and a serious burden to the family. Grandmother Simonds died in 1929, leaving this massive house and 300 acre estate in some disarray; worse still the greatest slump of the century was just beginning. Father put the place on the market but at such a time there was not a nibble of interest; after 18 months he decided to sell Mertonford - which we never fully grew into - and move in. Mertonford stood on 15 acres of what became prime building land in the middle of Wokingham; had we stayed we would all be millionaires.

Audleys Wood was leased to Lord Camrose during the War, after which we returned for four years, but with no more sons living at home it was unsustainable and was sold in 1951 for a figure not greatly exceeding the £16,000 mortgage which the Grandpater had taken out on it fifty-one years before.

Father died in 1953 at the age of 73; in a sense this was merciful since he was due to retire the following year - a fate which he could not have endured. We received a vast number of letters on his death of which I quote from just one - from Gramp - "I'll always bless Uncle Charlie for a request he made of me. I can remember it perfectly. He said - when I pass on I'd really like you to pick up the thread and carry on the contact with your Cousin Eric. I thanked Uncle Charlie a thousand times for his foresight. It allowed me to get so that I really knew your father, and that was a rare and wonderful privilege". There are still many pensioners of the Brewery alive who remember "Mr. Eric" and echo those sentiments.

Father was not perfect. He was, for instance, not a good communicator. He never mastered any kind of machinery or learned to drive a car. The summit of his manual dexterity was to pull-through his gun after shooting, or to deal a poker-hand (both probably relics of the S. African venture). I seem to recognise these failings in somebody else! But he was certainly memorable.

Mother moved to Handpost, at Swallowfield, very self-contained and determined at all costs never to be a nuisance to anyone. Her deep religious convictions carried her through all of life's tragedies and crises and she died full of honour in 1969 at the age of 86.

The family of Thomas Simonds - elder son of our original Thomas - were if possible even more Berkshire-oriented than our own line. And even more strongly oriented towards field-sports, especially the cult of the horse, an activity which largely passed by the later descendants of William! Possibly pre-occupation with the horse may have made them slow breeders, because whereas I am the seventh generation in descent from old Thomas, David is only the sixth! The Berkshire orientation extended even to their schooling, as a high proportion of Thomas' issue went to Wellington College.

I could not attempt a detailed account of this side of the family, and in any case David is much better informed. Their principal home was Newlands, a beautiful Queen Anne house on a small eminence at Arborfield, now regrettably pulled down; and their business activity focussed for 150 years on the bank in Reading. This connection lasted until the retirement of Cousin Maurice in the 60's from his position as local director of Barclays.

My own memories of Newlands go back to the time of old "Mr. John" who died in 1929; he was a freeman of the Borough of Reading, and naturally I found him a very daunting old man. Newlands was a natural centre for children's parties, and at the Hunt and Hospital Balls of the 20's and 30's there were always around 30 Simonds' present, a large part of whom emanated from this house. John Simonds, elder brother of Maurice, succeeded his father at Newlands and coupled his duties as a main board director of Barclays with vice-chairmanship of the Brewery. My particular friend was his younger daughter, Mary (Maria) - a friendship lasting to this day. She married John Hart who retired recently after many years of distinguished and strenuous veterinary service in hot climates, which earned him the CBE.

Not all the family's cross-country exercise was taken on horseback. Gerald Simonds, first cousin to Maurice, was a real country character, who did not take kindly to banking routines and soon abandoned the office stool to spend most of the rest of his life running the Farley Hill Beagles. He and his devoted band of followers must have run many thousands of miles chasing hounds and hares across the Berkshire countryside, sometimes with myself in attendance.

All these people had a real affinity to the countryside in which they had their being, to the study of nature in its many forms, and to all the country pastimes commonly enjoyed by people of their social standing. This aptitude probably reached its highest level with Cousin Maurice who had in particular a comprehensive and instinctive knowledge of birds.

This side of the family also contributed its sons to the nation's wars. Charles Simonds, a second cousin of Maurice, was a partner in the Bank and something of an athlete and sportsman. He saw active service in the Boer War and won the Queen's Medal with 4 clasps. In 1914 he volunteered again, joined the Kings Royal Rifle Corps as a Captain, and was killed while Second-in-Command of the 13th Battalion of that Regiment on the Somme in 1916. He was very popular and later his brother officers subscribed to produce a little book about him called "Our Pal". I quote the first paragraph because it sums up all that his generation would like to be remembered for:- "He was our second-in-command. An unassuming country gentleman, full of the joy of living, generous to a fault, tolerant, easy-going (but never where the interests of discipline were at stake), and fearless in that rather boyish way which suggests the natural outcome of an untroubled habit of looking life squarely in the face. The Major, as we will henceforth call him, was typical of that fine class of

Englishman who, by thought, birth, and education is so essentially a gentleman". He is survived by his two sons who were both in the Army; Tony lives in Cyprus and Dick in Sussex.

Another casualty was Peter, third son of Gerald and elder brother of Kenneth's and my very dear friend Charity Maclaughlan, who joined the RAF and was killed in a flying accident at the age of 20. And Guy, eldest son of Maurice was killed in action in 1942 while being flown from one theatre of war to another.

It will have been noticed from the many dates scattered through this record that the Simonds family, and tributary families, have by and large shared the virtue of longevity. Not even mentioned so far are Gramp's three sisters, all of whom lived to well past 90, and two of whom, Barbara Simonds and Sophie Brewster Taber are still living; and their cousin Jeannette Renshaw, daughter of Emily Ogden Simonds, and great friend of my mother, who died this year aged 94. However, all these ancients were handsomely beaten by a lady who is of very special interest.

To trace her connections, we must go back to a third son of old Thomas Simonds, namely John, born 1736, who actually died at the early age of 26, but not before he had married and had one son of his own, William, whose son - also William (1787-1858) - moved to the Winchester area, married a Bristol lady, Hellen Barrow, and so founded the Barrow Simonds family who lived at the house that William built, Abbots Barton.

John Simonds and his descendants seem to have had no connection with the Brewery - not, that is to say, with the Simonds Brewery. But they compensated splendidly for this.

William Barrow Simonds 2, born in 1864, became the most distinguished of his line, for he was twice Mayor of Winchester, Member of Parliament, and Deputy-Lieutenant of Hampshire. His sister, Constance, born 1869 married James Allen Young, and their son William Allen Young married his first cousin Joan, daughter of William Barrow 2.

The Young family were the owners of the famous Ram Brewery at Wandsworth, and the four sons of Joan and William Allen have all played their part in building up the Brewery to its present eminence over the past 30 years while preserving its distinctive character and independence. John Young, the eldest, is now Chairman, his brother Thomas a director, and his son James a managing director.

But despite their achievements the undoubted star of their family was their grandmother, née Constance Simonds, who lived to the remarkable age of 110 years 9 months. Until well past 100 she maintained a close and detailed interest in the affairs of the Brewery, and to celebrate her 110th birthday this dauntless old lady held a full-scale T.V. interview of which she was in full command. We must all salute our kinswoman who was certainly the only person to live from the first administration of Gladstone to the first of Thatcher.

I N M E M O R I A M

1914	Lt. George Prescott Simonds	S. Wales Borderers	France
1916	Major Charles Francis Simonds	Kings Royal Rifle Corps	France
1917	Major John de Luze Simonds	Royal Garrison Artillery	France
1918	Lt. Col. St. John Shandon Quarry (great grandson of Henry Simonds)	Royal Warwickshire Regiment	France
1930	P/O Peter Hilary Pomeroy Simonds	R A F	England
1940	Charles John Francis Hare	R A F	over North Sea
1942	Edward Guy Hayes Simonds	R A F	in flight
1944	John Mellor Simonds	Airborne Forces	Arnhem
1951	Gavin Alexander Simonds	Died of illness contracted while on active service in	E. Africa
1953	Lt. James Malcolm Simonds	Fleet Air Arm	N. Korea.

C O N C L U S I O N

It is strange - and perhaps a little sad - that all this should have been written in 1985, the year in which the Brewery, the family's most visible achievement, celebrates its 200th birthday in the hands of the demolition gangs; and the year in which the family's claim to be Berkshire landowners has dwindled almost to zero.

You may attach what symbolism you like to this. For my part I have to believe that the monuments of a family are not to be found in sticks and stones, artefacts and balance sheets, (after all there are some pretty nasty Earls about with vast possessions), but in the quality of its sons and daughters.

Perhaps you may choose to regard 1985 not as "Finis", but just as a "Natural Break".

E. D. S.

APPENDIX 1

SYMON SYMON(D)S

THE VICAR OF BRAY - SIR!

According to the 'Pedigree of Simonds', Symon Symons, son of Andrew and nephew of Robert, (my Greatx12 Grandfather), was a Canon of Windsor in 1540. The Eton Register of the period states that he was also, at one time, Vicar of Bray. There is no record of any progeny of Symon, though it is an interesting speculation as to how he would have arranged his marital affairs under different disciplines if he were, as I believe he was, the veritable subject of the Ballad.

The List of Vicars in St. Michael's Church, Bray, shows 'Symon Symonds' as Vicar in 1522-23, and the next entry is 'Symon Alleyn', though clearly there is a good deal of uncertainty about both the succession and the dates. There is in the Church an abbreviated 'walkabout' guide which suggests that it was this Simon Alleyn who achieved notoriety, but the 'Short History of St. Michael's', currently out of print, has quite a different version and claims that Symonds was Vicar until 1547, and that there was a William Stafferton between him and Alleyn.

At this point it should be noted that, whilst the Ballad is of 17th century origin and refers to 17th century happenings, there is little doubt that, written a hundred years after the event, it lampoons the 16th century Incumbent whose fame had been handed down. There were, of course, happenings in the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth comparable to those of the Stuarts and the Commonwealth.

The best and most nearly contemporaneous account can be found in Thomas Fuller's 17th century 'Church History', and this is quoted in extenso in 'Berkshire and the Vale of the White Horse', by Roger Higham, Batsford, 1977:-

"When Henry VIII shook off the Papal supremacy, the Vicar of Bray preached in the most zealous manner against the innovations and encroachments made by the court of Rome, and when the Five Articles were published, he vindicated idolatry with all the strength of prostituted logic. In the reign of Edward VI when the Protestant religion was established by act of Parliament, the Vicar renounced all his former principles, and became a strenuous advocate for the Reformation. On the accession of Queen Mary, he again vindicated the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and became a zealous Papist, inveighing with great acrimony against all those worthy persons who abhorred the Romish religion. He enjoyed his benefice until the reformed religion was established in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when he once more changed with the times, and enjoyed his vicarage until his death which happened in the 41st year of her reign. This man's name was Symon Symonds. So insensible was he of everything that bore the name of moral honesty that instead of being in the least affected by it, his constant answer was 'I will live and die Vicar of Bray!'"

If indeed Symon became Vicar in 1522 and died in office in the 41st year of Elizabeth's reign, he would have served a term of seventy-six years, which looks a bit improbable, but there are several alternative, more credible, explanations. Some authorities believe that Symon Symonds and Symon Alleyn were one and the same person, and that there never was a William Stafferton. 1565 is thought to be the date of Alleyn's death, and

this would have encompassed the vagaries of all four monarchs, and an incumbency of forty-three years, which is entirely credible. Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 so, with Henry's death in 1547, there is a minimum time-span of only eleven years, though he would surely have needed a significant overlap at both ends to have given him time to make his historic impact. Another alternative is that Symon started it all, and his particular ethos became a tradition in the parish to which his successors adhered enthusiastically, and this way of life became immemorially associated with the name of Symonds.

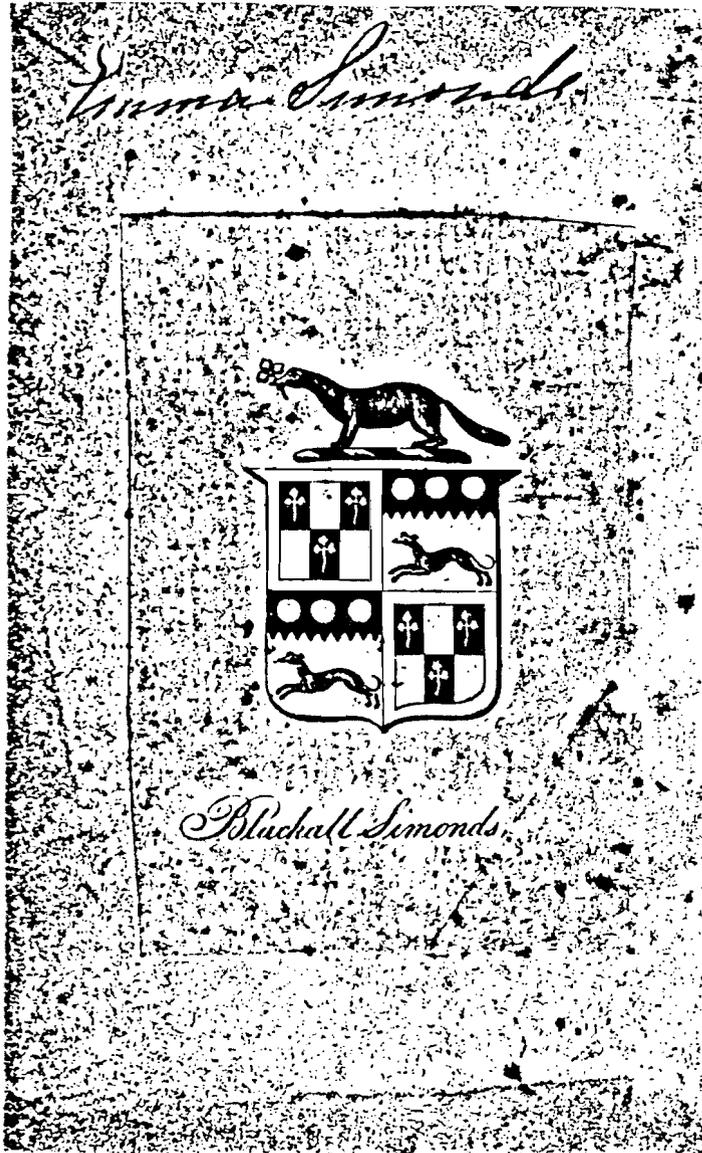
The exact truth will never be revealed, but the case is a strong one. It is, perhaps, notable that Symon is the only cleric in the pedigree, and, as a man 'so insensible of everything that bore the name of moral honesty' it may be just as well that he was not the founder of a dynasty.

KFS

May 1985

APPENDIX 2

THE ARMS OF THE SIMONDS FAMILY



This is the earliest representation that I can find of the Crest and Arms of the Simonds family. It is taken from the fly-leaf of a book owned by Emma Usborne, wife of the first Blackall Simonds, eldest son of William Blackall Simonds (1784-1875). The book is dated October 27 1813. The Arms are familiar to you because they formed the silk banner used to hang from the trumpets blown outside the Assize Court in Reading to greet the Judge during the period when my father was High Sheriff. This banner is now at Winloed.

A letter from Somerset Herald in 1984 suggests that the Arms are "an unofficial variation of a 16th century grant quartering a 15th century coat" and that "there are many cases where families rose into the ranks of the gentry, and rather than have a new grant of arms which would proclaim the comparatively recent establishment of the family, they chose to use the arms of another family of their name without authority".

In our case the Arms in the first and fourth quarters (the trefoils), and the crest (the ermine with trefoil in its mouth) appear to have been first granted to a William Simons of Lyme Regis in 1587, who may or may not have been a relative.

The Arms in the second and third quarters (greyhounds) were granted in 1494 to Richard Blackwall, of Blackwall in Derbyshire. There must be a strong supposition that the two sets of arms were quartered in this way because the Blackall family of Henley, whose daughter Mary married William Simonds in 1765, were descendants of the Blackwalls of Derbyshire. However, further research would be needed by the College of Arms to establish this assumption with any certainty, and such research is costly.

APPENDIX 3

T H E F I T Z G E R A L D D E S C E N T



ERICA

RAYMOND

GERALD

COLIN

LOUISE

GAVIN

Children of:

Sons of:

LOUIS

DUNCAN

KENNETH FITZGERALD

Sons of:

AMY FITZGERALD SIMONDS, B. 1883, nee Hill

Daughter of:

AMY HILL, b. 1857, nee FitzGerald

Daughter of:

CHARLES MORDAUNT FITZGERALD, b. 1827 Major, Bengal Staff
Corps d. Calcutta 1867

Son of:

WILLIAM ROBERT FITZGERALD, b. 1798 Major, Bengal Engineers
d. Calcutta 1844

Son of:

MARTIN FITZGERALD, b. 1768 Colonel, 2nd Bengal Cavalry
d. 1829 Buried in Bath Abbey

5

Son of:

ALEXANDER FITZGERALD, of Strabo Treasurer of the Queen's
County d. 1797 Buried in Timogue Churchyard

Son of:

DUDLEY FITZGERALD of Ballydavis d. 1761 Administration
granted to widow, Ann Delany

Son of:

ALEXANDER FITZGERALD b. posthumously 1666
A ward to his uncle, Colonel Alexander Piggott. An officer in
King James II's Army 1685 - 88. Will dated 6 June 1712; proved
19 December 1712.

Son of:

THOMAS FITZGERALD of Morett etc.
Will dated 5 March 1666; proved December 1666. m. Sibella,
5th daughter of Sir John Piggott of Dysart, the Queen's County

Son of:

GERALD (BUY) FITZGERALD of Morett etc. and Luggacurran
High Sheriff, the Queen's County 1637. Attainted 1641. d. a
very old man in 1667. Administration granted to Alexander
Piggott for benefit of grandson, Stephen FitzGerald 1 April 1667.

Son of:

GERALD (OGE) FITZGERALD, of Morett b. 1546
Inherited from his father by will of 20 February 1584 the lands
of Morett, Timogue, Ballyteskin, and Shanganamore, all in the
Queen's County. He married subsequent to 1585 and was murdered
at Morett and his castle burnt, 1601.

Son of:

GERALD FITZGERALD, 11th Earl of Kildare d. 1585
great, great, great, great, great, great, grandson of:
JOHN FITZ THOMAS FITZGERALD, 1st Earl of Kildare, 1316,
from whom originates;

"THE STORY OF THE MONKEY CREST"

When an infant he was in the Castle of Woodstock, near Athy,
when there was an alarm of fire. He was at first forgotten,
and when the servants went in search of him the room was in
flames. Hearing a noise on one of the towers they looked up

and saw an ape, which was usually kept chained, carefully holding the child in its arms. The ape brought him down to safety and in grateful acknowledgement the Earl adopted a chained Monkey for his crest, and two chained monkeys as supporters for his arms. Some of his descendants added the Motto "Non Immemor Beneficii".

Another tradition relates this story to Thomas Fitzmaurice and the castle of Tralee, but his family never assumed the monkey crest.

It is said that when Dean Swift was writing "Gulliver's Travels" he had quarreled with the then Earl of Kildare, and to annoy him introduced into his story the Brobdingnagian ape who carried off and fed the hero.

The Motto "Crom - a - boo" was really a war-cry compounded of "Crom", a heathen god corresponding roughly to Jupiter, and "Aboo", an exclamation of defiance. Crom was also a castle in Co. Limerick belonging to the Geraldines, and on the borders of the territory of the O'Briens, their traditional enemies, whose war-cry was "Lamblaides - a - boo". In 1495 when the feud between the two families was at its height, Act 10 of Henry VII was passed rendering penal the utterance of these cries. It was not effective in stopping the feuds.

GERALD FITZGERALD, 11th Earl of Kildare was son of Gerald, the 9th Earl who died a prisoner in the Tower of London on 12 December 1534. He was succeeded as 10th Earl by his elder son Thomas, by his first wife Elizabeth Zouch, commonly called "Silken Thomas". Thomas was executed at Tyburn (now Marble Arch) on 3 February 1536, an event recorded in "The Annals of the Four Masters", 1537, thus: "Thomas the son of the Earl of Kildare, the best man of the English in Ireland of his time, and his father's five brothers, James, Margarch, Oliver, John, Walter and Richard, were put to death in England on the 3rd rones (sic) of February, and all the Geraldines of Leinster were exiled and banished. The Earldom of Kildare was vested

in the King (Henry VIII) and everyone of the family who was apprehended whether lay or ecclesiastical was tortured or put to death. These were great losses and the cause of lamentation throughout Ireland."

This catastrophe left Gerald, the younger half-brother of Silken Thomas by his father's second wife Elizabeth Gray, as the sole free survivor of the family. At the time he was aged 11 and was lying ill of smallpox at Donore in Co. Kildare. His younger brother, Edward, was then in England as a hostage with his mother. On such a slender thread hung the existence of the future Simonds family! Gerald was carefully conveyed by his tutor, Thomas Leverous, a priest, in a basket to his sister Lady Mary O'Connor at Offaly.

There followed a long tale of movement and intrigue which is more fully recounted in the family history. In March 1540 the young earl with his tutor sailed from Donegal Bay to St. Malo. Although well received by French connections there, he was still not out of reach of the English, so proceeded to Italy where he was cared for by Cardinal Pole. He was associated, at least in the public mind, with the assembly of a huge force of 15,000 men by the King of France at Brest, aimed at invading Ireland in 1544, and to be welcomed by the McCartheys and O'Connors. The invasion did not materialise. At the same time he married Ellinor, daughter of the O'Kelly of Timogue. She died in 1546 at the birth of their son Gerald (Oge); owing to his father's Attainder the legitimacy of this child was not allowed, but he was acknowledged by the O'Kelly, who brought him up, and eventually settled on him much O'Kelly property, including the castle of Timogue.

The Earl found it safer to remain abroad until after the death of King Henry VIII when he returned to London, still accompanied by his faithful tutor. His fortunes were at a low ebb,

but he wisely repaired them by marrying in 1552 Mabel, daughter of Sir Anthony Brown who was master of the horse to King Edward VI, and in full court favour. The introduction must have come about from the curious fact that Gerald's sister, "the fair Geraldine", had in 1543 been sold in marriage to Sir Anthony Brown as his second wife. His title and Irish estates were quickly restored to him by letters patent dated at Westminster 25 April 1552, but his son was barred from succession to the title by the former Act of Attainder. This was probably in deference to the rights of his children by Mabel Brown, but in fact they died childless, and the Earldom of Kildare passed to the issue of his younger brother Edward.

The Earl returned to Ireland in 1553 and ruthlessly set about gaining personal supremacy, even earning the thanks of Queen Elizabeth for his services against the O'Connors, and O'Mores. He became the virtual ruler of Ireland and escaped through the perilous year of 1577 when English settlers combined to murder 398 of the old proprietors including many of his kin. He further ingratiated himself with the Queen by treacherously murdering Fergus O'Kelly at the Castle of Kilkea in 1580, and received from her further grants of land.

He died in London in 1585, having left to his son, Gerald, by his will dated 20 February 1584 his lands at Morett and elsewhere, in all 2745 acres.

GERALD (OGE) FITZGERALD married in middle life sometime after 1585 Margaret Bowen, daughter of Robert Bowen of Bally Adams in the Queen's County. The Bowens were, like King Henry VII (Henry Tudor), of Welsh descent, and had earlier gained possession of the castle at Bally Adams, built originally by Adam O'More, by conquest. This circumstance intensified the blood feud with the O'Mores until finally Gerald was murdered by a raiding party of O'Mores at his home at Morett Castle in 1601, the castle then being destroyed by fire.

GERALD (BUY) FITZGERALD displayed once again the family's knack for preserving the blood line by being born before his father's murder. He was called Buy by the Irish on account of his yellow hair. He married Ann, daughter of O'Dempsey, Lord Clanmalier, and identified himself with the Irish Catholic party. He became High Sheriff of the Queen's County in 1637 and was Commandant of Lord Castlehaven's Life Guard, but his fortunes fell with those of the O'Dempseys and in 1642 he was attainted and lost his property and lands.

Somehow, by inter-marriage they ultimately reverted to the family, but gradually over the next two centuries they were frittered away and the FitzGerald's ceased to be of real consequence in the Queen's County.

Five generations later MARTIN FITZGERALD, born 5 January 1768, followed the natural course for penurious younger sons of Irish gentry by being the first of many FitzGerald's to join the Indian Army. At the age of 15 he was appointed Ensign in the 2nd Bengal European Regiment. He survived much active service in India serving in turn in the 30th Bengal Native Infantry, the 31st of the same, the First Bengal Light Cavalry and the Second of the same. At the battle of Laswar, 1 November 1803, he had two horses shot under him. He was promoted Lt. Col. in 1818 and commanded the 2nd Bengal Cavalry at Muttra. His military career was brought to an end in 1820 by an accident when his horse fell on him; returned to England in 1821, was made Colonel of his Regiment in 1824 and died at Bath in 1829. His eldest son, John, eventually succeeded him in command of the same Regiment.

The second son of Martin's second son was my (Duncan's) great-grandfather, Charles Mordaunt FitzGerald who, for the first time, brings us in touch with living memory in the person of his wife, Mary Swayne. She outlived him by some 55 years and died when I was five years old at Wokingham.

I have a clear recollection of her aged over 90. Charles Mordaunt, like his father and grandfather and most of his cousins, joined the Indian Army, being appointed Ensign in the 31st Bengal Native Infantry at the age of 16. He too endured much active service, serving with the Commissariat in the Burmese War of 1852 - 53, and being severely wounded in action at Trimmoo Ghat. He was honourably mentioned for his services in the Sikkim Expedition of 1861, became substantive major in 1863 and died of cholera in Calcutta on 13 June 1867, still aged under 40. He dutifully left two sons for further service in the army, one of whom HERBERT SWAYNE FITZGERALD, my great-uncle, served as adjutant of the 15th Sikh Regiment in the Afghan War in 1880 and in the march under Sir Frederick Roberts from Kabul to Kandahar. This seems to be timely reminder that just a century ago it was the British who were invading Afghanistan, no doubt for the best of reasons, but at that time there were no Olympic Games to boycott.

At this point the history of our part of the FitzGerald family comes to an end, for neither Herbert Swayne nor his brother had male issue. They were however quite an interesting, adventurous, and even at times distinguished family, and I trust that one of my sons will one day give one of his sons the name of FitzGerald so that not all of the history will be forgotten.

Footnote

Those turbulent early FitzGeralds found their way into Winston Churchill's "History of the English Speaking Peoples" Vol. II.

Churchill describes the difficulties which King Henry VII experienced in trying to control his far flung and unruly

Kingdom following the Wars of the Roses - particularly in Ireland. The 8th Earl of Kildare was an open supporter of Perkin Warbeck who laid claim to the throne on the pretence of being the younger of the two princes murdered in the Tower.

Churchill goes on, "Kildare was attainted and sent over to London; but Henry was too wise to apply simple feudal justice to so mighty an offender with his fighting clan on the outskirts of Dublin, and cousins, marriage-kin, and clients all over the island. The charges against the Great Earl were serious enough apart from his suspected favour of Perkin Warbeck. Had he not burned down the Cathedral of Cashel? The Earl admitted it, but excused himself in a fashion that appealed to the King. "I did, but I thought the Archbishop was inside". Henry VII accepted the inevitable with a dictum which is famous, if not authentic, "Since all Ireland cannot govern the Earl of Kildare, let the Earl of Kildare govern all Ireland". Kildare was pardoned, freed, married to the King's cousin Elizabeth St. John, and sent back to Ireland where he succeeded Poynings as Lord Deputy".

This incident took place in or shortly after 1494. The lady was his second wife and is described in the family tree as "daughter of Oliver St. John of Lydiard Tregoze". Ironically she bore him seven sons, including the five who were later hanged at Tyburn in the reign of Henry VII's son, Henry VIII.

The Poynings referred to was the author of the celebrated Poynings Law which subordinated the Irish Parliament to the English, causing great bitterness right up to the present century. That Kildare should have succeeded this hated Englishman is proof, at least, of his versatility.

THE VON BETHMANN CONNECTION

History can have its own quirks; here is an example from our family.

My 4 x great-grandfather, Johann Philipp von Bethmann, co-founder of the Bethmann Bank in Frankfurt, was also great-great-grandfather of Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg who became Chancellor of the German Empire under Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1908, and who must therefore bear a share of responsibility for World War I. However, in 1917 he was manoeuvred out of office by Ludendorff, who suspected him of being less than totally supportive of the German High Command's policy of unrestricted U-Boat warfare.

It was, of course, reaction against this policy which turned American public opinion away from neutrality, and it was the American Ambassador in London at that time, Walter Page, who was largely responsible for influencing President Wilson in the same way. Accordingly the first American troops arrived in Britain in 1917, and their participation in the Allied cause was crucial to ultimate victory. Walter Page's part in this earned him a memorial plaque in Westminster Abbey, recording him as "a true friend of Britain".

How remarkable, and in a way how apt, that his grandson, John Page, should in due course have married Susie Simonds who shares equally our Bethmann descent. So is the circle of history squared, and the folly of war exposed. Our contact and friendship with the von Bethmann family in Frankfurt - who had maintained the banking tradition until only two years ago - is now restored and hopefully will continue in later generations.

H AND G SIMONDS—A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO READING'S HISTORY

Looking back at 200 years of family success

THE bi-centenary of a successful brewing company which has played a major part in the life of Reading and Berkshire was celebrated in style at Worton Grange on Saturday.

H and G Simonds marked their 200th anniversary with a garden party for 600 guests at the new Berkshire brewery where the company is now housed.

Among those attending were past and present employees of the family firm and the Mayor and Mayoress of

Reading, Brian and Gladys Fowles.

A director of the company, Mr David Simonds, said: "It was a great family get-together and a good opportunity to meet old friends. The place was full of happy, smiling faces."

Several of Simonds directors, prior to the Courage merger, were at the garden party, including Mr Duncan Simonds — the great, great grandson of the brewery founder, Mr William Blackall

Also present were Mr Derek Keighley, former joint managing director of the company with Mr Duncan Simonds, and Mr Kenneth Chapman, the financial director at the time.

They were all delighted to see that Mrs Asa Bradford was able to attend the party. Mrs Bradford, who is in her eighties was the private secretary of the late Eric Simonds, chairman of the company during its greatest period of expansion in 1913 and 1953.

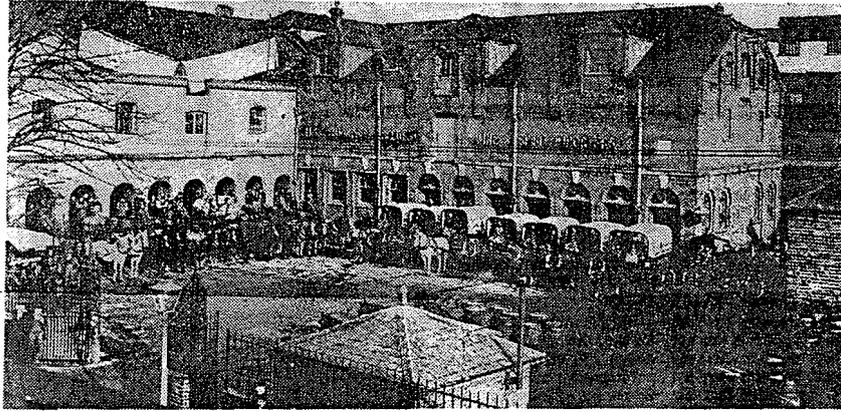
Simonds has gone from strength to strength since it began 200 years ago with a brewery built on a site south of Gun Street.

making the Reading Brewery site more intensively used.

Throughout the history of Simonds, members of the firm have played their part in affairs of the town. William Blackall Simonds became mayor of Reading in 1816, followed by Henry Simonds in 1824, Henry Adolphus in 1859, Henry John in 1866 and Blackall in 1882.

The company merged with Courage in 1959 and Reading became the headquarters of the central region of the new firm.

By 1980 it was time to move on to bigger, and more modern premises, and the brewery transferred to Worton Grange which now has an annual output of 1.5 million production and distribution, barrels.



Looking back . . . the old brewery yard.



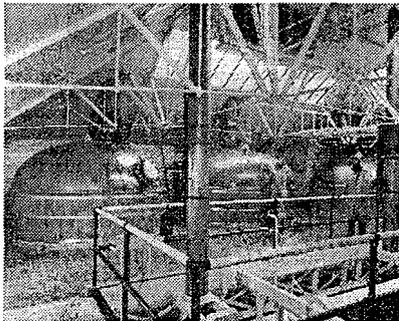
With a memento of the brewery's past at the H and G Simonds bicentennial celebrations are, from the left, Mr Bill Freeman (former home trade manager), Col Derrick Keighly, Mrs David Simonds, Mrs Gladys Fowles (Mayoress), Mr Brian Fowles (Mayor), Mr Duncan Simonds, Mrs Ada Bradford (secretary to the late chairman) and Mr David Simonds.



Former brewery employee, Mr Bill Bain, and his wife, Vera, study photographs on display at the bicentennial exhibition.



Looking back . . . the offices of H & G Simonds.



Looking back . . . the brewery coppers.