

The Life and Times of the Real

Winnie- the-Pooh



The Teddy Bear Who
Inspired A.A. Milne

Shirley Harrison

*The Life and Times
of the Real
Winnie-the-Pooh*

The Teddy Bear Who Inspired
A.A. Milne

Shirley Harrison



First published in Great Britain in 2011 by

Remember When

An imprint of

Pen & Sword Books Ltd

47 Church Street

Barnsley

South Yorkshire

S70 2AS

Copyright © Shirley Harrison 2011

ISBN 978 1 84468 078 8

ePub ISBN: 9781844683208

PRC ISBN: 9781844683215

The right of Shirley Harrison to be identified as Author of this work
has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs
and Patents Act 1988.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British
Library.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or
transmitted in
any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopying,
recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without
permission from
the Publisher in writing.

Typeset in 12pt Bernhard Modern by Mac Style, Beverley, East Yorkshire

Printed and bound by MPG Books Group

Pen & Sword Books Ltd incorporates the imprints of Pen & Sword
Aviation,

Pen & Sword Maritime, Pen & Sword Military, Wharncliffe Local History,
Pen & Sword Select, Pen & Sword Military Classics, Leo Cooper,
Seaforth Publishing and Frontline Publishing.

For a complete list of Pen & Sword titles please contact

PEN & SWORD BOOKS LIMITED

47 Church Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 2AS, England

E-mail: enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk

Website: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

Contents

[Pooh Preface](#)

[Explanation: Hand In Hand](#)

[Chapter1:](#) [A Bear is Born](#)

[Chapter2:](#) [A Present for the Baby](#)

[Chapter3:](#) [Introducing Moon, Blue, Daff and Nou](#)

[Chapter4:](#) [When They Were Very Young](#)

[Chapter5:](#) [Winnie the Who?](#)

[Chapter6:](#) [Pooh and Friends](#)

[Chapter7:](#) [Hand in Hand](#)

[Chapter8:](#) [Home to Hartfield](#)

[Chapter9:](#) [Pooh's Corner](#)

[Chapter10:](#) [His Fingers Blew Across the Page](#)

[Chapter11:](#) [Pooh is the Spur](#)

[Chapter12:](#) [The Doldrums](#)

[Chapter13:](#) [War and Peace](#)

[Chapter 14:](#) [The Immigrants](#)

[Chapter 15:](#) [Winnie the Star](#)

[Chapter 16:](#) [Home Again](#)

[Chapter 17:](#) [Turmoil](#)

[Chapter 18:](#) [The Shop at Pooh Corner](#)

[Chapter 19:](#) [Pooh the Philanthropist](#)

[Chapter 20:](#) [Poogle it for Fun](#)

[Chapter 21:](#) [Don't Ever Forget Me](#)

[A Pooh Lifeline](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Index](#)

Pooh Preface

YOU MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT there was nothing left to say about Winnie the-Pooh. But of course there always is and Shirley's Expedition takes us into unexpected and exciting new territory. She explores not only the past but looks also to the future and the long overdue possibility of a permanent memorial to a national icon.

We can visit the factory where Pooh was made in 1921 and the store where he was bought 90 years ago as a present for baby Christopher Robin. We are introduced to some of the people who knew him in the magical world of Hartfield in Sussex. Her journey then follows Pooh over the Atlantic after World War II. There he became a touring celebrity, eventually inspiring the Disney Corporation to make him an international film star. He never returned.

As companion to Ann Thwaite's impressive biography of Milne, Shirley's perceptive, affectionate approach is extremely welcome. The fictional Pooh is never likely to be forgotten but we now have a book which tells so much more than even his faithful readers know about the original teddy bear.

I was personally delighted too, that Elliott Graham, the American editor at Dutton in New York, is acknowledged for the first time. He published my own early novels and became a close friend for many years. This stout and growly man did more than anyone else to ensure the real bear's survival. For over 40 years Elliott cared for Pooh and kept vivid, detailed diaries covering his travels with him around America. They have never before seen daylight until Shirley was invited to read them by Elliott's niece, Judy Henry.

In 2009, Egmont published my sequel to A.A. Milne's classics – *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood*. In it I imagined a more grown-up Christopher Robin returning to the place and friends of his childhood. The only newcomer to the Forest was Lottie the Otter. The next year I travelled to New York to introduce Lottie to the real Pooh and his friends from the Hundred Acre Wood. Ricketty and threadbare now, like so many of us, but still disarmingly loveable, they are all now living in retirement in the Children's Department of New York Library.

It is a curious tale when you consider it. Milne never regarded his Pooh stories as significant compared to his other books and plays. Yet these are little regarded these days. His son had, to put it tactfully, mixed feelings about the fame Pooh had brought him too. It is a bitter sweet story. Daphne Milne, on the other hand, was delighted that the books were so successful because of the opportunities which then arose for her to decorate their home in Mallord Street and to take annual trips to New York.

At the epicentre of all this kerfuffle is a small teddy bear. But who owns him today? No one is sure. And how can it be that it is due to him that Westminster School and the Garrick Club in London look so elegant, or that indigent writers everywhere can occasionally afford a night on the town? On a personal note, I owe the Milne Trust plenty and have not only benefited from the royalties from *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood* – a new fridge-freezer – but have received funds to enable me to finish a novel (as yet unpublished) and to teach overseas students at Goldsmith's College how to improve their essay-writing skills.

Pooh's philanthropy – like to see him try to spell that! – and the billions of pounds he has raised to help charitable causes and bring happiness to so many needy people, is an important part of Shirley's story. They are the reason why, at last, there is a move afoot for Arctophiles everywhere to muster support for a statue or maybe a museum to honour him – perhaps on Ashdown Forest where it all began.

David Benedictus

Explanation: Hand In Hand

AT THE OUTBREAK of World War II in 1939, before he left to join the army, my father gave me a set of four books by A.A. Milne. *When We Were Very Young*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Now We are Six* and *The House at Pooh Corner* were first published in the years between 1924–8. Those books, their covers now a fading blue, the pages yellow at the edges, have been with me, wherever I have been, all my life. I read them to my children, then to my grandchildren and now my great-grandchildren. They all laugh with me, even if they do not always appreciate the gentle humour, the wit and innocent but profoundly perceptive approach to life of Pooh and Piglet, Tigger, Kanga, Owl, Rabbit and Eeyore, just as I still do.

Embarrassing to recall that my friends and I even assumed their names and that I, being the oldest, was Christopher Robin. More embarrassing still, now in our sixties and seventies, when we greeted each other recently at my niece's wedding the power of Pooh was undimmed. 'Hi Piglet', 'Hi Tigger!', 'Oh Robin, how good to see you!'

By a twist of fate, in 1962 my late husband and I moved to the Sussex village of Hartfield on the fringes of Ashdown Forest. Looking back, it is hard to credit that, when we first moved in, I did not realise that Hartfield was the home of A.A. Milne, his wife Daphne, their son Christopher Robin and the teddy bear who eventually became Winnie-the-Pooh. Our Forest was the inspirational setting for the magical illustrations of E.H. Shepard. I was not alone, for although those books were loved by children and grown-ups all over the world very few knew, even then, that the stories were about real people, and real toys or that Pooh's forest was a real forest.

Soon after we arrived in Hartfield, I learned that A.A. Milne had died, at Cotchford Farm in 1956, and that his widow was still living there. Christopher Robin himself was married and running a bookshop in Devon.

And Pooh? Well, with A.A. Milne's agreement he had, surprisingly, emigrated to the united States at the end of World War II and was then living with Tigger, Kanga, Piglet and Eeyore in the New York offices of his American publisher, E.P. Dutton.

Despite growing international fame, in his homeland of Hartfield itself there were still no notices on the Forest, no mention of Pooh's life in local history books, no signs recording that 'A.A. Milne Lived Here'. The shop, known today as Pooh Corner, was still the village bakery where Christopher Robin bought his bulls eyes. And the remote and crumbling bridge where Pooh and his friends invented the game of Poohsticks was a peaceful haven known only to local folk and seldom visited by them. The 'Enchanted Place' on top of the Forest was still magical. Tourists were rare enough to be stared at. All this was about to change.

In 1961, after her husband's death and because she admired Walt Disney's work, Mrs Milne had astutely, if controversially, licensed the motion picture rights in Winnie-the-Pooh to the Disney Corporation.

Five years later the company produced its first cartoon – *Winnie the Pooh And The Honey Tree* – which began the transformation of the bear of not so little brain into the multi-billion pounds a year juggernaut that he eventually became.

English through and through, the cartoon bear that the original bear inspired is, today, the Disney Corporation's hottest property. He has his very own place on Hollywood's Pavement of the Stars. He is richer even than Queen Elizabeth II herself.

That year – 1966 – with a group of friends I started a pre-school playgroup in the village and not long afterwards Mrs Milne sold her lop-sided Tudor farmhouse to an American family. Before she left I went to interview her for the magazine *Sussex Life*, hoping, perhaps naively, that residents would like her to share with them the story of Winnie-the-Pooh, their furry local hero.

The elegant Mrs Milne was not particularly popular in the village. The Milnes were not churchgoers – quite the reverse – and Daphne appeared to be rather distant and somewhat snooty. Most of their friends had hailed from London's literary scene and they did not mingle at village fetes or flower shows, although their gardener, George Tasker, had been very proud of the produce he exhibited from their garden.

We sat in the comfortable living room of Cotchford Farm, as she talked enthusiastically about her role as the voice of Piglet and of the hidden heartache the bitter-sweet success of the books had brought them all. Then we walked around the garden watching real-life rabbits lolloping on the lawns, and sauntered among the bluebells and little streams that fed the river itself, as she remembered those early days.

‘We had no idea when we first sat making Pooh and Piglet voices that those terribly English toys would amuse other families so far away’, she said. ‘But I suppose that my husband’s dream characters had the faults and foibles of all people, whether they live in igloos or wigwams.’

Then, in 1976, I heard that Christopher Robin’s teddy bear himself was coming to London for the 50th anniversary celebration of the publication of *Winnie-the-Pooh*. I wrote to his English publishers, Methuen, and asked them to allow him to return to Hartfield, so that we could photograph him with the children of the village playgroup in some of his favourite ‘warm and sunny spots’. Amazingly they agreed! Pooh was coming home.

There were to be two events that June. The first was with our playgroup, where Pooh was to be filmed by television. This was to be followed by a giant Teddy Bears’ picnic at Forstal Farm, in the next door hamlet of Withyham. The hosts were actress, Joan Wood, and her husband, Alan, who was a member of A.A. Milne’s favourite, Garrick Club.

Three years later, in 1979, children in Hartfield were queuing up to buy a special commemorative eleven pence stamp issued by the Post Office to mark The Year of the Child. It illustrated their very own Winnie-the-Pooh – the Pooh they had met and played with only a few years before.

The great Disney take-over created a new character that many of Pooh’s original devotees regarded as sacrilege. The animations did not look much like the original, innocent, rather wistful book illustrations by artist E.H. Shepard, who thought they were a travesty. They looked nothing like Christopher Robin’s toys and WORSE – they spoke American!

In truth, Pooh the film star has generated even greater fortunes for all who flocked to dip into his golden hunny pot. Much of this income from film, books and merchandise has today been diverted to charities raising funds for an impressive range of causes for both adults and children. Disney’s Pooh has also touched the hearts of a new generation who have come to love him and don’t much mind if he has strolled off the pages of a book or a cinema screen.

To A.A. Milne’s own great regret, the extraordinary acclaim accorded those four books totally overshadowed his literary work as an internationally respected and popular dramatist and author. He admitted ruefully, in a poem, that he had brought Winnie-the-Pooh to life little thinking that his prolific output would be eclipsed by these ‘four trifles for the young’. E.H. Shepard, too, lived to regret that much of his later work as a brilliant artist had been sabotaged by ‘that bear’.

Sadly the boy who grew up to be Christopher Milne, a Devonshire bookseller, also felt overshadowed as an adult by the fame of his once-loved teddy bear.

Recently Pooh was made an Icon of the World, yet few of his faithful followers, young and old across the globe, realise when or how, or even where, it all began. Unlike Harry Potter, or any of the characters in the best loved children's classics, such as Mole or Toad in *The Wind in the Willows*, Rupert Bear, Paddington or Babar the Elephant, Pooh is not fiction.

The rather threadbare Winnie-the-Pooh himself lives on, celebrating his 90th birthday in 2011 in the Donnell Children's Centre of the magnificently ornate New York Public Library. Adults and children press their noses to the glass of his retirement home and write their thoughts in the visitors' book. He has even been invited to witness the engagements of couples who love to be photographed in his company. They, at least, know that he is real, although very frail now and so none is privileged, as our Hartfield pre-school children were in 1976, to hold him by the paw.

Those children are grown-up, and package tourists – especially from Japan – pour into their village to pay homage and sometimes to do battle with residents, many of whom still resent the increased traffic and the crowds infesting their Forest.

On the final page of the last book, *The House at Pooh Corner*, as Christopher Robin prepares for boarding school, he and Pooh make a pilgrimage together to the Enchanted Place on top of the Forest. There, sitting under the trees among the pine needles, he breaks the news to Pooh that he won't be able to do 'Nothing any more' because 'they don't let you.'

'Pooh, promise you won't forget me, ever. Not even when I'm a hundred.' Pooh thought for a little. 'I promise', he said.

Despite the razzmatazz that has surrounded him, despite the happiness and the riches he has generated, despite the controversy and feuding behind the scenes, the true story of the real teddy bear Winnie-the-Pooh and of his life has never been told. After all he is just a stuffed toy in a book – or a cartoon – isn't he? He cannot be found on Facebook, can he? He doesn't breathe, does he? He was not really born, was he? He can't really speak – and yet.....

Once upon a time an anonymous teddy bear set off, from a factory in a north west London suburb with a van-load of similar bears and other toys. His spectacular journey was to take him into the hearts of people of all ages, around the world and that is where we will join him first – in Acton where it all began.

Chapter One

A Bear is Born

DURING THE NINETEENTH century the character of Acton changed rapidly. Once a rural farming community famed for its healing wells, by the end of that century it had acquired the nickname of 'Soapsud Island'. This was due to the proliferation of laundries (servicing the smartest hotels of London's West End): in the twenty years from 1873 their number had risen from sixty to at least two-hundred-and-twelve. By the 1920s, Acton was also to become home to one of the largest concentrations of industry in the south of England and was known as Motor Town.

Previously an Agent for Servants, it was there, in 1871, that Joseph Kirby Farnell started a new business following the Victorian fashion for fancy goods – such as tea-cosies, pin-cushions and elaborate cards for all occasions. This would almost certainly have included a limited selection of toys.

The Farnell name is all but forgotten by the general public today, although its memory is hugely respected by toy trade magazines and writers. Kathy Martin's excellent book, *Farnell Teddy Bears*, places the company, for the first time, in its true historical context.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, toy shops were few and far between and even then were found only in larger towns and cities. They would have stocked games and dolls and some mechanical animals such as bears or donkeys on wheels which were scary rather than cuddly. The concept of childhood had not yet been fully appreciated. However, it was the growth of department stores during the second half of the century which had offered new and exciting marketing possibilities.

The best known centre for toys in London was Lowther's Arcade, off the Strand, a glass-covered walkway which was described by the writer George Augustus Sala in 1861 as 'the toyshop of Europe'. It was a magical place in which the 'honest, hearty, well-meaning toys of Old England' were contrasted with those somewhat eccentric items from Germany and the fierce war-like products of France – all blood and glory.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Farnell had become Britain's leading manufacturer and exporter, first of soft toys and then, importantly, of teddy bears.

Joseph Kirby Farnell died in 1891, leaving the business, most unusually for the times, to his three daughters, Agnes, Eleanor and Martha, and their brother Henry.

The company's claim for first prize in the race to make soft, child-friendly toys is supported by an article in the February 1922 issue of *Games and Toys*, which says that Farnell 'has been established for over 50 years'. However, an advertisement which appeared later, in 1965, put the date even earlier and, according to Kathy Martin, 'this strong evidence would seem to suggest that some time between 1863 and 1868 Farnell had begun manufacturing the first soft, squashy, comforting, animal-inspired decorative items'. This would have placed it just ahead of the, now famous, Margarete Steiff company in Germany.

Margarete Steiff had been paralysed since the age of one. Always a courageous and cheerful fighter, she was seventeen years-old when her father transformed a study in their house into a dressmaker's workshop where, with her two sisters, she made children's clothes.

She produced her first stuffed toy – a little elephant called 'Elefante' – in 1879. The elephant was so popular with children and adults that she progressed to other animals and went on to launch the enterprise which grew to become today's internationally celebrated company.

Also in Germany, in 1894 the company of Gebruder Sussenguth had produced the first catalogue showing a stuffed toy bear based on Robert Southey's 1834 fairy tale *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.

Around 1898, the entire Farnell family moved upmarket into The Elms on Acton Hill. The house was described in the sale details as 'a very substantial and excellent eighteenth century mansion'. It boasted greenhouses and a boating lake, set in a thirty four acre park. The property was big enough for the building of a new factory in the grounds to the north east which eventually became the headquarters of the expanding Farnell enterprise.

It was here in Acton in 1921 that the 'best bear in the world' would eventually be born.

After the death of the reclusive Queen Victoria in 1901, there had been a lightening of mood throughout Europe, which heralded a new delight in childhood and, in its turn, opened the way for the emerging toy industry.

A year later, in America, President Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt travelled to Mississippi to help settle a border dispute with Louisiana. His hosts famously took him bear-hunting but when no bears appeared the President was invited to shoot a cub that had been previously captured. He refused to fire at such a helpless target – an act which inspired the famous cartoon by Richard Berryman *Drawing the Line*, which appeared in the *Washington Post* on 16 November 1902.

It was this cartoon which encouraged Maurice and Rose Michtom of Brooklyn, New York, to make a toy bear in honour of the President's actions. They wrote to ask for his permission to call it Teddy's Bear. He replied: 'I don't think my name is likely to be worth much in the toy business but you are welcome to use it'. To the delight of everyone it was not a moose, as expected, but a bear, which he decided to use as his mascot in the next Presidential election.

The Michtom's bear looked sweet and innocent, which is probably why he was an overnight success with the public. In fact, demand was so strong that the Michtoms, with the help of a wholesale firm called Butler Brothers, formed the first-ever teddy bear manufacturing company in America. It was called the Ideal Novelty and Toy Company.

Margarete Steiff's nephew, Richard, was in America that year and attended a circus performance by dancing bears. They gave him an idea. He returned home and took out patents for a toy dancing bear which he called 'Friend Petz' and also a brown bear with his handler. The bears were shown at the Leipzig Toy Fair in March 1903 but the dancing bear did not sell at all well until, just as the Fair was closing, New York toy importer, Hermann Borgford, ordered four thousand.

People in Europe and America were beginning to get teddy bear fever and the Steiffs and the Farnells were leading the way. The toy bear – known originally in trade magazines as a 'Bruin' – had arrived.

In 1908, the American composer, J.K Bratton, wrote *The Teddy Bear Two Step*, which soon became popularised as the toe-tapping *Teddy Bears' Picnic* and was used in Roosevelt's next election campaign.

By this time, the Farnells had begun exporting bears to countries such as South Africa and Egypt and, of course, America. Originally made from animal skins, teddy bears were now made in a new fabric. Yorkshire mohair was long-haired, silky and very tactile, woven from the hair of the Angora goat. Mohair is the most durable, soft fabric, with none of the harshness of man-made materials.

Then, in 1908, Farnell produced what is generally believed to be the first British teddies. Farnell bears had long tapering limbs, with webbed stitching on

their paws and rather pronounced muzzles. Their ears were quite large and round and their eyes in various shades of clear glass with dark pupils but most importantly they GROWLED. Christopher Milne recalled, as a grown-up, that Pooh's growl didn't last long!

The new bears were cuddly and looked more like furry people than the four-legged wild animals on which they were based.

Dolls were for girls. But, being genderless and classless and selling in a wide range of prices, teddy bears could be equally well-loved and hugged without shame by boys as well as girls and, before long, by grown-up men and women too, from all sections of the community.

An article by F.R.B. Whitehouse appeared in the 1954 July issue of the magazine *Toys and Games* in which he describes the enduring magic of the time when the bedroom light is turned off and all is dark in bed, secrets can be imparted between the child and the teddy and an affection is created which lasts long after childhood has passed.

The Harrods catalogue of 1910 shows a photograph of Teddy Bear TY 365. By the 1912 catalogue this superior bear is proudly identified as from Farnell.

During World War I, toy imports from Germany stopped, leaving the way clear for a boom in British bears. However, after the Armistice in 1918, a very worrying increase of imports of 'cheap foreign muck' was reported in the trade press.

Despite all the setbacks, Farnell was flourishing, with fifty outworkers and one hundred and eighty nine factory girls in the care of Sybil Kempe, daughter of a local Professor of Music.

Factory conditions were excellent. Wages were above average. There was plenty of space and the girls worked in teams at long tables on the various stages of the teddy bears' creation. The fabric was first cut to shape ready for the machinist to assemble and put in baskets. Others then turned the parts inside out ready to be stuffed with wood shavings and more solid wood wool for the head. Limbs had to be jointed and eyes inserted. Most important of all was the stitching of the nose, as it was this which gave each bear his individual character.

In 1920, Rupert Bear appeared as a picture story *Little Lost Bear*, in the *Daily Express*. He was introduced as competition for the *Daily Mail's* 'Teddy Tail'. Written and drawn by Mary Tourtel, Rupert was a fictional character inspired by the current passion for teddies, but he was a bear dressed as a little boy with a yellow scarf. His popularity gave an additional boost to the new trend.

In 1921, the Farnell family decided to formalise their company. Agnes and Henry became company directors, and the factory at The Elms was named The Alpha Works. Their new Alpha range of soft toys, including the Alpha bear, was lauded in the trade press for its quality.

At the same time they also opened a showroom in Union Street in the East End of London. There were huge bears and growly bears, baby bears and musical bears, dressed bears and bare bears.

In that memorable year of 1921, Sybil Kempe had been with the firm for thirty years and had risen from her role as a simple fur worker to a position of considerable responsibility and importance not only to the factory but to Agnes and Henry personally: they both remembered her later in their Wills. Her exact role in Pooh's arrival is uncertain but several magazines refer to her as a 'gifted designer' and it is not unreasonable to imagine that she may have been the 'midwife' at his 'birth'. She died in St. Albans on 3 December 1959 at the age of 84.

Today, the factory itself has been demolished but the Farnell home, The Elms, has become Twyford Church of England High School.

In Acton, there is no blue plaque on the wall to remind pupils, the people of Acton, or the rest of the world, WHO was born there in 1921.

During the summer of that year, the Alpha teddy bear who would eventually become Winnie-the-Pooh travelled with his many siblings and a consignment of other toys, including Beatrix Potter's *Jemima Puddleduck*, in the Farnell delivery van from Acton. They sped across London, towards Harrods department store in Kensington. Who would have guessed then that, from all the hundreds of bears who left the Works that year, one alone was destined for fame and fortune and would become a household name worldwide.

If hand made mohair bears like Pooh seem expensive, that's because mohair IS expensive! Priced according to thickness and length of pile, it can cost up to £150 per metre today. It takes many hours to make a bear from design to finished article. The price doesn't really reflect this – bear makers have always designed and made bears with love.

Mohair is the most durable, soft, huggable fabric. The vintage bears of a hundred years ago, made with mohair, have stood the test of time. Alpaca and cashmere plush are sometimes used for tiny bears.

They have the same qualities and are excellent for children who will want their bears to remain with them as they grow up.

A traditional teddy bear is made, as it has always been made, with wood or hardboard joints held by long cotter pins. The filling is wood shavings and the eyes glass. Modern safety regulations mean they must no longer be sold for children to play with and are for adult collectors only. Much the same character can be achieved for a child's bear by replacing the joints and eyes with plastic, and filling with a softer acrylic fibre and/or acrylic 'beans.'

Caring for your bears

The ideal place to keep an elderly bear is in a glass-fronted cupboard where it can be seen and taken out from time to time. Alternatively, protect your old bear's fur with soft clothing and dust occasionally. Above all, keep bears out of the dog's reach!

Chapter Two

A Present for the Baby

THE YEAR 1921 was a special one for Harrods Emporium – but not solely because of that one particular delivery of Farnell teddy bears and a shopping expedition by young society mother. More importantly for Harrods, this was the year in which the freehold of their vast 34-acre site was finally acquired for £263,850. The impressively monumental building, with its famous terracotta brick façade, had become the largest departmental store in the capital. This was to be Pooh's first home.

The ground floor alone covered four-and-a-half acres, and fifty lifts served twenty acres of the four shopping floors above. Thirty nine miles of underground tubes carried money to the cashiers and change back to customers.

With the grandiose telegraphic address of 'Everything London', its advertising claimed that 'Harrods is winning ever increasing appreciation from thousands of country womenfolk who have never been nearer to Harrods than their nearest pillar box.'

That year, too, the store catalogue offered a Rhesus Monkey for £5, live cod from the fish department for 1/-d per pound and holiday transport in a Harrods luxurious car with a courteous chauffeur for £7 per one hundred miles. You could also hire the Harrods Royal Red Band and purchase Ashanti hammocks 'suitable for gardens or exploring purposes.'

But most important were the teddy bears. They came in a number of sizes costing 10/6d for a 15-inch bear like Pooh, 8/11d for one of 13½ inches and 5/-d for babies of 11-inches. The size and price variations were important, since the appeal of teddies was universal and many of the Farnell bears would have been destined for smaller shops, serving less prosperous families.

Author Eric Newby described his own childhood memories of Harrods at this time in his book *A Traveller's Life*. His mother had worked in the shop and was a regular visitor according to Eric, going from department to department like a combine harvester. To the young boy, Harrods was a world apart from any other he had experienced.

He was bemused by the wonderland of the great vaulted Food Hall decorated with medieval scenes of the chase, which remains a tourist attraction today. Fishmongers, purveyors of game and butchers assembled there, confronting each other across mountainous displays of crabs and scallops, Aberdeen smokies, turbot and halibut on one side and 'hecatombs' of Angus beef and South Downs lamb and mutton on the other. In the linen hall, tablecloths eight yards long could accommodate place settings for twenty four guests and were destined for the dining halls of the gentry in their moated mansions. You could buy christening robes or servants' uniforms, and use Harrods services to arrange your wedding or funeral.

Even more exciting was Harrods Zoo, where the noise was deafening and macaws and polite parrots (who had passed a bad language test) lived alongside guinea pigs, tortoises and puppies.

Harrods, like Farnell, had started life as a modest one-man business. Tea-dealer, Charles Henry Harrod, was running a small grocery shop in Cable Street in the East End of London when Joseph Kirby Farnell was acting as an Agent for Servants in North Kensington.

In 1868 Charles Harrod moved his shop to a run-down, rat-infested area of South Kensington off the Brompton Road not long before Joseph Kirby Farnell established his fancy goods enterprise in Acton.

In 1879, Charles' son, Charles Digby Harrod, launched a mammoth programme of slum clearance and rebuilding to create a larger shop, so that by the early 1880s the number of employees had risen from one hundred to nearly two hundred. In 1883, the separate departments included groceries, provisions, confectionery, wines and spirits, brushes and turnery, ironmongery, glass, china, earthenware, stationery, fancy goods, perfumery, drugs, *etc.*

By 1901, social change had transformed South Kensington. The top-floor front of Harrods was converted into flats and many of the nearby buildings which are now shops were leased as luxury apartments designed to appeal to the new class of residents. Harrods was their local store and the new advertising slogan 'Twice the choice at Harrods. Supplying the needs of well-to-do people.' However, according to the *Chelsea Herald*, Harrods business 'is now worldwide, offering free delivery and its clients – or customers – rank from the Peer to the Peasant.'

Among those who might be spotted among the crowds was the colourful Emir of Katsina in Nigeria on his way to Mecca, who bought 'a watch, resisted a large plaice, bought grapes and two dozen lemons, non-alcoholic mouthwash from the

drug department and clothes such as pilgrims require'. Crown Prince Carol ordered furniture and fittings to be delivered to his home in Romania.

By the 1920s, the new designs of Coco Chanel from France were all the rage – shorter skirts, clinging fabrics, cloche hats and short soft-bobbed hair, were seen everywhere as, increasingly, were trousers for ladies. Soon to come – the little black dress and even shorter flapper dresses. Chanel created her most famous perfume – Chanel No 5 – which was, of course, stocked by Harrods. It has been described as 'the world's most legendary fragrance' and, even today, the company claims that a bottle is sold every fifty-five seconds.

Daphne Milne, wife of author A.A. Milne, a young society mother with plenty of money, was shopping at an exciting time for women. This was the period, after the deprivation of the war, when fashion went wild. It was also the hottest summer on record with soaring temperatures.

By the time that the Farnell bears arrived, Harrods was arguably the best-known store in the world, with a Royal Warrant from Queen Mary who was, on occasion, seen shopping there in person. It was a matter of chance that Pooh did not find himself in the nurseries of her grandchildren and disappear forever from history into Buckingham Palace.

The Toy Department was indeed a spectacular, carpeted, dream world, with its grand pillars and arches and ornately-carved ceilings from which teddy bears were suspended, gently circling and dancing in the breeze. There were rocking horses and bassinets, from which beautifully coiffured, perpetually smiling dolls greeted passing children with their nannies. Very popular then, although politically incorrect today, were rows of cheery golliwogs. There were dolls' houses, toy soldiers, wind-up dogs, clockwork railway trains, toy theatres and even more teddy bears, everywhere, sitting in rows and waiting for some eager child or parent to fall in love.

As a boy, Eric Newby was not allowed by his mother to dally in 'Toys' where temptation was too great, so he never met Pooh.

That day in August, when Miss Moran the Manager of Toys welcomed the new consignment of Farnell teddy bears, seemed just like any other day. How was she to know that this was not at all like any other day!

The new lift carried Daphne Milne, an elegant young woman, to the 'First floor, Madam'.

Daphne was now on one of her regular visits, probably to the Georgian Restaurant on the fourth floor (which, seating one thousand, was the largest in

London), just beyond the Toy Department. It was a popular rendezvous of fashion and luxury for the ladies of Kensington, Knightsbridge and Chelsea with a *recherché cuisine* and a first class orchestra. A 'dainty tea' with a choice of toasted tea cakes, scones, toasted items and meringues and cream cost 1/-d, rump steak was 1/-d and sago pudding 4d.

On this occasion Daphne was looking for a special first birthday present for her son.

In his autobiography, *The Enchanted Places*, the grown-up Christopher Milne imagined his mother's first meeting with the toy bear who was to become his constant friend and companion.

He visualised a row of teddy bears sitting in a toyshop, all one size and all one price. Yet, he wrote, how different each would appear from the next. Some were gay, some sad. Some looked stand-offish, some were loveable. 'One in particular – that one over there – has a specially endearing expression. Yes, that is the one we would like please.'

So Bear, as he was then, was wrapped in Harrods' brown paper with its name in smart green writing, ready for Daphne to take him home after lunch. The parcel could have been delivered in one of the firm's smart green, Walker electric vans, of course, but Daphne was impatient to get her purchase back home to Chelsea. There, husband Alan was waiting with Nanny and the small boy whose life was about to be changed for ever.

Sebastian Wormell, Harrods Archivist says, with pride: "Of all the many thousands of things that Harrods has sold over the past century and a half, none was to achieve greater worldwide fame than this simple English teddy bear".

Chapter Three

Introducing Moon, Blue, Daff and Nou

ALAN ALEXANDER MILNE was born in 1882, the youngest of three brothers. Barry was the oldest, but Alan was always much closer to the middle brother Ken. John Vine Milne, the father whom he admired and loved dearly, was the owner and inspired headmaster of Henley House School in what is now Camden, in North London. Milne claimed that he never felt close to his mother, who was also a teacher.

He wrote a long article for the Easter 1891 edition of the school magazine *My Three Days Walking Tour by Alan A. Milne aged 8 and three quarters*. This told of a forty four-mile walking holiday over Ashdown Forest in Sussex. The impact of this wild open landscape on the boy was deep, for it was here that he returned, so many years later, to make his country home and here that he was to place the setting for the adventures of Winniethe-Pooh and his friends.

After Westminster School, which he and Ken experienced together, Milne went up to Cambridge university to read mathematics, but he found the pleasures of literature and writing far more enjoyable and became editor of *Granta*, the university magazine. To his father's bitter disappointment, he only achieved a third and decided to abandon maths and to become a writer instead.

From the beginning, Milne moved in a circle of established literary names – H.G Wells, Lord Northcliffe, J.M Barrie, creator of *Peter Pan*, and Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*, were among those who helped him and with whom, in some cases, he became a lifelong friend.

Then, at the age of twenty four, in 1906, Milne, a pacifist and atheist, joined the radical, anti-establishment magazine *Punch*, as its assistant editor and regular contributor.

One of his articles, in 1909, was about falling in love. He loved being in love, falling out of love and being free to love again. He said that he would hate to be settled. 'It's so much more fun like this'.

In December 1910, Alan Milne was taken by Owen Seaman, Editor of *Punch*, to the twenty-first birthday dance of his God-daughter Dorothy de Selincourt,

known as Daphne, at her palatial home, Brooklands, near Sarisbury Green, on the River Hamble, in Hampshire. The house and forty-acre grounds were the setting, in 1985, for the television blockbuster *Howard's Way*. The de Selincourts was a huge, distinguished and extremely wealthy family of mixed talents, both academic and commercial.

The Punch Table

In the beginning, staff of long standing were invited to become members of the Table for regular editorial meetings. It was probably after a good deal of brandy and port that some bright spark decided that they should carve their names or initials on the table itself. It became a tradition for editors at one end and proprietors at the other to accept this honour and later selected guests were also invited to contribute.

Visitors ranged from William Makepeace Thackeray, author of Vanity Fair, to Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York, author of Budgie the helicopter, Sir John Tenniel, Sir John Betjeman, Anthony Powell, James Thurber and Basil Boothroyd, who have all carved their names. The Duke of Edinburgh added a Greek phi. Prince Charles' contribution surrounds a finely-drawn Prince of Wales' feathers. The tradition was lost on some. The Prince of Wales' detective when shown the Table, was not at all impressed. 'My God!' he exploded, 'you have certainly had trouble with vandals, haven't you!'

Since the magazine ceased publication in 2002 the Table has been looked after at the British Library.

A.A. Milne described in his autobiography, *It's Too Late Now*, how, rather daringly for those times, he and Daphne had 'gone about' together. If he needed a suit he sought her help and if she needed a partner for a dance, she sought his company. He said that she had the most perfect sense of humour in the world. Flatteringly, it seemed that she had even learned some of his articles in *Punch* by heart. He had a Pianola to which she was devoted. He said: 'We might have gone on like this for ever.'

But they didn't.

In 1913, when buying some skiing boots for a holiday in Switzerland, Alan bumped into Daphne who was, by chance, about to leave for the same fashionable

resort of Diablerets. She said 'I've got orange trousers'. He said 'I will wear a red carnation so we are bound to recognise each other. I hope we will like each other.'

And they did.

One morning in a blinding snow storm, Alan proposed and Daphne said 'yes'. He was earning about £1,000 a year. 'We were very comfortable and very happy', he wrote.

Christopher Milne claimed that when his father made Owl say to Rabbit in *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928) 'You and I have brains. Others have fluff', he was subconsciously thinking of Daphne. In fact he misquoted. It was Eeyore the donkey who observed wryly to Christopher Robin: 'They haven't got Brains, any of them, only grey fluff that blows into their heads by mistake'. But even if the description was true of Daphne, she laughed at her husband's jokes and that, for the start at any rate, was a basis for marriage. He called her his 'collaborator'. It was a marriage that, she decided, would be conducted with the appearance of elegance and style and with no scenes.

On 4 June 1913 – the day that suffragette Emily Davison threw herself under the King's horse, Anmer, running in the Derby – the Milne wedding took place at St Margaret's, Westminster. It was a fashionable event, of course, mingling Daphne's High Society friends with Alan's world of theatre and the arts.

Between then and the day of the future Winniethe-Pooh's arrival in the family there was the Great War, during which Alan Milne served very reluctantly, first in England and then in France, as a signals officer. According to Kathy Martin, he took with him a miniature toy dog, probably by Farnell, which Daphne had slipped secretly into his pocket before departure.

Like so many young men at the time he really believed that this was 'a war to end all war' and that being in the Signals, at least he would not have to fight. Years later he wrote: 'It makes me almost physically sick, to think of that nightmare of mental and moral degradation'. He was invalided out of the War in October 1917, after suffering from trench fever and went to work instead at the War Office.

On his return to domestic life in February 1919, he assumed that, out of loyalty, he would go back to *Punch* and, eventually, become Editor, although he had now written his first play *Belinda* and rather liked the idea of being a dramatist instead. Somewhat ironically, the magazine did not want him back. He broke the news to Daphne in a taxi on the way to a dinner party and she burst into tears and cried all the way to their destination. She had *so* looked forward to being married to the Editor of *Punch*.

For some time home life revolved around the worrying absence of any babies. It didn't help that Daphne knew nothing, and didn't want to know anything, about sex.

Marie Stopes' sensational book *Married Love*, was published in 1918. In it, she declared that the secret of a happy marriage lay in separate bedrooms. Daphne's husband had a rather different view. He wrote to a friend that separate bedrooms meant death to marriage.

Eventually, on 21 August 1920, after a mysterious, unspecified operation, 'a tremendous event' happened. A baby arrived in Chelsea at 8 a.m. weighing an uncomfortable 10lbs. The father admitted that they had rather hoped for a 'Rosemary' but they would probably be as happy with 'this gentleman.'

According to Mrs Penn, the Milnes' cook-housekeeper, the new-born baby was 'tall, like mistress'. Daphne, like many women at that time, was horrified by the experience and reputedly vowed never to repeat it, which is probably why Christopher Robin never had any brothers or sisters to play with.

Nicknames were fashionable in the 1920s, even for adults and so Daphne had now become more often 'Daff' and Alan – probably because of his piercing blue eyes – was known as 'Blue' to all his friends and family and even to his son. The boy, who was later to achieve world-wide fame, was never known by his real bookish name at home. There, at first, he was 'Billy' and later 'Moon' because he couldn't say Milne. Moon was the name that stuck until he went to school where he was 'Christopher'. In the army he became 'Chris' and much later, running his Devon bookshop, reverted to 'Christopher'. These names remained throughout their lives and long after his son had grown up, Milne was writing letters to him signed simply Blue. All in all, as the grown-up Christopher Milne once commented, 'an embarrassment of names.'

During World War I Marie Stopes began writing a book about feminism and marriage. In Married Love she argued that marriage should be an equal relationship between husband and wife but publisher Walter Blackie of Blackie & Son rejected the manuscript with the words: 'The theme does not please me. I think there is far too much talking and writing about these things already. Don't you think you should wait publication until after the war? There will be few enough men for the girls to marry; and a book like this would frighten off the few.'

Stopes' views were undoubtedly provocative – she believed that small boys should either wear kilts or loose, hand-knitted trousers in order not to damage their genitals.

So it was not until March 1918 that Marie Stopes found a small company willing to take the risk. The book was an immediate success, selling two thousand copies within a fortnight and by the end of the year had been reprinted six times. Married Love was also published in America but the courts declared the book was obscene and it was promptly banned.

A year before Moon's arrival, the Milnes had moved to 11 Mallord Street (changed to 13 in 1925) which Alan had described as the 'prettiest little house in London' and Chelsea 'a proper place for a writer to live'. It had been built, on three floors, just before World War I.

He was delighted when he bought the house, with its cheerful blue door and pots of flowers outside. Previously, they had lived in rented flats but now, for the first time, the Milnes were part of a street. According to Ann Thwaite in her immense biography *A.A. Milne. His Life* he wrote enthusiastically to his brother Ken that he had a staircase and a bathroom of his own: 'I go upstairs and down again about once in every half hour, not simply from pride of ownership, but to make sure the bedroom is still there and the staircase is continuing to perform its functions.'

Inside, the house feels much the same today as it was described when the Milnes lived there. On the right-hand side of the hall is the rather dark, formal dining room with its huge table and book-lined walls. There is a golden drawing room and the staircase, which thrilled Blue so much and which features in *When We Were Very Young*, is still there, as is Daphne's elegant bedroom on the first floor. Everyone else slept on the top floor. The day and night nurseries were at the front and Blue's poky bedroom at the back of the house was next to the shared staff bedroom.

On the day that Daphne Milne returned from Harrods with her precious package, the staff were gathered in their smart uniforms.

There was little Mrs Penn, small, round and elderly in grey, with a large white apron. She cooked and seldom left the kitchen. Gertrude, in dark green with a black bow in her hair, was Daphne's personal maid before she married and had been allowed to stay with her as part of the marriage settlement. She cleaned the

house before breakfast, laid the fire, served at meals. She made the beds, lit the fire, polished the silver – and never laughed.

But the key member of the staff was Nanny, who joined the family a little later than the others and became the most important figure (along with his teddy bear) in young Moon's life. She was Olive Rand, known in the family as 'Nou'. They had been together since he was five months old. Nannies, too, wore uniform, of course, usually also purchased from Harrods. There were black-and-white nannies, grey nannies, blue nannies and even pink nannies. Some wore hats and others wore veils. Nou wore grey, with a veil when out walking and a white cap and starched cuffs indoors.

Christopher Milne, years later, admitted: 'She had me when I was very young. I was all hers and I remained all hers until I was nine. Other people hovered round the edges but they meant little.'

Aged thirty-four, Olive Rand was a very superior nanny. She had been in charge of the Chilean Ambassador's children in London and travelled with them in Europe, America and Chile. She had a long-suffering fiancé, Alfred Brockwell, who had been in the Royal Engineers after enlisting for short service at the outbreak of World War I. On his discharge, he joined the Territorial Army and became a Post Office electrical engineer, but he had to wait for another nine years before Olive felt able to leave her young charge and become Mrs Brockwell.

The teddy bear, still not named Pooh, was known usually as 'Edward'. He lived, ate and played with Moon on the top floor of the house. They slept in the night nursery next to Nou's room – a closeness of which Blue himself became quietly jealous. The day nursery was light and bright and under the window was an ottoman in which most of the toys lived. The first Piglet, known as 'Poglet', who was nearly as tall as Edward Bear, was given to Moon by a friendly neighbour. He was joined later by the far smaller, pocket-sized Piglet that appears in the stories. Eeyore was a present from his parents at Christmas 1921. They later returned to Harrods and chose Kanga and baby Roo to add variety to the menagerie.

But, from the moment the teddy bear arrived, to the day when Moon finally went off to boarding school at the age of nine, the pair were inseparable. They had conversations at bath time; teddy sat on his pillow, guarding his handkerchief at night, and went wherever he went in the day. Once the teddy was given a name, the Milnes became accustomed to being asked by their weekend or lunch invitation hosts, 'do we assume Pooh is coming, too?'

Moon was a skinny boy but despite various attempts to fatten him up with Roo-style 'strengthening medicine', gym classes and boxing, he stayed skinny all of his life.

He was a quiet, rather shy little boy, who was afraid of the dark and dragons. He was not given to tantrums – more likely his eyes would fill with tears and then he would run to Nou.

She was always there for hugs and cuddles, comfort and reassurance. Once or twice when he was told he would be going to relatives on holiday without her, he lay on the floor and howled inconsolably.

Moon's early relationship with his parents was quite different. He claimed, when he was an adult, that he didn't really love them – simply because he didn't really know them – unlike Pooh and Nou. At the age of three, he said, although he might have missed his mother if she went away, he would not have missed his father but he would have missed Nou most desolately.

In the twenty-first century this seems strange. But the world into which Moon was born, of nannies and private education, was no different from that of many English middle and upper class families.

After breakfast and tea in the nursery and again in the evening he would be taken down to spend half an hour or so with his parents. It was quite usual in their circle for children not to eat with their parents. Nursery food was not the same as grown-up food. Steak downstairs, shepherd's pie up there. In those days when cooks reigned supreme, there was no room in the kitchen for a young wife to learn how to boil an egg or make a cup of tea, so she could go through life without ever knowing. Daphne never learned. She was not much good at anything domestic or practical because she had not been taught to be. But she did have a flair for design and colour and she was in charge of the choice of décor and furniture for their home.

Moon loved to clamber around on his father's big arm chair in the drawing room until on one occasion he fell off. That was a good game he realised, to try again – and again. Daphne was especially good at playing 'Boofy' games with Moon, in the dark, under the dining table, getting more and more excited until Nou swept him upstairs to his bath.

At first, of course, it was Moon who talked to his teddy and made him answer back. But Moon needed help and that help came from Daphne. With Blue looking on it was she, originally, who gave the toys their voices and their characters. Gradually, they came to life and began to breathe.

Daff has not been given her fair share of the credit for the anthropomorphising of Pooh and his friends. She almost came to believe that they were alive. In her way she loved them, too. With her, teddy developed a gruffish tone, Piglet an excitable squeak and Tigger his bouncy 'ho-ho-ishness'. Eeyore, of course, was flatly gloomy and philosophical.

Yet, strangely she is mentioned only once and never illustrated in the books. Secretly, Blue was well aware of her contribution. He once observed, with undue modesty that all he did was to put them in a book.

As they played together, he watched, his creative mind already hard at work. He has, over the years, been portrayed as aloof and not at ease with children. Rather unfairly, Christopher Milne wrote: 'Some people are good with children. Others are not. It is a gift – you either have it or you don't. My father didn't.'

This is not the whole story. Blue was not openly emotional – he was shy. The truth is that, throughout their time together – that is until Moon was demobilised at the end of World War II – their relationship had fluctuated but as he grew older Moon and his father grew closer and closer after Nou left. He describes a very different Blue, in *The Enchanted Places*, a father he adored, admired and accepted without question his ideas and beliefs. 'I knew only his smiles'. That intimacy was shared by Blue who revelled in sharing with his son his love of cricket and golf and his childlike pleasure in doing muddy things.

Ann Thwaite also explained in her very detailed biography that the reality was rather different. Maybe Blue did not really understand his son, but amongst the mountain of correspondence through Christopher Robin's childhood, she found that there was scarcely a letter from him to any of his adult friends which does not mention the boy with affection. The word 'love' too, appears many times. Like so many men, he just did not know how to show it. The grown-up Christopher always admitted that his father wore his heart firmly buttoned up inside his jacket.

Blue acknowledged his longing to be more widely accepted as a serious writer for adults rather than children. The runaway success of his children's books later became an ironically difficult pill for him to swallow, and in his autobiography he declared defensively that his observations of children were no more than any serious writer subconsciously absorbs for his creative work. He appears almost rueful that children had seemingly taken over his professional life.

Christopher Milne believed that there are two sorts of writers – the writer who is a reporter, and the creative writer. One draws on his experiences, the other on his dreams. His father, he said, was a 'creative writer' and so it was precisely because

he was not able to play with his small son that he sought and found satisfaction by writing about him instead.

Eventually, the teddy bear became the vehicle through which Blue fused memories of his own very happy childhood with his gently perceptive adult look at life. He had a warm, twinkly smile and talked in a way – rather like Pooh did later – that children themselves understood. His invented words like ‘blusterous’ and ‘rissolution’ and use of capital letters for important words like ‘Bother!’ were huge fun. Soon children (and adults) were going on ‘Expotitions’, finding ‘useful Pots to Keep Things In’ and taking ‘Strengthening Medicine’.

In fact, despite the adult Christopher’s insistence that Blue was not good with children, according to his nieces they loved him.

The language of the stories, too, makes them wonderful read-aloud books for bedtime or, as so often they were later, on the wireless.

Christopher Milne’s own delightfully sensitive, humorous autobiographies are the books to read if you really want to understand something of ‘Blue’, the child ‘Moon’, the adult bookseller ‘Christopher’ and the part that the future Winniethe-Pooh was about to play in all their lives.

Winniethe-Pooh grew up with Christopher Robin in a financially-privileged and secure cultural circle. ‘A land fit for heroes’ was promised at the end of World War I.

It was a period enjoyed by some as ‘The Roaring Twenties’ marked by the birth of Jazz, daring bath and bubble parties and the Bloomsbury Set. There was initially a post-World War I economic boom and victory at last for the suffragettes when, in 1928, after years of courageous battling, women were given the vote on the same terms as men.

But it was a time, too, of gathering clouds, the rise of fascism and massive demonstrations against the terrible working conditions of poor people, the vast majority of whom were struggling underdogs. In May 1926, a General Strike was called in support of the country’s desperate miners. It was a time when Infantry Battalions patrolled the streets of Liverpool and aristocratic young men took over the manning of the railways.

In America, prohibition meant the banning of the legal sale and manufacture of alcohol between 1920 and 1932, and when the Wall

Street stock market crashed on Black Thursday in October 1929, the world economy was plunged into chaos. By the winter of 1932, America was suffering the greatest depression in its history.

Pooh survived it all.

Chapter Four

When They Were Very Young

YOUNG MOON, NOT HIS teddy bear, lit the spark which was to launch his father on this surprising new and often bumpy road. The first flickerings of the fame to come emerge through a poem he wrote in 1922, when his son was still only two and 'nearly new'. It was the poem that was to cause Moon such agonies of embarrassment when eventually he went away to boarding school.

It named him for all to see. He was no longer the anonymous Billy Moon. Overnight, he had become Christopher Robin. The infamous poem was called *Vespers*.

Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!

Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

In fact, *Vespers* was never intended for children and has been sentimentalised by some adults and castigated by others for its upper-class smugness. Vera Lynn did not really help with her lump-in-the-throat version, which was later repeated time and time again by the BBC in the 1940s. They all failed to appreciate the atheist Milne's own shrewd irony and gently-amused interpretation of the reality of the situation. It is neither sickly, snobbish, nor is its intention sentimental. It has to be read with a wry, understanding smile.

Milne had gone upstairs one evening and watched through the nursery door where his young son was merely repeating, parrot fashion, prayers taught to him by Nou. Those words had no meaning for him, mixed in as they were with the much more exciting events of the day, which meant a lot.

Nou was aware that her employer was looking on and recalled many years afterwards how she heard him chuckling as he went downstairs. She too, failed to appreciate exactly why A.A. Milne was amused. He saw not childish piety but the innocence of his kneeling son, who had no understanding of the God he was praying to and in whom his father had no belief.

Blue gave the poem to Daff and said that if she found a publisher she could keep the money. She did. The poem appeared first in *Vanity Fair*, in New York in

January 1923. Daphne was paid only \$50 but it turned out to be the most rewarding present her husband ever gave her. Eventually it brought in royalties from the copies hanging on the walls of children's bedrooms around the world and even found its way into a miniature book for Queen Mary's dolls' house library.

In 1922, two years before the publication of his first children's book, A.A. Milne was already a hugely successful dramatist courted by the press. His play, Mr Pim Passes By, was a hit here and in America, and was reportedly bringing him a healthy income of between £10,000–£26,000 annually.

There followed The Truth about Blayds and The Dover Road which, with Mr Pim, were earning him then an additional £2,000 annually and were to remain constants in the repertoires of amateur dramatic societies.

After the fourth and final Pooh book was published in 1928, A.A. Milne never properly regained his place as a playwright although he continued writing until the 1950s.

His last novel, Chloe Marr, written after a break of thirteen years, appeared in 1946 and sold 16,450 copies in Britain and, in America, Dutton printed 30,000 copies while the press referred to its author as the 'old enchanter.' It was a story which reflected the complex emotions of a father who loved but could not express love, and a son who was killed by a car. Ann Thwaite has written that A.A. Milne understood the painful truth – if the sensitive, competent and talented Moon was to achieve anything after the War, as the adult Christopher Milne, his relationship with his father would eventually have to be sacrificed.

At about the same time, Blue was approached by his agent, Spencer Curtis Brown, to see if he would be interested in preparing a dramatisation of *The Wind in the Willows*, written by his friend and idol, Kenneth Grahame.

He responded: 'Now you are talking.'

In fact, because of production problems, the subsequent play *Toad of Toad Hall* was not staged until 1929. Its acclaim served, to Milne's deep disappointment, only to boost his own, by then, already huge public success as a children's writer rather than as the serious dramatist he considered himself to be.

It was this book, with its brilliantly-conceived characters, Ratty, Mole and Toad from the river bank, that had long won Milne's admiration and, so he said, had provided the inspiration for Pooh, Piglet and Tigger and the other inhabitants of Ashdown Forest.

It had been written thirteen years earlier and never achieved the fame Milne thought it deserved. He talked about it to everyone and felt that it should be ranked as a classic.

In the summer of 1923 the Milne family, including Moon and his teddy bear, went on one of their frequent house party weekends, to Wales this time, with a mixed bag of colourful friends.

With actor and theatre-manager Nigel Playfair and his family, they rented Plas Brondanw in Gwynedd. The beautiful home of visionary architect, Clough Williams-Ellis, Plas Brondanw had belonged to his ancestors since the sixteenth century. It is situated near Portmadoc, between the mountains of Snowdonia and the sea, surrounded by some of the most beautiful gardens in Wales, which were created by Clough Williams-Ellis when he inherited the property in the early 1920s.

The house was largely destroyed by fire in 1951. It was restored, but few of the thousands of tourists lingering in the exotic grounds today realise that this is the place where the magic spell of Winnie-the-Pooh was first cast.

Two years later, Clough Williams Ellis began to design the eccentric, Italianate folly of Portmeirion on the coast nearby. Knighted in 1971, his village dream fantasy has become an international retreat for artists, writers and musicians.

The Milnes and their party were hoping to walk and climb and swim. But the rain was relentless and everyone was bad-tempered and bored. Now, the three-year-old Moon, his Bear and friend Andrew, youngest son of Nigel Playfair, were all packed off to the nursery.

Some time before they left London, Blue had been asked by Rose Fyleman of *There are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden* fame to write a poem for her new children's magazine *The Merry Go Round*. She had read some of his lighthearted verses in *Punch*. He refused at first, but changed his mind and produced *The Dormouse and the Doctor* for her.

The proofs arrived while he was in Wales and saved the day. Milne escaped to the Orangery and finished the editing in no time. So rather than rejoin the endless card games and bickering gloom in the house and because, as he explained, he had a pencil with a rubber on the end and a suitable red-covered notebook – just the

thing for poetry – he started to write some more verse for children. He recorded: ‘One need not fear that one is writing too well for a child. No one can write a book which children will like unless he writes it for himself first.’

The result of that dismally-wet holiday – a collection of children’s poems entitled *When We Were Very Young* – came as a shock to Milne’s agent and publishers, who were expecting a new detective story. ‘You can imagine my chagrin and disappointment’, lamented his American publisher at Dutton. He should not have worried.

E.V Lucas, chairman of Milne’s English publisher, Methuen, and the then Deputy Editor of *Punch*, decided that it would help publicity were *Punch* to preview the poems. So he commissioned the amiable, child-friendly artist, E.H. Shepard, known as ‘Kipper’ to illustrate them. Three years older than Milne, Shepard had joined the *Punch* Table in 1921 and had been drawing bears for years. The name ‘Giddy-Kipper’ had been allotted to him as a rather lively young man. The ‘Giddy’ was dropped as he settled into adult life.

Milne was not amused by the choice – he originally regarded Shepard as perfectly hopeless. However, when the first line drawings for *When We Were Very Young* were submitted he was delighted and there began a remarkable partnership.

When We Were Very Young was finally published on 6 November 1924. The book was a phenomenal success. Within eight weeks Methuen had sold 43,843 copies and, in America, Dutton reported a sale of a further 10,000. It was hailed as the greatest children’s book since *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

Who were the ‘We’ of the title?

Could it, perhaps, as Christopher Milne has suggested, have been that ‘We’ represents the two sides of Milne himself – the child still within talking to his adult other half? A number of the verses are certainly autobiographical, recapturing his own, very happy childhood.

In the adult Christopher’s mind there was no doubt for whom eventually all four books were written. He later said that when Moon was three, his father was nostalgically three himself. When Moon was six, so was his father. They grew up side-by-side and, as they grew, so the books grew, too, intended in A.A. Milne’s heart, for just two people: Blue and Moon.

However, *When We Were Very Young* was not without its literary critics. Words like ‘sentimental’, ‘middle-class’ and ‘self-conscious’ were once again bandied about in some newspaper columns.

Despite the perfect marriage of Shepard's drawings with Milne's text, the two men never became close friends and were always wary of each other. Shepard thought Milne was 'cagey' and said that he had to get to know him all over again each time they met. Ann Thwaite rightly suggested that any claim that Milne owed his success to Shepard is misplaced. After his collaboration with Milne there followed his iconic new illustrations for Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* in 1931. Although prolific later, like Milne, Shepard's immortality rests on his inspired interpretation of the Forest and the River Bank. Individually there was great talent. Together there was magic.

Moon – still only four – was now on the threshold of international fame in his real name of Christopher Robin. The book's dedication reads:

To Christopher Robin Milne ...

This book which owes so much to him

Is now humbly offered.

The bear, so obviously already very much a part of Moon's life, makes his debut too but only to illustrate some poems as a much-loved teddy. As Ann Thwaite writes, 'In the spring of 1925 Winnie-the-Pooh was still a toy. He was not even in a story.'

He is pictured anonymously watching attentively from the landing in Mallord Street as the little boy sits on his own special stair in *Halfway Down*, falling off the ottoman to get what exercise he can in *Teddy Bear*, and, of course, as the grand finale in *Vespers*, lying feet in air on the end of the bed.

To the family he was still 'Bear' or some times 'Edward Bear'.

At that stage, Shepard had not been introduced to Moon's bear and claimed many years later that as he had originally used his son Graham's teddy, 'Growler', as his model for many previous cartoons, he would carry on as usual. Growler was not quite the same shape as the future Pooh – he was not a Farnell bear and could even have been a Steiff model and he never achieved the fame that perhaps he deserved. Later the two bears might have become friends.

But at the start of World War II Growler was evacuated to stay with Shepard's parents near Montreal, in Canada, accompanied by Graham's wife and daughter Minette, who was three years old. Graham himself was drowned when his corvette, *Polyanthus*, was sunk in the Atlantic.

In Canada, the unhappy Growler was attacked and mangled by the family poodle and abandoned with only one photograph to remember him by – sitting in a pram with Minette.

Minette and her mother returned to England briefly in 1943 for a short visit to her grandfather. They came back finally to live in 1947, when they stayed with him in the new house he had built at Shamley Green near Guildford.

There, Minette would sit in the summer house while he drew. She recalls how her grandfather loved children and how much they loved being with him. But he 'didn't have a clue' about what would happen and was very amused at the way in which the books took off.

Although she never met A.A. Milne, she was told that he was not very approachable but the grown-up Christopher Robin, although shy, she says, was a 'witty, delightful man.'

Today, Chairman of the British Humanist Association, Dr Harry Stopes-Roe remembers the time when, as a very little boy, he sat on Shepard's knee while he made plasticine models of the animals he was drawing. It was in the second of the four books that Pooh was named for the first time. After the books were published Harry would invite Pooh to his birthday parties and Pooh would always reply although he never found time to join in the fun and Shepard went instead.

Two of these letters from Pooh fetched £18,000 at auction in 2001. The first, written in 1930 from Pooh and Piglet read:

'We are so sorry we can't come to yuor party.'

The second says:

'I am very sorry that I cannot come to yuor party, I love Punch and Judy but I am rather frigtend but it could be all rite siting near you.

Love from Pooh.'

Marie Stopes was a friend of the Shepard family and in the late 1920s often visited their home. Her son Harry, known then as 'Buffy', was sometimes with the artist in the summer house when he was working.

At first Shepard, who was not a great businessman, was paid a flat fee for his work but eventually A.A. Milne, most unusually, offered him a generous share in the ever-growing royalties. Over the years these amounted to a considerable sum as Shepard was continually asked to produce sketches for new and, later, coloured editions and a vast production of merchandise. This continued long after Milne himself had died.

Shepard's last commission, at the age of 91 when he was deaf and going blind, was to colour all his original line sketches. By this time he admitted that he was

becoming bored with the bear – he didn't really like him at all. In fact among the final drawings in the archives is one of Christopher Robin, schoolbag in hand, kicking him out of his life.

Chapter Five

Winnie the Who?

ON CHRISTMAS EVE in 1925, the *Evening News* ran a banner headline on the front page which was to launch Moon's teddy bear into his new life as the celebrity Winnie-the-Pooh. A story, it explained, had been commissioned especially for the paper and was one that his father had told to Moon at bedtime. It was illustrated by J.H. Dowd and was the first in a series of unforgettable tales that were later published under the title *Winnie-the-Pooh*. The hyphens are there in the original handwritten manuscript and were removed years later by Disney.

How did he get such a strange name?

Pooh it seems came first. Blue had his own explanation for the origin of the Pooh.

From time to time in the early days, he explained, the family escaped from London to the country. One of their haunts was the pretty South Downs hamlet of Poling in Sussex not far from Arundel.

The entry on Google for Poling is amusing. It claims Poling 'has few public facilities apart from an historical Norman church, a phone box and two post boxes. The only industry is farming and a mushroom factory. You can buy eggs from Peckham's Farm but that's about it. You should definitely stock up well before you arrive.'

The family rented a pretty seventeenth-century thatched cottage called 'The Decoy', on the estate of the Duke of Norfolk. The cottage itself overlooked a large pond which was the home of a swan.

Blue said that Moon had named the bird 'Pooh'. He had decided that Pooh was a very good sort of name for a swan because, with childish logic, he explained that if the swan didn't want to stop what he was doing and come over for a chat, you could show him that you didn't want him anyway by shouting 'POOH!'

So, when they left The Decoy they took the name with them and it later became attached to the bear.

But where did the WINNIE come from?

In 1914, at the outbreak of World War I Harry Colebourn, a British-born veterinary surgeon left the Department of Agriculture in Winnipeg, Canada and joined the 34th Regiment of Cavalry. This was to become the 34th Fort Garry Horse.

According to his diary, on 24 August, Lieutenant Colebourn stopped off at White River, Ontario, on his way to join the Second Canadian Infantry Brigade.

From The Book of Duck Decoys

The Decoy cottage is on the edge of a lake and is named after a decoy which has been disused since 1868. A decoy is a living or artificial bird or other animal used to entice wildfowl or other game into a trap or within shooting range.

In 1825 Joseph Hume, M.P. the well-known radical statesman and author wrote: 'There is a Decoy at Angmering. It has been established for two centuries, and from November to March supplies all the neighbourhood with Ducks, Teal, and Wigeon. The pool is square, of about one acre, in a hollow surrounded by plenty of trees of different kinds, and is a secluded, quiet spot. There a small rill of water runs down the hollow, and two or three large fishponds are on the N. E. of it, from which, one year with another eight cwt of fish are drawn.

The Decoy pool has a strong spring of water in it, and they have the power of raising the water 12in or 14in when required. One man has attended this Decoy for 50 years, and his son is now assisting him.'

In 1976, The Wildlife and Wetlands Trust took over the conservation and management of the reed beds near the decoy which, in the days when the Milnes were on holiday, were much wilder.

There the Lieutenant met a hunter with a small black bear cub whose mother had been shot. He bought the cub and called her 'Winnie' after his adopted home town.

The Lieutenant's diary entries for that momentous purchase are briefly matter-of-fact. Yet the terrible journey young Winnie was about to make was more memorable than Lieutenant Colebourn could have imagined.

Bought (Winnie) cub Bear at White River Ont. Paid \$20.00

The seven-week journey to England first by train across Canada and by boat over the Atlantic must have been as traumatic for the little bear cub as it was for

the soldiers. One month later the Lieutenant's diary records:

Sept 24th

Making Preparations to leave Canada

Sept 25th

Standing by all day ready to Embark. Raining like Hell all day

Sept 28th

Embark S.S. Manitou in the afternoon

Oct 3rd

Left Gaspé Bay en route for England

Oct 15th

Arrived in England

Oct 17th

Disembarked and left Devonport 7 P.M. for Salisbury Plains

Oct 19th

Arrived on Plains in the Mud

Winnie had become very tame and as the unofficial mascot of the regiment she was a popular tourist attraction on Salisbury Plain. But when orders came for the regiment's embarkation to France, Lieutenant Colebourn decided to give his bear to the London Zoological Society, in Regent's Park.

Dec 9th

Took Winnie to the Zoo.

But it was not as simple as that! The newspapers recorded that Winnie had travelled by car from Salisbury to London with Lieutenant Colebourn but on arrival was obviously suffering from claustrophobia and escaped her escort! Although she was a docile animal, there was naturally panic among spectators who weren't too happy about a bear having fun and games in their midst. Eventually she was caught and led quietly to her new home. Winnie was not alone in London Zoo. A number of other regiments had donated mascot-bears to the safe-keeping of the curators for the duration of the War but none of the other bears was to achieve her fame.

In July 1915, Lieutenant Colebourn returned to London from France and made several visits to his friend but at the end of the War Harry Colebourn (by then a Captain) hoped to take Winnie home with him to Canada. However, she had become such a celebrity that he hadn't the heart and so he decided to let her stay in London.

That was where the bear called Winnie was living, when the little boy known as Moon paid her a visit.

E.V. Lucas, chairman of Methuen, was a Member of the Zoological Society at the time and had special privileges. He would have been able to open doors and gates not accessible to the public. His friend Laurence Irving, grandson of the renowned actor Sir Henry Irving, claimed in a letter to *The Times* in 1981 that through him he had been able to organise a birthday outing to the London Zoo for his daughter Pamela and that Moon was invited.

The children were taken by the Zoo keeper into a dark cavern and up some steep steps, through narrow passages, to the grille at the back of the bear pit. This was opened for them and the now large, furry animal ambled out to greet them and they were allowed into its den to play.

At first Moon was timid and tearful but very soon they were all hugging and rolling around with the docile people-friendly animal who apparently never needed to have her toe nails cut and who loved golden syrup and condensed milk – but not ‘Hunny’.

No Health and Safety worries in those days!

According to Laurence Irving, Pamela reacted strongly to the smell of Winnie’s fur and let out a disgusted cry of ‘POO!’ That was the answer! Moon’s bear became Winnie-the-Pooh.

As in so many good detective mysteries there is another even less likely explanation for the origins of the teddy bear’s full and final name, but one which is accepted by many people in Canada. It emerged recently in an old family album. The album was left to Pauline Mori from Burnaby in Canada by her uncle John (Jack) Hewat. Jack was only 17 years-old when he lied to the authorities in order to join the Second Canadian Rifles.

Pauline’s story was published in 2009. In that album, she says, she found a photograph showing her uncle Jack with a group of young soldiers, including Lieutenant Colebourn, laughing at the sight of a young black bear sitting on a Harley Davidson motorcycle. The bear was Winnie.

She told how Jack used to describe to her that long, arduous journey from White River to England. He said all the men took pity on Winnie and used to take food to her in the ship’s hold.

One of their less pleasant tasks was dealing with large quantities of ‘poo’ which had to be shovelled overboard and so, by the time she reached London and met Moon she was already known by them all as Winnie the Poo! Could this really have

been the name by which keepers introduced her to Moon? It seems unlikely and sadly the Zoo records don't say.

Wherever that unforgettable name came from, with the help of Blue, the voice of Daff and, eventually, with the drawings of E.H. Shepard, that teddy began to develop his personality.

Somewhat belatedly in 1981 a statue in Winnie's memory by Lorne McKean was unveiled at London Zoo by Christopher Milne himself. There is also a statue to the famous animal in Winnipeg. It seems a very odd sculpture indeed to come across in such a robustly multicultural and bracingly matter-of-fact prairie city as Winnipeg.

Then, in 2000, the Pavilion Gallery in Winnipeg paid \$243,000 for the only known oil painting of Pooh by E.H. Shepard. The picture was to be hung in what was described as a 'Poohzeum.' The bid was made by art dealer David Lock on the phone from Toronto to Sotheby's in London and the extravagant gesture was justified to the press as the 'Pooh meaning of Friendship' towards an 'Ambassador to the United Nations' – they meant Pooh!

The local press reported that children were breaking open their piggy banks, seniors were dropping off \$20 bills and well-heeled Winnipeggers were brandishing their cheque-books so the city could buy the oval-shaped painting of the famous bear, paw in honey pot. 'A poll conducted by a local radio station hasn't turned up one person who is against the idea', said Mayor Glen Murray. 'People here are very attached to Winnie-the-Pooh and Winnipeggers get downright indignant when people don't know that the Winnie in Pooh is the same Winnie as in Peg.'

In London, Christie's also sold a 14.5 cm by 19 cm ink drawing of Pooh by Shepard for \$112,500 (U.S.) The catalogue estimate was \$30,000 to \$45,000 (U.S.), the same as that for the 93 cm by 71 cm oil painting.

Winnie died in 1934 and her obituaries in Canada and in London occupied many column inches in the newspapers. She too had become a star.

Chapter Six

Pooh and Friends

MEANWHILE LIFE IN Mallord Street had continued fairly quietly. The Milnes often entertained at home and although Pooh was not generally present for their small, intimate dinner parties, he was sometimes introduced informally when Moon was brought down to say 'howdyerdo' politely to guests.

That guest list was star-spangled. Friends such as H.G. Wells, who had taught young A.A. Milne at Henley House School, Kenneth Grahame and J.M. Barrie, were among those who came to dinner.

The Milnes' neighbour, author Denis MacKail, a grandson of Burne Jones and related to both Rudyard Kipling and Stanley Baldwin, has recalled how he first met A.A. Milne at a disastrous lunch party in Mallord Street. He and Milne were squashed elbow to elbow at a too-small refectory table and both were dull and tongue-tied. Despite this the two men eventually overcame their inhibitions and were to remain lifelong friends.

Round the corner lived the composer H. Fraser Simson with his wife Cicely, and their spaniel Mr. Henry Woggins. He would one day set the verses from *When We Were Very Young* to music. Journalist and drama critic, W.A. Darlington, was only a short distance away, living with his wife and young daughter, Anne, in Beaufort Mansions.

But the idea of dropping in was not the Milnes' custom at all. 'We don't call very well. I hate knowing people for geographical reasons.'

Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt, sons of the former American President, popped in to meet Pooh for tea just after *When We Were Very Young* was published. They were on their way to shoot tigers in Turkestan, and Milne wrote to his brother Ken afterwards saying that Theodore almost wept because he only had an American and not an English first edition to be signed. The poems, having taken America by storm, were being quoted at official banquets, university seminars and dinner parties.

In the Middle East, grown-up Arab merchants were 'hoppity-hopping' around the bazaars (*Hoppity*). Children everywhere were trying to avoid walking on the

lines in the street (*Lines and Squares*) and asking for butter for the royal slice of bread (*The King's Breakfast*).

At this time Moon's own excitements were very simple. He liked to stand on the ottoman with Pooh and watch the happenings in the street below, through the bars of the window. Not that much happened in Mallord Street in those days. There were very few people and even fewer cars so he would wait for a noise to alert him to some event about to happen.

There were certainly no bears waiting to gobble up boys who walked on the lines, as his father had described (not that he would have dared to tempt them!).

The log man with his horse and cart yodelled to announce his arrival, a handbell introduced the muffin man and a roaring noise meant the coalman was shooting his wares into the cellar next door. There was also the organ grinder, which made Moon feel so sad that he threw him a penny. But the melancholy harp man, with his black hair and small moustache, made him feel even sadder and he was allowed to go down and put two pennies into his velvet bag.

Best of all was the sound of a 'coo-ee' down below which announced the arrival of Anne Darlington who lived twenty minutes away.

For forty-eight years, her father was the acerbic theatre critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, who once wrote that Richard Briers played Hamlet like a 'demented typewriter'. He was no less caustic about some of Milne's own later plays, which he thought were lacking in content and somewhat superficial. A.A. Milne hated criticism and so when Darlington first called at Mallord Street, both were overcome by shyness and embarrassment.

Anne Darlington was eight months older than Moon and rather bossy, so she tended to take charge of whatever was going on. It was she who broke the shocking news to him that there was NO Father Christmas! She had an infectious giggle as a little girl. Friends and family remember her laugh, and recall how as a beautiful grown-up, she became a very feisty lady.

In the Mallord Street days, Anne, like Moon, was an only child. She became his constant companion in London and later in Sussex, after the Milnes bought their country home in Hartfield: Anne's sister, Phoebe, was twelve years her junior.

The Darlingsons also had a rural retreat on the South Downs in Sussex, not so far away from Hartfield. Their home was a beautiful eighteenth-century house. A mile from the sea, at the end of a no-through lane, it was a haven in those days, not only for the Darlingsons. The Asquiths had a house there, as did the McKails.

The Milnes, too, loved the tranquility of the flint cottages and old English gardens. The village has not altered in any way since those times.

Anne had a toy monkey, known, illogically, as 'Jumbo', who was as dear to her as was Pooh to Moon and the four went everywhere together with their nannies. They were inseparable.

Anne's nanny, like Nou, was a family institution. But with her black-rimmed glasses and a black straw hat, was a far more formidable figure than Moon's nanny. When they were feeling wicked, the children giggled behind her back because of the way her many chins wobbled when she spoke, so they called her 'Jam Puff' and she pretended not to hear.

Blue adored Anne; she was the Rosemary he and Daff would never have and they both secretly hoped that when the time was right Moon and Anne would marry. Their wish never came true. Anne eventually became an almoner and married Peter Ryde, golf correspondent for *The Times*. The first time that the Milnes accepted a dinner invitation to their house in London, Peter remembered how Anne rushed around cleaning and polishing. Oysters and smoked salmon were on the menu but although Blue was as ever, courteous and polite, he made very little effort to be entertaining and remained locked within himself. Moon was not there.

Peter and Anne had two daughters, Julia and Katie. They remember, with affectionate nostalgia, visits to their Darlington grandparents in the country, lovingly safeguarding the moving memorabilia and photographs of that time.

Back in 1924, standing on the ottoman, clutching the safety rails over the window four-year-old Moon would respond to that 'coo-ee' and wave as Anne and her nanny arrived for the day's outing.

Chapter Seven

Hand in Hand

LONDON OUTINGS FOR Anne and Moon, usually with skipping ropes or hoops and always with Pooh and Jumbo, would be either to the Peter Pan statue or the Albert Memorial, in Kensington Gardens. Sometimes they would turn right from Mallord Street into Church Street, then down towards the Embankment and over the Albert Bridge to Battersea Park. They would hold hands and talk about all the things they would do when they were grown up.

One of the children's favourite outings was to watch Changing the Guard outside Buckingham Palace.

Buckingham Palace is the first poem in *When We Were Very Young*. *Vespers* is the last and these two verses were to rip four-year-old Moon from his untroubled,

The Albert Memorial

After the death of Prince Albert in 1861, the distraught Queen Victoria ordered that a competition be held for a suitable memorial to his life. The winner was George Gilbert Scott, who was later knighted for his magnificent design. The elaborate Gothic memorial was to be 175 feet high topped with a bronze gilded figure of the Prince Consort by Marochetti. The aim was that the 150 life-sized figures and surrounding friezes and mosaics should represent not only Albert's wide interests in the arts, commerce, agriculture, engineering and science but also offer a unique opportunity for British artistic talent.

The Memorial was finally inaugurated in 1872. It cost £120,000 and subscriptions were collected from all over the country.

Peter Pan's Statue

The statue of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens, which had been erected in the middle of the night, was never formally unveiled because Barrie wished to preserve the sense of magic surrounding his story. The Times announced on May Day 1912 that there would be a gift

from J.M. Barrie for children going to feed the ducks, down by the little bay on the south-western side of the Serpentine. This was the very spot where Peter flew in to Kensington Gardens.

Sure enough the children found the figure of Peter Pan blowing his pipe on the stump of a tree surrounded by animals of the English countryside and delicate winged fairies.

anonymous childhood on to the pages of newspapers and magazines world-wide. Everyone was chanting ‘Christopher Robin went down with Alice’. Nou was saved from unwanted publicity as even Blue could not find a rhyme for Olive. Alice rhymed with Palace.

This was not Blue’s only use of poetic licence. The Guards outside the Palace do not wear busbies but readers weren’t worried about all that. When in the poem, *At Home*, Blue described Moon’s childish longing for a soldier – a soldier in a busby, to come and play with him – he made the mistake of many grown ups then and now. The soldiers outside Buckingham Palace wear bearskins, a rather unfortunate fact in view of the proximity of Pooh, since these were then made from animal fur!

Busby is the English name for the Hungarian prémes csákó or kucsma, a military head-dress made of fur, worn by Hungarian hussars. Those worn by the Hussars and the Royal Artillery are cylindrical in shape. The rifle busby is a folding cap of astrakhan (curly lambs wool) formerly worn by rifle regiments. It looks like a Glengarry but is taller and has straight plumes in the front.

The bearskin cap is much taller and is worn most notably by the five regiments of foot guards of the Household Division (Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards) who parade outside the Palace.

One day a soldier did come to play in Mallord Street. He was an actor, Louis Goodrich, who Blue knew at the Garrick Club. He was invited round by Blue and to everyone’s delight arrived in full regalia – scarlet tunic and tall furry bearskin. It didn’t matter if Moon thought it was a busby – the little boy was quite overcome with excitement.

‘Soldier’ came many times after that – always to nursery tea because he came to see Pooh and Moon and not the grown-ups. Anne was allowed to join in and sometimes after tea Soldier got everyone busy cooking. Nou collected bowls and

jugs, icing sugar, egg white, cochineal and peppermint essence and the children started pouring, mixing, tasting, rolling and tasting again. It was blissfully noisy fun with a great deal of shrieking and giggling.

Moon adored him and certainly did not understand why his shy father couldn't possibly compete with the extrovert Soldier or how hurt he must have secretly been by Soldier's popularity.

There was even more military excitement at this time, for every Thursday, on his drill night, Nou's young man, Alf, called. He was really good fun and was excellent at playing, too. He arrived in Territorial Army dress which was not spectacular like Soldier's. Even so, Moon was all over him, Nou recalled.

Alf admitted later that he grew quite fond of 'the little fellow' and almost understood why Nou was loath to abandon him.

After her charge went off to boarding school when he was nine, she and the long-suffering Alf were finally married. They lived first in Croydon and then in the village of Three Oaks in the countryside near Bexhill. Their cottage was renamed 'Vespers' and furnished as a wedding present by the Milnes. They grew vegetables and filled the garden with statues of the children they were too late to have themselves, as well as reproductions of Pooh and other toys.

They also offered Bed and Breakfast holidays for select families.

One of these were the Pitt-Paynes. Today, musician Dr. James Pitt-Payne remembers all too well their visit when he was three years old.

"The cottage was quite dark and creepy to a young child and I thought she was a bit of a grim old thing who rather put me in my place. She told me that Christopher Robin was always a very good boy, whereas I left rather a lot to be desired. I was not allowed to handle the much-treasured first editions of A.A. Milne's work as I was somewhat grubby in those days'.

In 1965, Olive Brockwell looked back on her happy days with the Milnes in the *Sunday Times* – the only newspaper interview she ever gave.

She and Alfred talked to the reporter over tea, served from a special edition Pooh and Christopher Robin tea set which had been given to her as a birthday present. 'I believe this is the second service. The very first service was given to the Queen, when she was little Princess Elizabeth', she said. 'She was a great lover of Pooh'.

Her own memories of Blue did not echo those of his grown-up son. She saw him as a devoted parent who entered the boy's world of make-believe and gave voices to the toys, long before he gave them life in the books.

Olive died in 1978 and is buried alongside Alf in the graveyard of the Church of St. Lawrence in Guestling.

Occasionally, after breakfast in London, Moon and his father would leave Nou behind and take a stroll together round the neighbouring streets towards Fulham wearing their indoor shoes and no hats. 'Quite informal. Not party at all.' Every time they passed the same postman and on one occasion Blue asked Moon to say 'How do you do' – which he did, of course. But the postman did not acknowledge him and the little boy explained rather sadly, 'He doesn't know me.'

It would not be long before the whole world would know the family. Moon would become the public's Christopher Robin and fingers would point wherever he went. At first, he rather enjoyed his celebrity but this excitement was not to survive his growing-up.

Chapter Eight

Home to Hartfield

LEAVING LONDON ON THE B2026, just past Edenbridge you slip across the Kent border and into East Sussex. Down, and up and down again, the countryside becomes more and more agricultural until eventually you find yourself in a time-warp – the village of Hartfield – gateway to Ashdown Forest.

Hartfield is described on the Internet site ‘Tour uK’ rather unpromisingly as ‘only a small village but nicely formed’. In fact, although its best known residents have been a teddy bear and a pop star named Brian Jones, Hartfield’s history is quietly colourful. The picture of a deer on the roadside sign as you enter the village confirms the origins of its name: the Anglo-Saxon name for Hartfield was Hereot Feld – the field where harts roam. Certainly it is recorded that deer from the Forest once invaded the village in large numbers by night.

Local legend claims, probably incorrectly, that Henry VIII stayed overnight at Bolebroke (now known as Bolebroke Castle) maybe even with Anne Boleyn. Bolebroke Gatehouse is said to be the second oldest brick building in Britain.

Hartfield has changed very little externally since Pooh made that journey for the first time. In the summer of 1924 the Milne family piled into the large blue Fiat, with Pooh sitting in front with Nou and Moon alongside the chauffeur, Burnside.

They forked left, up Jib Jack Hill and then just before a small bridge they reached a well hidden turning on the right. This was the exciting bit. Burnside, who was not at all impressed by such rural things, hated it. ‘Jolly old lane’ he grumbled. He was rightly worried about his smart car as the surface of the lane leading to Cotchford Farm was – and still is – wonderfully bumpy and riddled with potholes made, in those days, by farm carts. When it rained they became yellow, muddy car traps.

It was not the sort of place a property developer would ever be likely to spoil. For four-year-old Moon, side by side with Pooh, it all promised unimaginable adventures ahead.

up and up the hill, beyond that lane, the road twists between woodland until at the top, without warning, the sky opens and as far as you can see in all directions lie woodland copses, heather clad moorland and hills, cobwebbed by little streams and rivulets stretching away towards the South Downs on the far horizon. This is the landscape that was soon to become known as 'Pooh Country'.

Ashdown Forest looks dramatically different from its immediate surroundings as a result of its distinctive land-use over many centuries. Originally known as the Forest of Anderida, it stretched 120 miles from East to West and 30 miles from North to South.

When the Romans arrived they established their centre at Garden Hill high on the Forest near Wych Cross and began to exploit what was already a flourishing iron industry. Remains of the Roman Road which lies parallel to the B2026 can be seen near Blue's Golf Club at Holtye on the road to East Grinstead.

In the eighth century, the Venerable Bede described the area as 'thick and inaccessible; a place of retreat for large herds of deer, and swine'. Bear, wolf and wildcat were also present.

In 1296 a large part of the Forest was enclosed by a twenty three-mile 'pale fence', the gates of which are marked today in names such as Chelwood Gate and Chuck Hatch. It became known as Lancaster Great Park and was used for several hundred years as a royal hunting ground for red and fallow deer, much loved later by Henry VIII. The King shot deer from a specially built tower on a high point at the place now called King's Standing.

By the sixteenth century Ashdown Forest had become a major industrial area. Forges and furnaces were everywhere and the country's first blast furnace was constructed at Coleman's Hatch in 1496. A great deal of wood was required to provide the necessary charcoal for all this activity: the reason that Ashdown Forest is now a generally open landscape is because most of the tree cover was cut down to provide fuel for iron production and then ship-building.

The first cannon was cast in 1543 and, as conflict with Spain grew, so did the Forest's reputation for guns. It is even claimed that the opposing fleets were both armed from Ashdown Forest.

Today glassy slag and cinder can still sometimes be seen on the ground, or in the beds of some of the streams. At times the streams, too, reveal the rusticoloured stains of the iron compounds that drew this early industrial activity to Ashdown Forest. These traces are all that now remain of the iron industry, since by the early eighteenth century iron-production techniques were changing.

In the late seventeenth century huge pillow mounds 200 metres long and seven metres wide were built on the northern edge of the Forest for the rearing of rabbits.

William Cobbett, passing through in January 1822 unkindly noted in his book *Rural Rides*: 'The most villainously ugly spot I saw in England. This lasts you for five miles, getting, if possible, uglier and uglier all the way, till, at last, as if barren soil, nasty spewy gravel, heath and even that stunted, were not enough, you see some rising spots, which instead of trees, present you with black, ragged, hideous rocks.'

How different 102 years later was its impact on the young Moon, remembering, as an adult, sitting on the heather with his thoughts while the Forest talked to him of imaginary dream worlds. 'The Forest was all mine.'

During the seventeenth century, the Forest had been granted to the Earls of Bristol and Dukes of Dorset and through the years significant areas were enclosed, parcels of land were taken for small-holdings and commoners became increasingly worried about their livelihoods.

Not until the first Ashdown Forest Act, passed in 1885, were the Forest borders defined and they are largely unchanged to this day. There are now about seven hundred families with Commoners' Rights. The De La Warr family, descendants of the Dorsets, were still the freehold owners until 1988, when the Forest was purchased from the 10th Earl by East Sussex County Council. Today, it is managed by the Ashdown Forest Trust. Only the 500 Acre Wood (Pooh's '100 Acre Wood') is still maintained by the De La Warrs.

With careful protection by the Conservators, Ashdown Forest, with its ever-changing sky, bracing winds, swirling mists and dramatic sun rise and setting, is still a haven of outstanding natural beauty not so different today from the near-dream world of Christopher Robin's childhood. Thanks (or maybe not, if you live in Hartfield) to the adventures of that small boy and his toys in the 1920s, to the inspirational story telling of A.A. Milne and the exquisitely sensitive work of artist, E.H. Shepard, their Forest has become today a place of pilgrimage for grown-ups and children from all over the world. Despite its new role, the silence and space remain, lifting and refreshing the spirit.

When the Milnes first drove down to view the old empty Cotchford Farm, there were still Highland Cattle and sheep roaming the adjoining land and wandering along the almost car-free roads.

They were soon to be joined by some more unusual residents— a small tubby teddy bear, his friend Piglet, and a melancholy donkey, who had started life with his head held high. Sadly, by the time the stories appeared, Eeyore's neck had lost some of its stuffing with so much constant cuddling. His head had drooped and he had become the sad character who lived in a damp and gloomy bit at the bottom of the garden that nobody wanted. There was the bouncy Tigger and the motherly Kanga with her baby Roo. Originally, in Milne's handwritten notes, Kanga was a 'he' but this was corrected and she assumed her role as the only female in the books. Then the sagacious Owl and busy Rabbit – both products of Blue's imagination for the sake of the stories – arrived on the scene.

'As I played with them and talked to them and gave them voices to answer with, so they began to breathe. But alone I couldn't take them very far. I needed help'. So his mother joined him and gradually more character flowed into them until they reached the point at which his father could take over.

The places that Blue described – the 'North Pole', the 'Heffalump Trap', the 'Enchanted Place', and, of course, 'Poohsticks Bridge' – are there to be rediscovered. After years of villagers fighting against the promotion of Pooh, maps can now be bought in the village to show new arrivals where to find them. The suggested locations shown are, perhaps, a trifle 'wobbly' but a little imagination makes anything possible.

The weather is much as it always was. 'In the country' wrote Christopher Milne 'weather matters'. He explained that in London you only notice weather if it is hot or cold or very wet. In the country weather brings exciting things to do everyday and sometimes it stops you doing the exciting things you had meant to do.

The story of Cotchford itself has been recorded in various historical documents. It was first mentioned in 1574 as Scotchford Furnace and Forge – and was playing an important role in the iron industry.

In 1924, when Blue discovered the house, it had been largely abandoned although some remaining farm buildings at the top of the drive were occupied by George Tasker and his wife. The farmhouse had been rescued by a Mr Jervis who partially restored it before selling it on to the Milnes.

There was still a huge amount to do and, to give her credit, Daff, sophisticated town-lover that she was, surprisingly had a vision of the potential in the garden itself— acres of overgrown field, jungle and bog bordered by the Forest and, excitingly, a small rather muddy stream said to be a nameless tributary of the river Medway.

Daff had grown up among the beautiful landscaped flowerbeds and gardens of the de Selincourt family home and Cotchford reminded her of the peace and solitude she had loved as a child.

She made frequent visits to the house before the family moved in. Equipped with sandwiches and a thermos she would travel, alone at first, from London on the train, taking dozens of her favourite daffodil and tulip bulbs, bought, of course, from Harrods. She would be met at the station by a driver from one of the village garages and driven up to Cotchford, where George and she began work on taming the wilderness.

Once the house itself was ready, tall, handsome George (who looked like a Spanish sea-captain) became the Milnes' full time gardener – Daphne called him the Head Gardener. It sounded quite grand. At the end of the week he could be found wearing his smart brown suit and homburg hat, casually sweeping the brick path outside the house, to remind the mistress tactfully that it was pay-day. She never forgot. Her husband accepted his lot as 'under Gardener'.

George was very proud of his prize-winning dahlias and chrysanthemums which he exhibited not only at the local Horticultural shows to which the Milnes never went, but also at the Chelsea Flower Show in London. The villagers observed, somewhat wryly, Daff's condition that they should be entered but that they were *not to be* donated to the church!

The family moved in with Pooh and the other animals in 1925. So began their regular weekend one-and-a-half-hour car journey to Hartfield from London on Saturday mornings returning, in the early days, on Monday afternoons. At first, until Moon went to school, they stayed for a month in the spring and two 'glorious' months in the summer holidays.

Christopher Milne later described his mother as a cat in the country – revelling in the peace, taking walks by herself. As a child, he sometimes asked to go with her and she would say: 'No, meet me on the way back. I like to be met'. Occasionally, when it was dark, they would walk to the Forest together, up the mysterious tree-lined road past Chuck Hatch, listening to owls and the wind and not talking at all. In those days, they had it all to themselves.

Blue, on the other hand, was at heart a Londoner which was, he said, 'the right sort of place for a writer to live'. He loved the country like a dog – always on the go, playing games, chasing a ball, climbing hills, riding a bike – never doing nothing. Everything had to have a purpose which didn't always suit Moon – who sometimes preferred being busy doing nothing. But he was not the insufferably

spoilt child that some critics portrayed later. He also loved 'dog games' with his father, playing cricket, catching balls, bouncing balls. Nou was very useful and joined in fielding.

The stream became Blue's project – the plan was to turn it into an attractive goldfish pond but somehow that never happened and as the weeds and brown scum flourished it became a wonderful hunting ground for Moon and his father, in boots. Together, usually watched by Pooh and with nets and golf clubs, they fished and dug for nobbly newts and dragonfly larvae, they hooked out snakes that were hunting fish under the weeds and flung them away into the bullrushes.

Eventually all the alterations were complete and staff quarters organised off the kitchen for Mrs Wilson the housekeeper and her daughter Pat. A rather damp, dark, north-facing little study along the corridor was set aside on the ground floor in which pipe-smoking Blue could write. Cotchford was ready to take its place in literary history.

Chapter Nine

Pooh's Corner

LIKE MALLORD STREET, Cotchford Farm has hardly changed today from how it was described when the Milnes lived there. Here is the background, the building blocks of Moon's early years that his father wove through the stories of Pooh's life on the Forest.

Walking through the front door, to the left is the dining room with a chimney through which you could see up to the sky and to the right a drawing room with a similar fireplace which burnt slabs of peat that smoked and filled the house with fumes and was bricked up.

The twisty corridors and low-hung doorways were a hazard for heads especially at night. The house was lit mainly by candles and they made their own gas which supplied the lights in the passage at the top of the stairs and the drawing room.

Water was pumped up from the well every day after breakfast by Tasker's nephew, and for the first bath of each visit ran from the tap as a rather brown murky tea-like liquid.

Upstairs were the bedrooms for Daff and Blue. It was here, through his mother's room, that Moon discovered the 'Secret Passage' running behind the wall. At first it was used as storage for cases but these were removed and Moon made it his own. He loved his mother's bedroom where he would sit on the soft carpet to be dried after a bath.

Moon's recollection as an adult was of his father's room and study being the darkest, dingiest places in the house. 'Most of us have small, sad places somewhere in our hearts', he wrote years later. Blue, he said, kept his sadnesses to himself and then let them spill out into his writing. Was it perhaps, that his shabby armchair, in his little north-facing study, and his miserable bedroom were the origin of Eeyore's gloomy place? Did he, maybe, transfer some of his own inner loneliness into the character of the gloomy, isolated donkey everyone loved?

Moon and the animals shared the tip-tilted day nursery with its sloping floor, along the corridor next to the night nursery and Nou's bedroom.

Up again was Mrs Wilson's bedroom and the room which became Moon's very own 'carpenter's shop'. As he grew older Moon became a dedicated maker of furniture, a craft that was to be a lifelong passion. From his earliest childhood he loved making and unmaking things. He sewed and knitted, he made tapestry pictures and from his Meccano set he built a working clock. He once took a dead mouse to pieces to see how it was made and threw it away when he couldn't see the answer. He dissected the lock on the nursery door but when he couldn't put it back together an ironmonger had to be called. Generally everything Moon made worked and by the age of seven he was the family's 'Chief Mender'.

The furniture and interior décor were Daff's province and she brought all her skill into mixing, matching and making a home. She had her own distinct eye for what was beautiful. She hated antiques, particularly polished mahogany. She consulted Peter Jones' store in London and with their help she created a gay, cheerful setting for colourful hand-painted furniture. Caring for it, she left to others.

The first real animals at Cotchford were a couple of fox terriers which were 'a great mistake' and they were followed by cats. George Tasker produced the founder of the family, a tortoiseshell kitten. Moon announced 'his name is Pinkle but I shall call him Tattoo'. However, Tattoo turned out to be a she – and produced a kitten they called 'Pinkle Purr' who sometimes travelled to London with Pooh in the car. Pinkle Purr features in *Now We Are Six*. Jessica the donkey also arrived quite early and Moon and Pooh used to ride down to the village with Nou holding the reins.

Mrs Jacques ran the bakery and bread was delivered by van drawn by Bridget, the horse. Mrs Jacques also sold sweets and knew that Moon had come for a pennyworth of his favourite bulls eyes. Later her daughter Mary took over and eventually, much later still, Mary's daughter, Dawn (now Mrs Boakes) used to help out delivering Coburg and cottage loaves baked in solid fuel ovens on the premises, to Cotchford Farm and to Earl De La Warr's family at Buckhurst Park, in nearby Withyham. She was a familiar sight around the lanes in a rather less romantic but more practical blue Ford van.

As a little girl, Dawn remembers seeing Daff, tall and slim, with blue-rinsed hair and shocking bright-red lipstick walking, always in the middle of the road, past the shop as if to avoid meeting anyone. 'People thought she was a bit standoffish' she says. 'Very few people really knew who the Milnes were.'

There were many more shops in the village High Street then than there are today. There was a post office, a cobbler, a blacksmith, an undertaker and two grocers, a tea shop, two butchers and a wonderful shop called 'The Candy Box' which sold every kind of sweet a child could want: mint éclairs, lemon sherberts, barley sugars, blackberry and custards, 'Army and Navies' – greyish blue drops with a spicy flavour – and 'Tom Thumb' drops. There were also three pubs.

Cars were a rarity. In fact, according to Tommy Mitchell whose father and uncle ran Mitchell's Garage at the other end of Cotchford Lane, the lads used to play cricket in the 'main' road. Burnside eventually taught Blue to drive but by common agreement he was a menace. He could be heard a mile off, revving up and ambling very slowly round the village. Tommy thought Burnside was a really good bloke and remembers how he sometimes used to drop in to the garage for a cup of tea.

The Mitchell brothers had a splendid car which they bought from Lord Abergavenny and never removed the impressive family Coat of Arms on the bonnet. It also had a talking tube between the driver and his passengers and was, on occasion, used to transport Pooh and the family.

There was at least one other garage in the village, whose work included chauffeuring and haulage. Sometimes they ferried Mrs Milne, Moon and Pooh into Tunbridge Wells, eight miles away, to get a paw patched or an eye restored.

At first it was Pooh, Nou and Moon who embarked on adventures to explore the mysteries and the promises of the surrounding country.

Very soon Anne Darlington (with her nanny) joined them at weekends and sometimes in the holidays, especially at Easter. Sometimes, when Nou was on holiday Moon would go with Pooh and join Anne and her family on the Kent coast, and at Christmas they were together in Mallord Street, but the summer belonged to Cotchford. These were the 'buttercup days' of their childhood.

Most importantly there was the river, which was really a stream, a tributary of the Medway (which was a proper river). It ran slowly, deep down between high slippery banks carved in the winter when the water rushed faster and murkier. Here was their favourite spot. It was just possible to swing across on a useful branch, just deep enough to swim for three or four strokes. They called it 'Dragon's Bridge' because, sure enough, the tree had been moulded over the years to look like the snout and green back of a dragon down which, on brave days, Moon and Anne could clamber over to the other bank. Here Moon made his rope ladder and built a hut of twigs – just like the home that Pooh and Piglet built for melancholy Eeyore

when his own stick and twig house blew down. Here also, they searched for snipe and butterflies and watched a weasel family out for a walk.

Soon they made more friends.

There was Hannah Symons, who lived at Kilnwood Chicken Farm up the lane. She was playing outside as they passed one day and Nou called to ask her mother (she didn't have a nanny) if Hannah could join them. Of course, Mrs Symons said 'yes'.

In 2009 Hannah (by then Mrs Rooth) remembered how she and Moon played and shared their gardens – although she was never invited inside Cotchford Farm itself and Moon never visited her home. They paddled in the stream, dug a hole in the river bank which became their 'Channel Tunnel', climbed trees and pretended to be monkeys and they helped with haymaking and apple-picking while Pooh looked on, his back against a tree.

Hannah was particularly good at climbing trees – a very useful talent in the woodland. Very soon Moon would be just as good and even better at falling out. There was a special apple orchard at the top of the lane where the trees were old and bent and so were brilliant for climbing.

Imagine the distress when, one afternoon, back at the house for tea they discovered that Roo was missing. Nou and Moon searched and searched but he was never found. Piglet too suffered a terrible mishap when his nose was badly bitten by a neighbour's dog.

As well as Hannah and Anne, there was Iva Osman (who became Mrs Iva Hill), daughter of John Osman estate manager for Cotchford when it was a farm and importantly the builder of Poohsticks bridge. The Osmans lived up the lane from Hannah's house. For years Moon kept in touch with Iva, sent birthday cards and holiday letters from Normandy, signed with 'lots of love.' They are now in the Sussex Records Office in Lewes.

Iva described in an interview how she used to run free in Cotchford Farmhouse when it was still empty, before the Milnes came. She paddled in the streams which were alive with trout and dragonflies and her family's Sunday walk was up to the clump of trees which eventually became 'The Enchanted Place'.

Opposite Cotchford Farm lived Les and Mary Hallett. Mary, who died in 2004 at the age of 93, had been born on the farm, the youngest of five children. East Grinstead five miles away was the farthest she ever went from home. She always said that Moon was not the little angel as sometimes alleged and often told

the story of the day her brother had thrown a bucket of water over him to stop his pranks.

It was on a visit to Posingford Wood, over the bridge which crossed Posingford Brook, that Pooh and Moon went one day with Nou and discovered the charcoal burner who appeared later in *Now We are Six*, the third of the Pooh quartet. He was a rare breed, even in those days and he told them wonderful stories. He said he had actually seen a fox.

E.H. Shepard was to capture those moments with two simple drawings of Pooh and Moon on the Forest floor huffing and puffing at their own little kiln of twigs and then sitting together on a log and listening enthralled,

‘Oh, the charcoal burner has tales to tell! And he lives in the Forest and knows us well.’

Posingford Bridge itself was soon to rank with other historic bridges of the world and named by Daff as ‘Poohsticks Bridge’. It was from this bridge that Moon and his friends would drop sticks and race across to the other side to see whose stick came through first. The game was old but the name they gave it was new. ‘Poohsticks’ was to become an international sport.

One day Eeyore, having fallen into the stream, floated under the bridge, legs in air, while his friends tried to ‘hoosh’ him to the bank, by dropping a large stone in the water.

Trees played an important part in the children’s lives. Pooh and Moon shared a real-life house in the old walnut tree at the top of the drive. There was just enough room to squeeze inside through the split in the trunk and sit on the soft sandy floor.

The bedroom was on a branch and the dining room on the branch below. It was the first of many tree houses and has long gone. Hannah’s house was in one of the nearby ruined farm buildings used by the Taskers.

When Anne came to Cotchford she of course, needed a house, too. So Anne lived in the new wooden well house which was bigger than Moon’s house and he and Pooh came visiting. Sitting on the floor with Pooh and Jumbo they made mud pies and sang and laughed at jokes.

Sometimes they went on family outings across the Forest. Blue was a bad rambler but a keen walker and trees became very important for him, too, in the stories that he was about to write. There everyone lived in trees. Pooh had his own tree, so did Piglet. Piglet’s tree was called ‘Trespassers W’. He explained that his Grandfather was named ‘Trespassers William’ and the tree was named after him.

One of Moon's favourite walks with Nou was across the main road from the Enchanted Place and up into the dark and mysterious '100 Aker Wood,' which was really Earl De La Warr's 500 Acre Wood and into a different kind of forest. Here was a real forest where the trees were ancient oak and ash and beech and the floor was soft and rustled as they walked. Moon and Nou sometimes met the young Lord Buckhurst (who was the same age and was also known as Billy). His Nanny was Nanny Buckhurst. She and Nou became friends and the boys went adventuring together.

There was one particular tree which Moon, Nou and Pooh discovered on their first 'Expotition' to the wood. It was this tree which Shepard eventually used to illustrate the story *Eeyore Loses a Tail* and which when Moon was grown up was vividly recalled in *The Enchanted Places*. It looked, he said, as though over the centuries it had grown tired of holding its arms up to the sky and had allowed them to droop. Those drooping branches were a challenge to small boys. They were slippery and you could slide along them bit by bit until you were scarily high and able to swing your legs.

This, they agreed, was Owl's house, known as 'The Chestnuts'. It was a charming, old-world residence and was far grander than anybody else's home because it had a knocker AND a bell pull.

The sad events on the Blusterous day when The Chestnuts was blown down are described in *The House at Pooh Corner*. Pooh and Piglet were visiting and the front door letter box ended up in the ceiling. Piglet had to do a 'Very Grand Thing' to escape and go for help to get them all out.

With his usual attention to simple details, Shepard insisted first on sketching draft drawings of exactly how he imagined the inside of Owl's house would have looked before it was uprooted. He was then able to illustrate more accurately the devastation caused by the gale.

It is a moving story because eventually Eeyore found a very suitable new residence for Owl which he had already decided to call 'The Wolery'. The trouble was that it was really 'Trespassers W' and it belonged to Piglet. So Piglet, being the kindly little creature he was, gulped and said nothing except that he hoped Owl would be happy in it and he went off to live with Pooh.

These were halcyon days for Pooh. Moon learned to make crazy paving and built a path from Pooh's house. Tasker made him a wooden sundial at the end to give the path somewhere to go and he built a 'heffalump trap' covered with sticks in

case too many people walked down the path and spoilt it. His first victim was poor Mrs Tasker and then he really was in disgrace.

Blue was watching and absorbing it all. The 'Pooh books', as they were to be called affectionately, were simmering in his imagination. He was now busy trying to write more stories like that commissioned by the *Evening News* for its 1925 Christmas number.

That story began:

'Once upon a Time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself.'

Pooh was destined not to be alone for long.

Soon, in the tales that followed, he would take centre stage and the Forest would be shared with his friends the second Piglet, Rabbit, Eeyore, Tigger, Kanga, Roo and, of course, Christopher Robin. First, the Forest had to be introduced to E.H. Shepard.

Chapter Ten

His Fingers Blew Across the Page

ERNEST H. SHEPARD was an artist whose talent as a painter in oils, of portraits and English landscapes, is largely unknown to the world in general. Forgotten, too, are his many years as a *Punch* cartoonist and illustrator of over one hundred books. All that the public remembers today is that this gentle, kindly man was, as his biographer, Arthur R. Chandler, defined him, *The Man Who Drew Pooh*.

Just as Pooh eclipsed Milne's ambitions to be considered a serious literary figure and dramatist, so was it to be with the artist Shepard.

In 1925 Milne was caught up in all the brouhaha of the bonanza around *When We Were Very Young* – and enjoying it. So was Daphne. She wrote a 'PS' on the bottom of one of his letters: 'We are all very well and happy and pleased with each other.'

Milne's letters to his new 'collaborator' are mostly in the Shepard Archive at Surrey university in Guildford. They are invariably addressed to 'Dear Shepard' and the replies to 'Dear Milne'. No 'Kipper' or 'Blue'. Milne's writing is small and slopes in triangles from the top left to the bottom right of each page. Infuriatingly they are mostly undated.

Shepard always said that he found Milne difficult to know, but the author's letters are friendly and almost paternal, although Milne was, at forty-four, three years younger than Shepard. He says, in one letter, early in the relationship, that this would be 'the last time that infernal man Milne is bothering you. Pray forgive him and believe that he is ever yours in friendship and admiration.'

The first invitation to Cotchford appears to have been for September 1925, when Shepard and his wife, Florence, went down to meet the animals again and to explore the Forest which was their home – in reality and in imagination. There Shepard discovered a different Milne: relaxed and no longer stiff and reticent as he had been at their first meeting in Mallord Street.

Moon, who had very little experience of playing with boys – even of his own age – was also delighted to discover that Shepard's son, Graham, at the age of 18 and about to leave for Oxford university, was up for splashing about in the stream

and doing muddy things, such as turning a floating log into a battleship and then an alligator.

The family returned to Hartfield in the spring of the next year and the two men set off on an 'Expotition' to explore the Forest which Moon and Pooh already knew so well.

At that time of year the gorse is ablaze on the moorland and woods are heavy with the scent of bluebells. They too followed the sandy track up to the high point of what Milne called 'Galleon's Lap' – sixty something trees in a circle from where the sunrise is breathtaking and the whole world spread out until it reached the sky.

Moon said that he knew it was 'Enchanted' as no one had ever been able to count the trees and you could sit down carelessly up there and not be forced to get up in a hurry and look for somewhere else, because the grass was quiet and soft and green. 'The Enchanted Place' was to become the centre of Pooh's world.

The Forest touched Shepard, too, and he began to draw. He was a keen observer. There is nothing static in his pictures; whether it is the prickliness of the gorse or the tail-drooping gloom of Eeyore, everything is alive.

His step-granddaughter, Penelope Fitzgerald, wrote sensitively about Kipper's work, in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 22 December 1991: 'He let his fingers blow across the page.'

The secret of Pooh's personality lay in the way in which her grandfather placed his eye far lower down and further back than in any previous teddy bear. It was this that gave him the uniquely, bemused, anxious-to-please expression that prompted Christopher Robin (and the rest of the world) to say lovingly 'Oh Bear, how I do love you!'

'We all love your pictures', wrote Milne to Shepard, 'you have made a delightful book of it.'

Milne's own talent was playing with words and the use of language. With humorous twists and simple, sometimes silly sentences and idiosyncratic banter, each story is a drama full of action, smiles and 'Deep Thoughts'. Characters come alive and can be shared between adult and child.

Humphrey Carpenter, in his book, *Secret Gardens*, suggests that Pooh's world gives all children an unconscious understanding of human nature, which will remain with them forever.

Shepard liked to draw from life and so he became a fairly regular visitor to the Milnes. His beloved wife Florence was very ill at this time, and he found the work therapeutic. One of these meetings was recorded by Dutton's President, John

Macrae, when he visited Mallord Street, in 1926. He described Moon sitting on the floor with Pooh and the other animals, largely unaware of the significance of what was happening. A.A. Milne was on the sofa reading aloud and Shepard was sketching away in his accustomed pencil.

Milne himself described Macrae as an old man with a beard who insisted on saying 'yessir' and who flatteringly assured him that he went straight to the hearts of the people. 'More likely to the heart of his banker', Milne wrote tersely to his brother, Ken, afterwards (Ann Thwaite).

On 24 December 1925, *In Which We are Introduced to Winnie-the-Pooh and Some Bees*, was published in the *Evening News*, with a front-page banner headline, 'A CHILDREN'S STORY BY A.A. MILNE'. It appeared in far larger print than the main news stories – 'Great Storm Sweeps over Derbyshire' and 'Lord Cobham's Mansion on Fire'.

On Christmas Day, at 7.45 p.m on the wireless, the BBC offered a reading of the story by the well-known Actor-Manager, Donald Calthorp. This was the first interpretation of many – the best known probably being those by the growlyvoiced actor, Norman Shelley, on *Children's Hour*, years later.

It is alleged that Churchill (himself a Winnie, of course) was so impressed that he commissioned Shelley to impersonate his voice and record some of his wartime speeches for the radio, when he was otherwise occupied in trying to win the Second World War.

Pooh must have been proud.

The new story would shortly be followed in the magazine, *Eve*, by *Pooh Goes Visiting And Gets Into A Tight Place*. This tells of the day Pooh called on Rabbit and got stuck in the entrance hole of his burrow and how Rabbit used his legs inside as a towel rail while he waited for Pooh to slim down and eventually wriggle his way out into the Forest. There were eight more stories until the publication of *Winnie-the-Pooh* finally launched the career of its hero.

The book, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, was published on 14 October 1926 and was dedicated rather gushingly to Daphne 'because we love you'. She appears only once in any of the books – as Moon dutifully repeats 'God Bless Mummy' in *Vespers* and even then there is no illustration of her.

This was Pooh's big moment. Christopher Robin is there of course – but he has become the sensible growing-up boy in the background (as he was becoming in real life) to whom his friends from the Forest, who would never grow up, would turn when in trouble.

Winnie-the-Pooh, the teddy bear, the romantic poet and philosopher, was now the hero. Thirty-two thousand copies of the book were immediately on sale in Britain and by the end of the year 150,000 copies had been sold in America, too.

Pooh spent much of his new celebrity status down in Sussex but over the following years was often required for personal appearances in London. With Moon, he met the not-quite-yet-famous Enid Blyton who, at the age of 29, had already published a dozen books. She described Moon, in his little brown overall and a shock of corn-coloured hair carrying 'an enormous teddy bear, which he informed me was Pooh. He looked around the room for something he might devour. His bright eyes fell upon his father's fountain-pen and he immediately took it up and pulled it into as many pieces as possible.'

Pooh watched the John O'London's reporter, Claude F. Luke, being given the freedom of the brightly coloured nursery in Mallord Street.

His later encounter, for a second time, in 1928, with American journalist, May Lamberton Becker was a bit rougher. As she sat in the Mallord Street nursery a 'large brown bear' came tumbling over her shoulder. In Daff's Pooh voice, small and gruff, the bear said 'Here, hold me up, I mustn't miss this.' So she sat with Pooh's face against hers watching Moon boxing his father who was protected by a yellow cushion.

Ms Becker had sent Moon a rather magnificent Red Indian headdress after their first meeting. She was thanked effusively by Daff who assured her 'He does look such a duck going out in it.' She sympathised with the problem of a bear who, she believed, had almost overnight changed the name of a household institution – when all the teddy bears in America became Pooh-bears.

Chapter Eleven

Pooh is the Spur

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1926 Moon had another part to play. He also became Christopher Milne and started morning school at Miss Walters' establishment in Tite Street, Chelsea, with little Piglet in his pocket. His companions were Anne Darlington and the two daughters of Denis McKail.

He was unconsciously and naturally moving away from Pooh as the map of Africa on his bedroom wall took his imagination out across the world. He had always loved beetles and creepy crawlies – one of the most popular poems in *Now We Are Six* was about his beetle Alexander, who escaped from his matchbox and ran away. Now Christopher Robin, the schoolboy, was discovering grown up Natural History and Science.

As he explained in *The Enchanted Places* he was quite unaware of the extraordinary effect his father's books were having. 'Throw a stone into a pool of water and you make a splash ... Pooh made a big splash and the ripples travelled a long way. But a child has small horizons and they soon passed over the edge of mine and out of sight.'

Moon with Pooh and the new Piglet in his pocket still enjoyed walks with Anne and Jumbo in the afternoon after school – only now there was a certain amount of finger-pointing. They all preferred the freedom of Sussex where they were hardly known at all and the few people who had heard of Pooh didn't care anyway.

Letters poured in – some of which Pooh answered himself. As he said, his spelling was 'wobbly'. It was good spelling but it 'wobbled'. It was Owl who advised him that some things are best doing nothing about. The Milnes adopted his advice and the pile of correspondence and begging letters which they decided to ignore was given the label 'Wol'.

There were the inevitable requests from commercial companies such as Pear's Soap. They wanted Pooh (and Moon) to support their internationally famous Bubbles advertisement. Wolsey wanted support for children's woollen underwear. They did not get it!

Those who did eventually benefit from Pooh's fame and Blue's natural generosity were charities such as The Royal Literary Fund, the Authors' Pension Fund, The Children's Country Holiday Fund and Toc H. He could never quite get used to the idea that he was rich.

He was also personally generous, especially to the family of his beloved brother, Ken. Ken had, from childhood, been overshadowed by his younger brother. He, too, had wanted to write and did contribute to *Punch* from time to time but never with the same spectacular success.

Now Pooh had dashed his hopes for ever. He was ill and struggling financially but maybe the explosive international response to Winnie-the-Pooh could provide some compensation. It gave Blue the resources to support Ken's wife Maud, and he helped too, with the children's education and his brother's medical expenses.

He never let his newly-found wealth go to his head, fearing always that it might end. Although his tastes were simple he could at least now afford to indulge a few whims – taxis, wine, golf balls, theatres and fancy lingerie for Daff.

He was pleased too, that his elderly father, J.V. Milne, was ecstatic at his son's success, reading all his reviews and checking sales figures. Blue wrote to Ken, 'father seems so happy and excited that he makes me feel ashamed of not having made him happy before.'

August 1927 was spent entirely in the country. It was a deckchair-in-the-garden sort of summer. The next book of verse, *Now We Are Six*, was due for publication in October and several stories for what Milne had claimed would be the last book, *The House at Pooh Corner*, were also ready. But most of his time was spent writing a new play, *The Fourth Wall*, an ingenious detective story with a twist.

In 1927 Shepard's wife Florence died after a long and very happy marriage. The Pooh commissions became a solace and a distraction for him at a very sad time.

Moon had chickenpox in December and had to miss his singing role in the school Christmas concert. So Daff came up with an idea. Why not let Moon make his debut as a performer? Early in 1928 she suggested that he should record some of Pooh's Hums and other songs from *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*.

Daff approached HMV and they eagerly leapt on her idea. The Milnes' neighbour was H. Fraser-Simson, known as 'F-S', whom Moon thought was a 'rather fierce-looking man, with a great grey moustache.' He had already set some of the songs to music. First there was a rehearsal in Mallord Street, followed by

some coaching in the Fraser-Simson house with the composer's wife, Cicely. Moon said she was younger and prettier than her husband and he liked being coached by her. She encouraged him to try a 'Poohish' voice when singing and to take deep breaths in the right places.

Then Moon and Pooh were driven by the composer and his dog, Henry Woggins, to the studio. There he sang, in his beautifully articulate and surprisingly confident treble, a selection of songs including *Buckingham Palace* and *Vespers*.

Even in the family there were those who thought the whole idea too sickly for words and the boys at school made Christopher's life a misery. Years later even his cousin Angela allowed her own children to hang the record in a tree and take pot shots at it.

At home, the next exciting venture was a play taken from the forthcoming book *The House at Pooh Corner*. *Eeyore's Birthday* was written of course by Blue and acted by Moon and some friends for just one performance. It told the tragic tale of how Pooh, discovering that it was poor Eeyore's birthday and that nobody had brought him a present, decided to rescue the situation. He went home to fetch a (very small) pot of his favourite 'hunny' and met Piglet on the way who said HE would give Eeyore a balloon. But on the way back Pooh forgot what he was doing and as it was a very hot day he felt it was time for a little something. So he ate the honey. Right down to the bottom of the pot. Still, as Eeyore said, it was especially useful because Piglet had fallen over – BANG – on the way and burst his balloon. Now he had a 'useful Pot' to put things in and a 'useful Thing' to put in the pot!

The House at Pooh Corner was published here and in America in October 1928. The sales were phenomenal. Pooh had been told that there would be no more books about him: 'But I do not know if he has quite taken it in', wrote Daff. 'Look', she said, 'Pooh's crying.'

Blue's beloved brother Ken died in May 1929. He was only 48. Blue could not face going to his funeral but was spotted standing alone, in the shade of the trees, among the graves on the edge of the graveyard.

Pooh's star turn came that year in July in Sussex when he and Moon, in the presence of Royalty, took part in a spectacular event telling the story of Ashdown Forest.

An impressive assembly of special guests was there, including guest of honour, HRH The Duchess of York, future Queen herself and mother of Queen Elizabeth II. Rudyard Kipling was there with Vita Sackville-West, Earl De La Warr and, of course, A.A. Milne.

The local paper enthusiastically devoted two full pages over ten columns to the four-day event. 'The Pageant of Ashdown Forest' was a spectacular telling of the history of Pooh Country from 475 A.D. concluding, of course, with Pooh himself.

The Pageant, which attracted several thousand visitors, was staged in the glorious grounds of Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, not far from Hartfield. This was then the home of the Hambro banking family. Today the mansion is home to Michael Hall School and headquarters of the Rudolph Steiner organisation.

Hannah Symons from Cotchford Lane was to play Eeyore on her hands and feet. Another friend, Rosemary Weaver (who met them both originally at the local nursery school) was chosen as Pooh 'because I was fat. But it was very disappointing – there was no hunny on my pot.' 'It was a sweltering day and I had a hot stinky skin to wear,' said Tigger. 'It was murder!' Piglet was in a pink stockinette jump suit. 'It was exhausting in that heat', recalled Hannah.

Moon played himself as the real Christopher Robin, carrying the real Pooh, the real Eeyore (who was dropped by mistake) and the real Kanga, Roo and Tigger.

There is a puzzle. A photograph snapped by a by-stander at the time shows Moon holding 'Poglet' – not Piglet, the little creature drawn by Shepard who eventually went with Pooh to New York. The original Piglet had survived his dog-biting ordeal but was, presumably, left out of the Pageant. Maybe he was considered a bit shabby to meet with Royalty.

Moon solemnly led the human 'animals' across the lawns to gather in the centre of the ground for a picnic, while a long procession of picturesque historical characters circled the field. There were ancient Britons, knights, witches, excise men, kings and queens.

It was all very exciting – Winnie-the-Pooh and Henry VIII, side by side, to recreate the story of Ashdown Forest for the future Queen of England!

In July 2009 Hannah (now Mrs Rooth) and Rosemary (now Mrs Foster), chauffeured by their sons, accepted an invitation to a 'Hunny Tea Party' in the garden at Cotchford Farm, where the present owners, Alastair and Harriet Johns were hosting a unique gathering with their son, Alexander.

All of the guests were making a nostalgic return and several had travelled long distances for the reunion with friends: others were the Hartfield villagers, like Les Hallett, or their families who had worked for the Milnes. All had stories to tell and memories to share.

Pete Tasker, in his smart military blazer, son of gardener George, had grown up in the old farm house at the top of the drive. He was born in 1930 just after Moon

had left for boarding school. He brought with him from Devon a teddy bear which Blue had given to his Dad as a present for the new baby – much as Pooh himself had arrived in Mallord Street after Moon was born. The bear, named ‘Billy’, after Billy Moon, sat on the dresser in Cotchford beside pictures of his cousin Pooh on Poohsticks Bridge.

Pete and elegant Dawn granddaughter of Mrs Jacques, met for the first time since they were very young. His old pal, Tommy Mitchell, from the garage was there, as was Tom Belton with his brother Bill. Bill was known to Daff as ‘Mr Rabbit Man’ because he used to shoot rabbits for her in the garden.

They swapped an endless riot of tales about their youth in Hartfield over honey sandwiches, strawberry scones and lemon-drizzle cake.

There was the time when Moon went up to the garage to buy some cartridges for his pistol. He had fired the gun at home and the bullet had jammed, so there was a loud explosion and blood spattered all over his hand. Tommy told how his Dad helped the boy enlarge the hole in the barrel so that the cartridge would slip in more easily and then, how he went outside and fired the bullet through a notice saying ‘private’.

But it was clear, as the memories flooded back, that those select few who knew the Milnes well or had worked for them as a family were generously warm. Daff’s demeanour and sense of style may have been out of place and misunderstood down in the village but her staff were loyal and remained with her for years. Mrs Wilson was with them throughout their time at Cotchford and only left at the age of over 80 to marry. She ruled the household roost (refusing always to serve coffee after dinner); George Tasker worked on their garden until he died. Words like ‘gentleman’ and ‘kindly’ were heard frequently at that tea party.

They all remembered too, Moon’s teddy bear, but apart from Hannah and Rosemary they were mostly too busy or too young to read the books as they appeared and they certainly didn’t play ‘Poohsticks’. Only Hannah and Rosemary really cherished their personal link with that furry ‘Personage’ from their childhood who was to become a national institution.

And where were Pooh and the animals from the nursery while all this was happening so many years later, in their name? For that part of the story we shall have to retrace our footsteps.

Before the Pageant, Christopher left Miss Walters’ establishment and graduated to a boys’ day school at the bottom of Sloane Street run by Mr C.H. Gibbs. It was, he said later, a bridge between childhood and boyhood for him and

that Pooh was moving into the shadows. He was living in two worlds – one still, but less often, with Pooh and Nou. In the other he was on his own.

He was bought his first pair of football boots and, in January 1929, wearing the uniform of bright red blazer and bright red peaked cap, his hair now cut boyishly short, he took the number 11 bus with Nou to start his new life. It was still Nou who was at the centre of his day. It was she who went to the school's lantern lectures on Tuesday afternoons and was waiting for him when it was time to go home. It was she who took him to James Greig's shop in Sloane Square to buy tools and sandpaper for carpentry lessons.

But Mr Gibbs was merely a stepping stone to the next huge step in the boy's life. First, there had been only Nou and Pooh but when Moon was nine and sent off to boarding school, Olive Rand retired to marry her long-suffering fiancé and become Olive Brockwell. Moon begged her not to go. 'Marry me', he pleaded.

His nanny's departure was to leave the way for Blue, at last, to feel his way gently towards a much closer friendship with his son, since now there was no competition. It was not until she had left finally that Moon, who had become painfully shy, developed a stutter. He turned instead to his father 'adoring him as I had adored Nanny so that he, too, became almost a part of me. His knowledge, his opinions, his beliefs could be passed on to me and I would eagerly accept them as my own.'

In May 1930 he started boarding school at Boxgrove, near Guildford. With his smart new leather bag with his name on, he set off with his father (never his mother), driven as usual by Burnside. Sitting silently in the car it was always the same; doing *The Times* crossword and then looking straight ahead when the time came to say 'Goodbye'. He said that school was all right when he got there but home was so much nicer.

Many, many years later, when Daff left Hartfield, after her husband had died, she gave that school bag to Bill Belton. For some time he used it to carry his bowls but the well-battered bag is now safely tucked away and treasured by his son Dick. Daff also wrote to him on several occasions when she was living in luxury at The Athenaeum Court in London. The letters, addressed to 'Dear Mr Rabbit Man' are sadly nostalgic, exposing a rarely seen aspect of her character; a regret for the happy times enjoying her garden among the daffodils, the roses and the chrysanthemums. When she died in 1971 she left Bill £250.

Ernest Shepard drew the bag near the end of his life in one of his last and most poignant illustrations. Christopher Robin, on his way to school, bag in hand,

is kicking Pooh out of the picture. Did Kipper really feel so antagonistic to the bear?

Boarding school also marked the parting of the ways with the child who had for a while quite enjoyed being famous. Surrounded by boys who were not impressed by such things and could be cruel, he gradually began to hate the Christopher Robin who belonged on the Ashdown Forest – a bitterness which was eventually to eat into his adult life.

Chapter Twelve

The Doldrums

ON 6 JANUARY 1930, Pooh took his first steps towards America. Literary agent Stephen Slesinger had arrived in London to visit the Milnes. He was a visionary and had recognised a new career for Pooh as a marketing figurehead. He purchased uS and Canadian merchandising, television, recording and other trade rights to the *Winnie-the-Pooh* works from Milne for a \$1000 advance plus sixty-six per cent of Slesinger's income, so creating the first modern licensing industry.

Slesinger was recognised in America for his contribution to literacy for children and was highly commended as a well-known humanitarian for his work on behalf of youth, the pleasure he brought and the opportunities he furnished to those who might otherwise have been forgotten.

By November 1931, he had turned Pooh into a multi-million dollar a year business. Slesinger went on to market the bear and his friends for more than thirty years, creating the first Pooh look-alike toy bear, record, board game, puzzle, uS radio broadcast (NBC), animation, and motion picture film.

The first time Pooh appeared in colour was 1932, when he was drawn by Slesinger (not by Shepard or, as many people think, by Disney) in his now-familiar red shirt, and featured on an RCA Victor picture record. Parker Brothers also introduced A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* Game in 1933, again with Pooh in his red shirt.

By 1935, the *New York Times* was reporting that Slesinger had seen in Pooh something that no one else had realised; that there was a place in industry for a genius with very little brain such as *Winnie-the-Pooh*. The likeness of Pooh could now be seen on spoons and forks, honey pots (spelt 'hunny') and not so surprisingly even on fever thermometers! Today there are dozens of spin-off publications, such as *Pooh's Workout Book*, *The Pooh Craft Book* and *The Pooh Baby Book*. There are puzzle books and pop-up books. Slesinger's marketing genius was to result over the years in the production of special jars of 'Strengthening Medicine', tea towels and crockery, money boxes, hot water bottles and woolly hats.

It was estimated that A.A. Milne was now making more money from manufacturers than from publishers.

For the next ten years Pooh and his now well-worn companions were safely resting in a glass case on a wall for an enforced (but fortunately, temporary) retirement. They became spectators, with an uncertain future.

There is no reliable evidence of their life or of their participation in the constantly escalating success of Milne's four children's books. No photographs exist of these years between. After chapter fourteen of eighteen in Ann Thwaite's biography, their activities are not mentioned. In her follow-up chronicle of Milne's work for children, *The Brilliant Career of Winnie-the-Pooh* (Methuen 1992), from 1931 they appear only by name in interviews given by A.A. Milne and Daphne to the American press.

Daphne gave a lengthy interview to *Parents* magazine in America in April 1931, in which she paints all too clearly the less than happy state of the ageing toys in England. By 1931 Pooh, she regretted, was thinner and more shabby. His nose had been patched and he had been taken to hospital for new paws.

She also told astonished readers that all little English boys of Christopher's age go away to school! She explained that he thinks everything that happened to him is jolly and that he was frightfully keen on cricket, not homesick at all. He was far too happy living in the moment to miss his parents, even with the Atlantic Ocean between them.

Set against the background of the looming Depression both in England and America, her generalisations are breathtaking. She described the life of an English child in his nursery which, she said, usually occupied the top floor of a house and which, with his Nanny, became the child's whole world, coming down only at teatime to meet his parents.

For Pooh and the toys she admitted things were now different. They were in their time-honoured places at home, waiting to be hugged in the holidays, when no one was looking.

'Fortunately these most friendly and agreeable of toys seem to understand.' She said. 'Perhaps they have talked it over among themselves and decided not to hold it against Christopher Robin for growing up. It is one of those awkward things like having to go to bed and eat porridge and brush his teeth that a boy can't help.'

Pooh shed a tear occasionally, she admitted, when he remembered that he and Christopher Robin were once the same size and that despite all the 'hunny' and tea parties, he has not added an inch to his stature, whereas Christopher Robin was

growing taller and taller. But perhaps, she suggests, that is because Pooh's young friend has had to eat all HIS jam sandwiches as well as his own. 'Pooh shakes his head', she says. 'He does not understand.'

Daff sounds in this lengthy interview as though she, at least, is still living in that make-believe world of her son's childhood that she created in her imagination and her husband put into words. Christopher himself was to acknowledge many years later, that his mother's part in giving life to Pooh had always been unfairly eclipsed and then forgotten.

In an unusually reflective moment, Daff added that children were not small adults, but that adults were grown-up children. All the precious gifts from childhood 'whimsy, fantasy, the dear nonsense of nurseryland, the stuff of dreams' carried into adult life were, she said, 'what gives the world its beauty and were essential to civilisation.'

Be that as it may, her vision was not quite the way things were in reality.

In July 1931, John Macrae asked his son Elliott to call on Pooh and the Milnes in Mallord Street. He asked Elliott to confirm Dutton's delight with his latest novel *Two People* for which he had been waiting on 'tip-toes'. The letter says that he is entranced with the book and looked forward to the visit of Daphne and Alan to America in October.

Like many commercial companies, E.P. Dutton was suffering from the economic situation in America and Macrae was confident that *Winnie-the-Pooh* and the new novel would help them ride the storm.

On 8 October 1931, John Macrae wrote to Milne expressing Elliott's joy at a day passed with them and Christopher en *famille*. They had not, he said, replied to his letter of a month earlier asking for details of their proposed visit together to the united States. He is as usual, effervescent, explaining that the name of Milne stood for a great deal in the American household and asking if there was anything at all that he could do to improve their visit. 'It will be a joy', he said.

Pooh stayed at home.

Alan and Daphne arrived in New York aboard *The Aquitania* on 27 October 1931, to the kind of overwhelming welcome he dreaded and she loved: dozens of press and radio interviews, receptions and parties. They were there for the publication of *Two People* but everyone wanted to meet the father and mother of Christopher Robin. Like their son, they seemed trapped by the umbilical cord which had given life to Pooh and, to Milne's chagrin, this very adult novel was once again billed as 'by the author of *Winnie-the-Pooh*' Even the paperback edition

of his detective story *The Red House* was promoted as 'by the author of *When We Were Very Young*'. There was to be no escape from Pooh.

With Nou out of the way, the boy and his father grew ever closer through the thirties, as his mother moved gradually into a new world of her own. She was becoming bored with her husband's acceptance of their mainly quietly countrified life and so, while Blue and Moon spent more and more time together, his parents spent less and less. Christopher admitted in the autobiography recalling the family's traumas generated by Pooh, that there were few interests that his parents shared and so 'wisely they did them separately and told each other afterwards of their adventures.'

Daff (now with auburn hair) embarked on many trips to America alone in this period, with her husband's agreement. There she seems to have thrown herself wholeheartedly into New York's social round. She had a discreet affair with playwright Elmer Rice, which everyone knew about.

Milne's own literary career was hardly shining. He wrote several plays which did not polish his reputation, and one book, *Peace with Honour*, which was widely praised as a brilliant attack on war in the face of Hitler's rise to power. Even so, he was spending more and more time like Pooh, doing nothing in the garden at

Usually in the spring, Daphne and Alan would take a short break in the Mediterranean. During one of these holidays, Reginald Berrow, the landscape gardener, who was working at Cotchford, took delivery of a specially commissioned sundial. The sculptor Carleton Ashwood, who never met the Milnes, came from Swindon in Wiltshire. He had already established a reputation for his work in cement fondue and his best known achievement was probably the Golden Lion situated in the town's Canal Walk. Reginald Berrow suggested to the family that a sundial would be a fitting memorial to the creatures who had played such a large part in their lives.

Very few people realise that the sundial still stands, almost secretly today, in the garden of Cotchford Farm. It features Pooh and his friends cavorting round the base which bears the now famous quotation: 'This warm and sunny spot belongs to Pooh.'

Pete Tasker remembers the unveiling at which his dad befittingly wore his Sunday suit. A set of the first editions of the Pooh books were buried beneath. But Daff did not like the sundial where her husband

had put it as it spoilt her own plan for that part of the garden. After he died in 1956 she had it moved further away.

When Daff finally left Cotchford and went to live in London, she sold the house to an American who, in 1968, sold it again to Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones – the first home he had ever owned. It gave him special delight to show the sundial to friends and he was proud to be the guardian of such a shrine. But as history knows there was a tragic postscript, for in 1969 Brian Jones was found drowned in his swimming pool.

Cotchford and protesting that he was a slacker at heart – acting as a chauffeur for his son, playing cricket with him and visiting school for prize givings and speech days (Daphne never went).

In the 1930s Daphne's husband now also found occasional comfort and a new stimulus away from home through a growing love for the quick-witted and sparkling actress Leonora Corbett.

Christopher Milne, the schoolboy, (still known as Moon at home), increasingly adored and admired his father. The feeling was mutual and for nine happy years, the long letters which used to be destined for brother Ken were now addressed by A.A. Milne (signed Blue) first to Boxgove and then to Stowe public school and eventually to Cambridge university.

There were four nostalgic holidays in Dorset for them during the summers between 1934 and 1937. Ken's widow, Maud and her family came too, when they all stayed together by the sea. Daff only came once. Sometimes a beautiful adolescent joined them. She was the little girl – Anne Darlington – who once held Moon's hand in the buttercups at Cotchford, still a devoted friend of both Moon and Blue. Pooh was not invited.

Maud, now in her fifties, always remained quietly mother-in-charge behind the scenes but Christopher has described how the rest of them slipped easily back into childhood and became twelve years-old again, followers of Angela Brazil.

They undressed under towels, without huts, and with maximum inconvenience on the beach, collected pebbles and arranged them in groups according to appearance, such as legs of mutton, played ducks and drakes and threw stones at Blue's hat.

Behind all this happy nostalgia loomed the growing threat from Europe of Adolf Hitler's proclamation of himself as The Führer and Reich Chancellor of

Germany and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

In 1939, Moon was at Cotchford preparing for Cambridge having won a Major scholarship from Stowe. He and Blue were sitting side by side on the sofa when they heard on the wireless Neville Chamberlain in his doleful voice make the famous declaration that Britain was now at war with Germany.

Everything was about to change for Blue and his son. It was to be for them, as for the rest of the world, the end of the past, but for Pooh at least, there would be exciting times ahead.

Chapter Thirteen

War and Peace

POOH'S WHEREABOUTS DURING the War are uncertain. It would seem most likely that he retreated eventually to Cotchford Farm with the Milnes. But there are family stories which point to another possibility.

In 1942 the house in Mallord Street was let to Hugh Davson, the internationally-respected physiologist, and his society portrait painter wife, Marjorie, who was one of Daff's 'tea-at-Harrods' best friends. Her husband was to undertake War work at Porton Down while she remained in London with their young daughter Caroline. Now Dr Caroline Roche, she recalls that when the family arrived the animals were in a glass case on her bedroom wall and that she was excited because she had read all the books. The Davsons 'left after about two years' and it seems likely that this was when Pooh and his companions were removed.

Christopher wrote years later, in a letter to W.A. Darlington, how the Milnes had collected some of the furniture from London and tried to squeeze it into Cotchford. He said that he took large articles to pieces and reassembled them upstairs himself. He felt sure that the toys were not included in the move. As the family carpenter, he explained that he would have been charged with securing their glass fronted cabinet to the wall in Sussex. But his memory was sometimes, like Pooh's spelling, 'wobbly'. For instance, he wrongly recalled that during the War that the animals were evacuated to America. In fact, their American adventure did not begin until 1947.

W.A. Darlington's granddaughters Katie and Julia have heard a family story that some time after the Davsons moved in the animals were taken from Mallord Street by cab to the Darlingtons' London house. They were probably looked after by Anne herself and were possibly driven down to her parents' home in Sussex. It would not have been perhaps the best idea since their house lay under the path of German bombers arriving from France (the front of the house was, in fact, badly

damaged). Both the Milnes in Hartfield and the Darlington were in the direct line of any German invasion from the English Channel. Bombs fell all round Cotchford Farm and the previously unlit lanes were illuminated by searchlights seeking out enemy aircraft on their way to London.

It appears that for a short time at the onset of war, Christopher remained at Cotchford and that Pooh was not there. The Government requisitioned the field where Jessica the donkey had lived.

He did recall the arrival of evacuees at Cotchford but Pete Tasker, the gardener's son, claims today that they never lived in the Milne home itself but only with the Taskers in their farmhouse at the top of the drive. They all played cricket together on a home-made pitch where, according to Pete, Christopher was rubbish. Down in the village the local football team had called itself 'The Tiggers'.

In 1941, Christopher decided not to return to Cambridge and first joined the Hartfield Defence Volunteers known as the Home Guard which met in the Hartfield Scout hut. He became aware of a truth that he had not previously appreciated – that the England into which he and Pooh had been born was divided sharply into two classes. One said, 'Good Morning, Smith'. The other replied, 'Good Morning, Sir'. In the Hartfield Home Guard, the author's son was no longer 'sir'. He was on equal terms with the cowman's son. It was for him a 'tremendous experience'.

Before long he joined the Royal Engineers as a Private in the real army. There he was 'Chris' and a different person altogether.

He was commissioned in 1942 and travelled to North Africa, the Middle East and Italy. In 1944 he was wounded by a stray shot to the head. He recovered and father and son were able to renew the constant and affectionate correspondence they both enjoyed all the time he was away. Blue lived for the postman's arrival with news from the Front and kept himself busy writing letters and articles for various journals.

At the end of the war Chris, returned home. He was demobilised in 1946 and returned home to Cotchford and then went back to Cambridge, graduating in 1947, only to find that there was no job anywhere for him. He was, he said, the 'wrong person in the wrong place at the wrong time.'

Nobody wanted a shy young man who could build a Bailey Bridge or defuse a Tellermine, was handy with a tenon saw, or knew how to take a rifle to pieces.

He would have liked to write but his father was still internationally famous and unintentionally paralysed his son's shaky confidence. He wrote bitterly that it

seemed if his father had climbed on his infant shoulders and had filched his good name, leaving him with nothing but the empty fame of being his son.

Perhaps it was not surprising that when Elliott Macrae – by then President of Dutton – made a visit to Cotchford Farm early in 1947, he met the toys and felt confident that there would be a new generation of Americans who would consider it a great privilege to share that experience. They would be thrilled to welcome what he described as a unique menagerie. At Cotchford, he was met by A.A. Milne and Daphne and was introduced to Pooh and his friends who had returned home from wherever they had been. It was, he said, a ‘particularly moving experience.’

Elliott Macrae asked, with some uncertainty, if he could borrow the animals and return with them to America so that they could help promote the books on a publicity tour. To his astonishment, the couple said ‘yes’ – on condition that they were not cleaned and returned to England in their present condition. A.A. Milne even prepared a birth certificate to act as a passport. He hoped that America would give them a warm welcome and apologised that the rather world-weary condition of Pooh and Eeyore was because ‘time’s hand has been hard upon them since 1921 – and that was a long time ago!’

Many people have wondered, over the years, what Christopher had felt about his father packing his beloved toys off to the United States. He has explained that he didn’t mind at all. As an adult, he said that he preferred to have things around him that he liked in the present, not those things which he had once liked many years before. In some ways the decision was opportune, for in his own book *The Enchanted Places* Christopher Milne explains that 1947 was the year in which the tide of his emotions became confused. They turned first to bitterness, and even hostility, towards his father but even more towards the beloved companion of his childhood, Winnie-the-Pooh.

Pooh’s emigration to New York was symbolic. The cement which had bound them all in the past was gone. It was time to make a break and for Christopher to stand on his own feet.

Chapter Fourteen

America and the Elliott Graham Years

The Immigrants

POOH AND THE ANIMALS escaped from England in April 1947, aboard the magnificent 92,000 ton *Queen Elizabeth*, the world's largest liner. It had returned from active war service as a troopship only six months before during the worst winter and heaviest snow for 150 years, followed in the spring by the worst floods for 250 years.

Clement Attlee was Prime Minister and the Royal family – King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret – were touring South Africa to boost morale after the exhaustion and devastation of the War. Princess Elizabeth celebrated her 21st birthday that month and made the famous speech dedicating her life to the people of the Commonwealth. On their return to England in June notice of her engagement to Prince Philip was posted without ceremony on the gates of Buckingham Palace.

In America on 4 April – the day of Pooh's arrival in New York – he was greeted by weather which recalled those now long ago days on Ashdown Forest when it 'rained and it rained and it rained'. Pooh had bravely rescued Piglet from his tree home, which was 'entirely surrounded by water' in an upturned umbrella named 'The Brain of Pooh'. On 4 April too, the American newspapers headlined terrible flooding and gales and on 9 April a hurricane and tornadoes were reported.

The country was then at the start of an economic boom but there were also alarming warnings in the press from President Truman of a possible third World War, this time between the Allies and Russia.

However, for the staff of the Dutton publishing company the big news was the arrival of Christopher Robin's teddy bear and his friends.

Dutton is one of the oldest continually-operating book publishers in the united States. According to the company advertising in 1852 they initially specialised in 'fresh and entertaining' books for children. Their motto then, 'Every Book a Promise', still reflects the imprint's mission to transport readers.

Edward Payson Dutton founded the firm in Boston but it wasn't until 1864 when a branch office was set up in New York, that the company began expanding. The original focus was on religious titles and the first bestseller was the two-volume, *Life of Christ* by Frederic Farrar, which appeared in 1874.

In 1885 John Macrae began working at Dutton as an office boy. He spent fifty-two years with the company, finally becoming President in 1923. Then in 1928, with his two sons, he bought the publishing house.

It is every publisher's dream to acquire properties that will last forever and by 1947 the four A.A. Milne books of stories and verse had made that dream come true.

The arrival of Winnie-the-Pooh himself and his friends from the Forest was an event of huge significance in the publishing world.

They were to be cared for by the larger-than-life Elliott Graham, who was later to be described by his colleagues as the 'Dean' of PR men in America. In 1947 when Pooh arrived in New York, he was already a force to be reckoned with.

Elliott was an outspoken, explosive, but greatly-admired character. He had a great understanding of children and was loved by them; they thought he was funny. Just the kind of grown-up little boy that Pooh could have understood. A boisterous Tigger of a man.

He loved England, too, and throughout his life spent time every year in London, staying at the Great Western Royal Hotel in Paddington, where he always booked Room 143. During the War he had been on duty clearing rubble from bomb sites, making many famous friends in the world of books and theatre. He has been described by Mimi Kayden, who became Children's Book Marketing Director at Dutton, as 'wonderful – a legend who took a great interest in young people and always had a smile for everyone who worked with him. He was a real people person.' No wonder he felt a bond with Winnie-the-Pooh.

Elliott Graham loved the stories of Pooh and as an adult was an admirer of Dutton's client A.A. Milne, and it was he who was, for the next 40 years, to take on the role of Pooh's guardian. It was Elliott who cared for the teddy bear and his friends, accompanying them on tour, appearing with them on television and radio, introducing them to devotees young and old, from all over the world.

This was to be Pooh's very grown-up new life, amid the tower blocks of New York so far from the trees and the open skies of Ashdown Forest and with the maverick Elliott Graham as his closest companion. Elliott kept an outspoken, page-a-day diary from before World War II until he died in 1988.

He made detailed notes wherever he went and then transcribed them on his return – as he admits, not always accurately.

What gets into me, reporting on a Friday something I should have written down yesterday? Well, I'm sure it's something historians will never have to worry their pretty heads about!

These neatly-bound leather books are today cared for by Elliott's niece, Judy Henry, who lives in Hastings on Hudson, New York. His microscopically small writing is very hard to read and from 1947 records events in his life with the celebrated Winnie-the-Pooh, the animals and also includes succinct daily descriptions of the weather.

The adjectives he used to describe his colleagues and clients and even friends were often colourful and many were unprintable. 'Stupid half-wit', 'nutty' or 'could have been a witch', he wrote.

His words have to be read not as a precise record of historic events but rather as an insight into the individual relationship with a very famous small British teddy bear. It was a relationship which came to be shared by so many people who had never met Winnie-the-Pooh.

The year 1947 did not, at first, bode well. Elliott wrote:

Wednesday January 1st

Snow

Have just been reading last year's diary and it was the most discouraging thing I could do on the occasion of my beginning a new one. It was so dull! Not an intriguing page in it.....

All that was about to change.

Friday April 4th 1947

Fair

We all had to troop downstairs after the meeting to see the Milne toys in Elliott's office, the originals that he brought with him from London. I kept my awful secret to myself – the secret that he had never read Winnie-the-Pooh and the House at Pooh Corner – only I think everyone must have guessed it when he asked what kind of an animal Eeyore is supposed to represent. 'A donkey!' everyone screamed. Elliott asked me if I had worked on my presentations and, thinking fast I said I wouldn't dream of

starting it until I had seen the animals. I fell in love with Piglet, the cutest little thing in the world.

The headline on a press release announced that the ‘world-famous delegation’ had arrived from England, hiding from fellow passengers in a large trunk.

In charge, it said, was Edward T. Bear, known affectionately as Winnie-the-Pooh. They were insured for \$50,000. The visit had, said the release, been organised by Elliott Macrae, President of Dutton’s, when he saw the animals during his recent visit to their home in England.

Pooh, it claimed, was the natural leader. Tigger with his bright green eyes was the most alert and handsome. Kanga, bereaved of Roo after he had been lost in the garden in Sussex, had a hopeful expression, while Piglet, with all of his three-and-a-half inches, had an expression of excited anticipation.

For much of their long life in America the animals were to live in Elliott Graham’s office, although their official residence was a large case, rather like an aquarium, situated in the magnificent reception hall of E.P. Dutton. It was a very grand, old-fashioned setting, carpeted with oriental rugs, the walls hung with old masters and furnished with comfortable sofas for waiting visitors. Among Dutton’s clients who visited Pooh, were James Mason, Betty Grable, Gore Vidal, Laurence Durrell and Françoise Sagan. School children, too, arrived by the bus load to press their noses, in awe, against the glass, vigilantly supervised by receptionist, Bridie Murphy.

Judy Henry’s sister-in-law Carol Scheele made the special tote bag in which Elliott used to transport Pooh and friends on tour. She remembers it well.

“The bag was made of 100% heavy woven cotton with cotton webbing for handles. The fabric was not printed but made with yarns that varied in thickness and shades of light beige. From a distance, the fabric appeared to be a uniform color.

The size of the bag was probably 16 or 18 inches wide, 12 or 14 inches high and 5 or 6 inches deep. The handles were probably 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide and 8 to 10 inches long. They were sewn to the bottom and sides of the bag like many totes today. There was no closure so that Pooh’s head peered over the top. The fabric was sturdy and washable – very easy to clean with no ironing required. I recall that on airplane flights the animals had their own seat next to Elliott. I assume that the seat-belt may have gone around the tote bag.’

In June 1947, Elliott Macrae wrote to J.L.Hudson and Co in Detroit, offering them one of the first viewings of the animals, for one week only. This was an excellent start, as the store was one in which Pooh would have been most at home. Founded in 1881, with thirty-two floors, it was America's second largest department store after Macy's and with the suitably dignified atmosphere reminiscent of Harrods in London.

The Macy's staff magazine recorded his stay in their Toy Department with the kind of hyperbole to which Pooh was to become accustomed.

Macy's Staff Magazine of October 1947

A world famous delegation of distinguished visitors from England slipped quietly into New York on the Queen Elizabeth a few weeks ago. Locked in a trunk, they were hidden from their fellow passengers throughout the voyage, and their arrival was unnoticed. The arrivals were Mr. Edward T. Bear, better, and more affectionately known as Winnie-the-Pooh, and his inseparable companions, Kanga, Piglet, Eeyore and Tigger. September 24th to September 29th these original playthings of Christopher Robin were exhibited in Macy's Toy Department, where they lounged in their locked case along with first editions of their stories, and were ooh-ed and ahh-ed at by many of New York's youngest.

Winnie-the-Pooh, which E. P. Dutton & Co. published in 1926, has run through 199 printings, and there are few children in America who have not made its acquaintance. This same Christopher Robin whose toys have been so immortalized, is now finishing his studies at Cambridge, England, but his father's (A. A. Milne) famous children's books have been treasured in American homes since they were written and hundreds of thousands of reproductions of these original animals have gone to bed in the cribs of a whole generation of Americans.

Winnie-the-Pooh is not merely a teddy bear; he is the most famous and remarkable bear in English literature. And because Kanga, Piglet, Eeyore and Tigger are toys that Christopher Robin played with, and because they helped inspire two children's classics, no other animals in the world can be quite like them.

In honor of the arrival of these honored visitors, E. P. Dutton and Company announced the publication of four new Milne children's

books illustrated in color by E. H. Shepard.

More appearances were planned to take place in seven of America's major cities, aimed at the promotion of the new 50 cent edition of A.A. Milne's four children's books.

Another of the animals' early outings was to be to Boston. It was an equally suitable showcase for Pooh as Jordan Marsh, founded in 1853 and one of Boston's oldest, most prestigious stores had recently been expanded and was now also its largest.

Elliott Graham wrote in his diary:

Thursday September 4th 1947

And so to Boston. Rode to Jordan Marsh and Co where I spent 2 hours with Mr Boyd and the high official team, and we finally reached Mr Edwards, the first vice-president, a tycoon type of person who went insane with pleasure at seeing the Milne animals and gave orders for a Washington street display and for a 600 line ad – really it was the kind of reception you dream about! I ended up saying a few words with Brown in the book department. A hard day but a very pleasant one, I must say.

Friday September 19th 1947

Hot

De Pamphilis sent me my Milne brochure and I must say they are wonderful. I took them up to Macy, along with 25 glossy photographs of the animals, the suitcase full of the originals and a reproduction made by Mrs Keller and got them up to Miss Wallace's desk. She is the kind of executive who works with her hat on all day. Everyone was very pleased to see them I must say...

Back home in England, in July 1948 Christopher Milne defiantly married his first cousin Lesley de Selincourt, daughter of his mother's estranged brother Aubrey. Daff and he had not spoken to each other for years. Eyebrows in both families were raised in concern at the close relationship but the couple were genuinely in love and their wedding, a fashionable London society gathering, was at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton.

It was to prove a long and very happy partnership. They decided that as there seemed to be no future for Christopher in London they would escape to Dartmouth in Devon, to open the Harbour Bookshop which was to bring them such joint pleasure for over thirty years. 'A very odd decision', commented his mother who thought he had escaped to the very heart of the world from which he

was running away. Christopher himself explained in his autobiography *The Path Through the Trees*, 'We liked doing things together. Particularly we liked doing nothing much together.'

At this time in America the Winnie-the-Pooh show was well on the road and Elliott Graham had been promoted to Advertising and Publicity Director: 'The best job I have ever had – and didn't get the salary that goes with it,' he grumbled.

The already tired animals were suffering and in January 1952 Elliott Graham wrote to Ralph Hancock of the Prince de Leon Hotel that Kanga and Eeyore were in hospital but that he would allow the other three to travel down to Miami.

The following month, he was apologising to the New Rochelle Library, New York, that the toys had returned from the south in a very sad condition. They might need to be restored before continuing their tour.

They were back on duty in the autumn in District Columbia where the local paper made great news of their still sadly-battered and beaten appearance.

In February the following year, *Life* magazine reported on the progress of the 'stuffed bear' describing him as 'the naïve and hungry hero with the shiny nose.' He was looking all of his thirty years they reported, with his rather moth-eaten appearance, his bearish appetite and the stomach that stoutness exercises could not reduce. Even so, it seems that so many people had asked to see him that his stay was likely to be prolonged.

That April of 1953, the animals made their first television appearance, on the Fred Waring TV show, in Iowa.

During the fifties it is noticeable that Elliott's diaries are dominated by the names of two curiously different clients – the young French author, Françoise Sagan, whose controversial novel *Bonjour Tristesse* was finally published by Dutton in 1955, and middle-aged Winnie-the-Pooh, who had not written a book but had become a literary star in his own right.

Elliott's relationship with Sagan, in New York and Paris, was colourful! He said she was the best dancer in the world: 'A spoilt bitch ... and nuts ... Lord, what would it be like to work with a normal author for a change!'

Sadly, far away in Hartfield all was not well. Back in October 1952 Daphne Milne had written to Ken's widow, Maud, that her 'darling Alan' had suffered a stroke and was in hospital. In December he had a brain operation at the Middlesex Hospital, London, which left him wheelchair-bound, partially paralysed and with a personality change that friends and family found hard to bear. He became rude, irritable and even vulgar when he returned to Cotchford Farm.

It was a terrible time for Daphne, who was not psychologically best equipped to deal with her husband's condition. She banned all visitors on the grounds that 'we are not a normal household.'

One or two people, such as Pete Tasker, did manage to pass the barrier and found a sadly bitter man sitting in his tiny, dark study trying to write.

The patient was attended regularly by Dr Hardy from nearby Forest Row and physiotherapist Joan Fuller, both of whom also found him extremely difficult. Many years later Dr Hardy's renovated surgery, now known as Ashdown Forest Health Centre, used Ernest Shepard's drawings to illustrate their connection with the author in their brochure for patients.

A.A. Milne lingered miserably on and eventually died at Cotchford Farm on 31 January 1956.

In his Will he left his remaining rights to a Trust, to be operated for the benefit of his widow, Daphne and then for his son. Other beneficiaries were The Royal Literary Fund for Authors, Westminster School and The Garrick Club.

The Trust became known as the 'Milne Trust' or to outsiders, informally as 'The Pooh Trust'.

In New York Elliott wrote in his diary:

Wednesday February 1st 1956

Fair

Mr Milne's obituaries were in the papers this morning and the Herald Tribune's story was so beautifully worded, so completely right, that it makes me cry when I read it ... pure poetry ... I guess the entire world felt sorrier about the death of Mr Milne than Duttons did ... but all our executives never read the books, don't realise he was Duttons most important author ... Life is rushing a story on Milne and I think they'll want to photograph the Milne animals ... how fortunate it is that Elliott (Macrae) is in London ... And how ... Milne has been bedded, hospitalised etc since October 1952 and Daphne wrote in December that she had almost reached the end of her rope ... she had a new nurse for him every week, he had such a vile temper. She was never much of a bargain – a real screwball ... but how ironic to spend all your life writing and then to have your fame rest on four effortless little children's books!

Magazines and newspapers from all over America rang Elliott for pictures of Pooh. Even in death, A.A. Milne was haunted by the shadow of Winnie-the-Pooh. It was Pooh they all wanted. *Life* ran an article of six-and-a-half pages entitled *The World of Pooh*, illustrated with Shepard drawings and excerpts from a Milne family

album. In Boston a 'great Milne do' was organised at high speed in the Public Library, due to the national interest in the author.

Only two weeks after her husband's death Daphne was ruthlessly clearing the decks. Alone at Cotchford, she immediately began to empty the house of all his remaining possessions. Pipes, books, golf clubs, albums, letters, photographs were disposed of. She buried a sculptured head of the young Billy Moon in the damp patch that had once belonged to Eeyore. She said she did not want to see it again.

George Tasker remained as Daphne's right-hand man after Milne's death. Daphne stayed on at Cotchford, living mostly upstairs and becoming rather reclusive. Her housekeeper Mrs Wilson was there too until she developed arthritis and Daphne sent her off to an osteopath. She married him and never came back.

Christopher later reflected sympathetically on his mother's behaviour that perhaps, if you have memories, you don't need mementos and that she was probably right to start afresh.

Meanwhile, the sales of the four 'Pooh' books shot up. Elliott Graham recorded 6,400 copies sold in February and 9,100 in March. In April, Dutton astutely raised the price to \$2.50 a book!

Elliott noted:

Tuesday February 14th 1956

Fair

A letter came from Elliott [Macrae] saying that Mrs Milne wants to sell the Milne animals and he's prepared to offer her \$2,500 for them. She'll laugh in his face and she'll want 10,000. He doesn't want them to get into the wrong hands. Hah! Hah! If I were Mrs Milne I'd consult a Texas bookseller to see if some dotting oil millionaire wouldn't care to lay it on the line for his spoiled grandchildren. I'll bet the subject never would have come up if he hadn't opened his big bazoo. Ah well – once a dope always a dope.

Friday February 24th 1956

Snow

Elliott sails for home tomorrow, and today we were favoured with a letter ... describing the Milne memorial service in rich beautiful prose. It sounded awful, for they played Fraser Simpson's [sic] stupid songs. And our little fools were indignant because the Royal Family didn't send a representative ...

Christopher Milne went to the service in an elderly overcoat, much to the indignation of his mother. He only met her once again during the rest of her life. He and his childhood companion Anne Darlington left the church together but

his wife Lesley was not there for the very good reason, as he explained, she was pregnant and far away in Devon.

Later that year their much loved daughter, Clare, was born with cerebral palsy.

Chapter Fifteen

Winnie the Star

IN 1956 THE ANIMALS themselves were, not surprisingly, showing signs of even greater wear and tear, and a representative from the New York Natural History Museum, no less, was called in by Elliott Graham, to discuss what action to take:

Wednesday June 20th 1956

Fair

This fool taxidermist, or whatever he is, will charge \$150.00 to repair Eeyore. God knows what he'll want for the others. It's all a great shame. We paid \$2,500 for these animals.

In 1961 Stephen Slesinger's widow Shirley sold the merchandising rights which A.A. Milne had passed to her husband in 1930. The new owner was Walt Disney.

That same year in June, Daphne Milne perhaps naively, added complication to complication by licensing the motion picture rights also to Disney. Her decision was to give New York's now rather bedraggled bear earning-potential beyond imagination. It was also to sow the seeds for what was to become America's longest-running and most bitter legal battle, the one between the Milne Trustees, the Slesingers and Disney.

At the time Daphne was confident that she was only doing something with which her husband would have been happy. Always a fan of Disney's work, he had commented that he would be honoured should he ever want to animate the Pooh stories.

Their admiration was mutual, for Disney's daughter, Diane Disney Miller, has since explained that when she was a little girl her father often read her the stories at bed-time. It was Christopher Robin's toy – the teddy bear – that had originally caught his imagination and inspired the films that were to follow. The first film, *Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree* (without the hyphens) was Disney's translation of the stories of *Winnie-the-Pooh and Some Bees* (with hyphens) and *Pooh Goes Visiting*. Both were taken from the book *Winnie-the-Pooh*. The film was released on

4 February 1966. Daphne watched it on television and said she was relieved ‘nothing jarred’. The British press, however, were less benign. The *Daily Mail* headlined ‘Massacre in 100 Aker Wood’.

On the other hand, A.A. Milne’s niece, Angela, wrote in *Punch*, ‘It makes me furious the way people are grumbling over Walt Disney’s version of Winnie-the-Pooh as though they had gone and ruined a masterpiece.’ She went on to tell how even the gopher’s appearance in the film, which upset so many purists, WAS real after all! It appears that the *Mid Sussex Herald* had reported in 1925 that a gopher had actually escaped from a crate in Brighton and how Moon was sure at the time that he had found one in the garden at Cotchford Farm.

Walt Disney brought together the many talents of the studio to develop and create a new, if undeniably controversial, masterpiece. His inspiration and supervision made the film a classic: from concept-art, to the storyboard, to the animation, music and voices.

The original plan was to develop Pooh as a feature-length animated film but Disney decided to break the film into short featurettes. The Pooh stories were still not as widely familiar to Americans as they were to the British and Walt Disney believed that Pooh would be much more popular if he was allowed to build up an American following. He under-estimated their impact.

In December that year, Walt Disney died from cancer but the empire he had masterminded went on from strength to strength – with just a little help from Pooh!

The fight for the rights in this furry property ever since has been a nightmare of Hollywood screen proportions.

Journalist David Rowan, bringing the story of the ongoing saga up to date in *The Times Magazine* of November 2003, likened the fight between an old school family (the Slesingers and the Milnes) and the unstoppable Disney, to a fight between Eeyore and Tigger.

In Los Angeles, Case No BCO22365 became the longest-running, most complex lawsuit in the history of Tinseltown’s legal minefield. For over seventeen years some of the most high-profile, expensive show-business lawyers in California locked horns eagerly for a curious prize – a tussle that involved allegations of industrial espionage on one hand and the destruction of key documents on the other.

That prize? Their share in the royalties generated by the small, now elderly British teddy bear.

The Disney Corporation had turned Winnie the Pooh into the annual five billion pounds-plus juggernaut he is today, but the descendants and Trustees of A.A. Milne and Stephen Slesinger did battle first with them and eventually with each other over who owed what to whom.

It is a fact, however, that the great Disney take-over created a cartoon character which, though sacrilege to many of Pooh's original devotees, in his turn had managed to touch the hearts of a new international generation of children. Pooh is, today, the Disney Corporation's hottest property.

Not at all bothered at the eye of the storm, was the original teddy bear who inspired it all and who, through the imagination of A.A. Milne, had become, in the minds of his followers, a cult leader. The world already honoured his name but despite this, few of his followers realised that he was not fiction, neither was he American, as Disney implied. Winnie-the-Pooh was a very real English fact.

This was the wise and innocent bear who had stomped across Ashdown Forest with the little boy Billy Moon. Over the following years Pooh's fame brought additional excitements for Elliott Graham. He was thrilled by his first-ever ride in a black Rolls Royce limousine that arrived to collect him with his protégé and he enjoyed many television appearances with Pooh and sometimes the other animals at his side.

In 1960 *Winnie-the-Pooh* was first translated into Latin by Alexander Lenard with the enthusiastic support of Elliott. It was illustrated by Ernest Shepard. *Winnie Ille Pu* remains the only book in Latin ever to grace *The New York Times List*. It was followed by a companion volume *Winnie Ille Pu Semper Ludet*. The critics raved once again that Latin is not a dead language and Pooh, as everyone knows, will also live forever.

It was in 1962 that Elliott was responsible for the publication of *The Fourth of June*, a book by British author and playwright David Benedictus and the two became friends. They met whenever Elliott came to London, went to the races and the theatre. 'He was a short stocky man, usually in a raincoat and a homburg hat – always on time', says David Benedictus.

In those days, David didn't share Elliott's interest in Pooh, so it is somewhat ironic that more than forty years later, in 2009, he was to square the circle and write the Pooh Trust-approved book of stories *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood* which in its turn became a best seller. The drawings by Mark Burgess had a strangely Shepard-like look about them and the book was another success for

Pooh, as it told the story of Christopher Robin's return to the Forest on a bicycle and wearing not girlish smocks but proper boyish shorts.

Chapter Sixteen

Home Again

FOR POOH THERE WERE to be three memorable return visits to England. The first was in 1969. He was guest of honour at the Victoria and Albert Museum's celebration for the 90th birthday of Ernest Shepard. Pooh was given red-carpet treatment by British Airways for his flight from New York.

It was at this celebration that British film and stage actor Peter Dennis was first introduced to Winniethe-Pooh, the bear that was to transform his life too. He was so enthralled that he went away to write a one-man stage show, which he called '*Bother!*', based on selections from the four books by A.A. Milne.

Pooh and his friends, he believed, represented the whole of humanity. Peter captured unforgettably the bear's ponderous thought processes; the jumpily anxious Piglet (peppered with grunts and snorts); the lugubrious melancholy of Eeyore; the clipped, efficient tones of Rabbit and the pompous grandiloquence of Owl.

For the rest of his life the actor gave 'Pooh readings' in venues that ranged from the Palace of Westminster in London to the Hollywood Bowl. He became the Voice of Pooh.

After one of these events at the Lee Strasberg Institute, Los Angeles, Charlton Heston, who had been in the audience, went backstage and greeted Peter with a very bouncy 'Hi! I'm Tigger and this is my wife Piglet.'

'There was Moses reflected in my mirror,' Peter Dennis told *The Times*. 'He wrapped his arms around me and said it was one of the most wonderful evenings he had ever spent in the theatre.'

The second nostalgic journey for Pooh was in 1976. This was the 50th birthday celebration of the publication of *Winniethe-Pooh* but it was also, sadly, the year that E.H. Shepard died.

Elliott's diary records:

1976 Thursday May 27th

Fair

British Airways building at Kennedy Airport. I received a regal welcome from a Miss Levy as soon as I had checked in; I was told I was expected and that I must go to the Monarch Room, the VIP lounge on the second floor The other VIPs were a seedy lot – harassed businessmen and overage pop singers (my guess) and they were galvanized with attention when 2 men were admitted . . . to photograph Mr Elliott Graham. He took out of his briefcase a copy of Now We Are Six asked me to sign it for his daughter and with Pooh under my arm I went down to the Security Chief's to find a pretty hostess for the picture taking.

1976 Friday May 28th

Overcast

So here we are in Paddington again, after 11 months.

On Saturday May 29th he went to see *Betjemania* written by David Benedictus at Richmond Theatre.

1976 Wednesday June 2nd

Cold

. . . Jet lag, room 143, hotel has lost a bit of ground since I was last here, reception area carpet shabbier, the great array of bathroom towels dwindled to face towel and a bath towel. Not even a wash cloth.

On 5th June (Fair) Elliott Graham had lunch at El Vinos in Fleet Street, with Jan Hopcraft of Methuen, Pooh's English publisher, to prepare for his return visit to the Forest:

I am sick when I think of all the things I have to prepare for Pooh's birthday.

Referring to the Hartfield playgroup organiser he added:

Jan thinks the Pooh picnic Mrs Hartfield has set up is a great thing and is trying for BBC coverage. Jan and her husband will drive me down to Hartfield. I wish it were here tomorrow.

So it was, on the morning of 15th June, that the children stood waiting eagerly outside the former Hartfield railway station, once used by Pooh and the Milnes for steam train journeys to London. The building had lain derelict for years after the line was closed and parents had raised funds to buy and convert it into a home for the village playgroup.

There were many grown-ups in the village who were very worried that Pooh's real life appearance might expose the truth they had hidden for years which would end the rural peace and quiet they still treasured.

Two minutes after midday the film crew arrived and a large black saloon turned into the station yard from which emerged Elliott Graham, carrying his

usual home-made travelling bag, with Pooh's head peeping over the top. Hands were shaken and smiles exchanged and then, once inside, Elliott sat down on one of the little red playgroup chairs and lifted the visitor out to greet the children. Pooh was looking surprisingly well as, awestruck, they came one by one to gently shake his paw.

This was the first time that Pooh had returned to Hartfield since his departure for America in 1947.

The film crew buzzed around while the children played with Pooh until he was ready to drive up to the Enchanted Place for more photographs and a game of 'Poohsticks' on Posingford Bridge. They all trooped down to the wooden bridge over the river where the game had been invented so many years before. A small blond boy named Peter Taylor who looked just like Christopher Robin and was already known as 'Pooh' to his family, took his namesake by the paw and helped him to throw sticks into the water once again.

Peter lived just up the track in Cotchford Lane and so his mother Mary invited Pooh back for a quick 'smackerel' of something in their garden where Pooh, seated comfortably in a high chair, was the centre of attention.

Back at the station, it was finally time to move on and Pooh was driven away. Sadly he forgot to take the very large welcome card the children had made for him and which is today looked after as a much-prized memento of that special visit.

The following Saturday 'it rained and it rained and it rained.' The appalling weather revived memories once more of that fateful day when little Piglet had been stranded in his tree house, entirely surrounded by water.

Pooh returned from London and with a bus-load of press made a nostalgic drive to Cotchford Farm where the owner, Alistair Johns and his wife Harriet had laid on lunch. Playgroup supervisor Sonja LeVay and actor Peter Bull watched them go off for another very muddy photo shoot on Poohsticks Bridge.

There were five hundred people and their bears present that second day for the picnic at Forstal Farm in the next village of Withyham. The crowds paddled stoically around the deeply muddy field with plastic sheets and umbrellas protecting their bears. A table had been laid for the celebrities: the real-life Pooh sat at the head, with toy bears playing Paddington, Rupert and Mary Plain at his side. There, too, was the elderly author, Gwynedd Rae who had created the loveable Mary Plain from the Berne bear pits in Switzerland, and all the way from Edinburgh came Colonel Bob Henderson, the Teddy Bear historian and arctophile who represented the children's charity Good Bears of the World.

This was Pooh in his element, surrounded by Friends and Relations, happily content and with only the incessant downpour to dampen spirits. Not to be deterred, when, eventually, the rain eased, Pooh and his bodyguard set off once again for the Enchanted Place for yet more photographs. Jan Hopcraft planted a tree and arctophile author and broadcaster Brian Sibley, protecting Pooh's paws in some plastic bags, read stories from *Winniethe-Pooh*.

The last trip, seven years later, on 28 August 1983 was extra special for Pooh who travelled supersonically by Concorde with American author Nancy Winters as his escort. His ursine companion on the flight was Nancy's own teddy bear, Moreton Hampstead. She had bought him for 5p in a British charity shop and travelled with him to some of the smartest places in the world.

With Moreton as founder-member, Nancy had recently launched the 'Take a Teddy to Tea Club' in New York's very smart, literary Algonquin Hotel. Meetings were to be held annually to honour A.A. Milne's birthday, on 18 January. Winniethe-Pooh had replied to that first invitation that he would be delighted to come.

Earlier, in the baking heat of 27th July, Elliott took Pooh down to the Algonquin (his favourite hotel) where Nancy was staying. The Manager admired Pooh's travelling bag. '*Really!*' wrote Elliott, sarcastically, in his diary. '*He sees bags all the time.*'

On Concorde with Moreton Hampstead sitting at his side, Pooh, unusually travelling without Elliott, was treated as a VIP and was taken on to the flight deck and presented with a certificate signed by the Crew. The Captain, who obviously knew to Whom he was talking, had written 'Concordes are faster than Heffalumps'.

On arrival in London, Nancy and the bears took up residence at the Savoy Hotel in the River Suite, where they were welcomed by Mr Bashford, the hotel commissionaire. He bowed politely and invited Pooh to 'Come along Edward'.

Also staying at the hotel on that occasion were Peter and Diane Dennis. Peter was by this time well known in England for his broadcasts and public readings from A.A. Milne's books.

The couple were living in London and had been invited to the teddy bears' tea party Nancy was planning for the following day in the Savoy's elegant ballroom.

An arctophile is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as a 'lover and collector of teddy bears'. The word is exactly the same in most European languages.

Arctophile actor Peter Bull was naturally there too, with about thirty other guests and their bears. While they were all enjoying themselves, the cream-coloured telephone rang.

It was Christopher Milne! He said that he was very sorry that he had not been able to accept the invitation, so Nancy asked him, 'Would you like to speak to Pooh?' To which he replied – 'Oh, I'm too old – he won't remember me!'

'Pooh loved London', says Nancy. 'Especially travelling in black cabs, although he was much impressed by the occasional limousine.' During that two-week holiday, he stayed in a number of very smart establishments such as Brown's. He also took tea in Claridge's elegant restaurant in Brook Street and at The Ritz and Simpsons. When it was not appropriate for a bear to join the party, he would remain reclining on the *chaise longue* in Nancy's suite at the Savoy, overlooking the Thames.

As a treat he was taken out sight-seeing when he was always the centre of attention. 'Wherever we went children recognised him and were thrilled to be introduced', Nancy recalls today.

Pooh returned to a New York sweltering in temperatures of 94 degrees. He was taken by Nancy to Tiffany's for a little 'smackerel' and then, with Moreton alongside, on to Dutton's. Elliott was somewhat stunned by her dramatic all-black attire and large black glasses and by her gift – a jar of orange marmalade from Paddington bear!

Nancy admits that she had thought of kidnapping Pooh: 'I really felt that he belonged there in England', she says and being an honourable person, she had rung Dutton in New York to suggest the plan but Elliott said 'No. It's too late now.'

It probably was too late. That year in America, Dutton saw the beginning of a period of turmoil within the company largely because they were losing money and were ripe for a take-over. It was a time which has been described since, by many of those who were there, as a bloodbath.

Chapter Seventeen

Turmoil

BY 1981 ELLIOTT'S DIARY had begun to reveal profound and sad changes in the ageing man. He was not well and was becoming increasingly aggressive about many of his colleagues at Dutton. The frequent colourful expletives in his diary are unrepeatable. There were also signs of discontent and job losses, too.

Dutton was no longer a happy ship. In fact one of the Directors described the company as 'the Titanic' but there was one topic of conversation that united them all. What would happen to Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends?

Elliott wrote:

1981 Tuesday March 17th

Cold

... our Mail Room is decimated in fact it has all but vanished. I unbolted the glass that protects Winnie-the-Pooh and friends from the public and had a photographic session with Edward T. Bear in my office.

However, at the end of May Elliott abandoned Pooh to take his annual visit to London but he seems to have carried his anxieties with him. For the first time his stay was ruined by bitterness, anxiety and increasing ill-health.

He met some of his usual friends and visited writer David Benedictus and his family, who he describes as 'the Benedicti'. David gave him a copy of the Athenaeum edition of the *Antique Collector's Guide* inscribed 'For Elliott with love, happy memories and more to come. David. Derby Day 1981.'

In June he wrote despairingly:

1981 Sunday June 21st

Cold

For a week I've been anxious to get the hell out of here, and right now I'm counting the minutes!

The next day he added: *I'm not anxious to go back, ever.*

1981 Wednesday June 24th

Fair

Back to the office. Jane tells me that a couple of banks are now involved in selling us to a mysterious individual who owns a big corporation and she thinks it is going to be another month before we'll know.

On Wednesday 14 October 1981 the directors of Dutton assembled to be introduced for the first time to 'our new high lords'. They were Charles Dyson, who owned the Dyson Moran Corporation, one of America's richest men, and his son John, financier, today Chairman of Millbrook Capital Management and owner of Millbrook Vineyards, with an understandable passion for good wine. He was later to become Deputy Mayor to Rudolph Giuliani and had been a cabinet officer in New York State, holding the positions of Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Commerce and Chairman of the New York Power Authority. He was also said to have developed the 'I Love NY' advertising campaign for the State.

By 1981, he was looking for a publishing company to add to his portfolio and was about to acquire Dutton with their entire book list, their spectacular gallery of world famous authors and the somewhat incongruous quintet of stuffed animals from England with their leader, the priceless Winnie-the-Pooh.

Pooh presented no problem to John Dyson who had loved the Milne stories himself as a child and whose young daughters were growing up with him as their bed-time reading.

It is heartwarming that amidst the upheaval of high finance and executive discussion there was constant concern at Dutton about the welfare of the Milne animals. No-one knew the answer to the big question – 'WHO owns Pooh?'

Elliott wrote in his diary that Dutton had bought the animals from Mrs Milne. But there were others who were equally sure that this was not so and that the Publishers were merely their Trustees and legal guardians and that they should probably have gone home years before.

Despite the uproar surrounding them, Pooh himself had been happily earning his keep and was certainly in no danger of redundancy, while Elliott continued to chronicle their movements in his diary:

1981 Thursday August 6th

Hot

Chicago Public Library asked Mimi Kayden if they could have Winnie in October and I was delighted to say "Yes". It will be his first expedition to the hinterland since last year's trip to Atlanta. Incidentally, Christopher Robin is to unveil a statue to Pooh at the London Zoo in October, so I've written to Methuen for more information.

1981 Sunday September 20th

Fair

The day of the Fifth Avenue Book Fair. I dressed in some of my Fall finery. I marched up Vanderbilt and Madison Avenue and soon I was at our booth at Fifth and 53rd (NE Corner) – Pooh House, I guess – anyway it was Too Much but who cares. I heard a man exclaim over it approvingly and that is what counts. The Pooh animals were lost in it. All we needed was a sign ‘The Original Winnie-the-Pooh’ . . . Really the “Fair” is dreadful but I enjoyed the event!

1981 Thursday October 1st

Cold

I must be losing my mind – or lost it yesterday – for I forgot to mention that I spent half an hour on the phone to Chicago answering questions about Winnie-the-Pooh. I talked with the Director of Public Relations, and it was recorded and the librarian listened in. Winnie is to arrive there on November 12 and great things are planned. They are determined to show Atlanta that they can outdo them. So later I mail my 3 incomparable releases – the ones on Milne, Shepard and Winnie himself.

To Elliott’s great delight – and pride – because he had masterminded the translation of *Winnie-the-Pooh* into the Latin *Winnie Ille Pu*, Edmund McDowell of the *New York Times* decided to interview him for a feature on that book’s remarkable ongoing success:

What a wonderful achievement that was! My greatest, and I like to think that no one else in the world could have got it on the Best Seller list for so many weeks. A book in a foreign language – or a dead language at best. Dutton never knew what I was doing, but that made it all the more fun.

The interview was on the same day – 1981 Friday October 30th (Cool) – that the contract with the Dysons was signed and a new era began.

On 11 November Pooh was packed unceremoniously into a carton with his hunny bowl and into his usual carrying bag on his way to La Guardia Airport for his trip to Chicago, where he was to be ‘King of the Hill’ at the Chicago Book Week. At the airport he came off the plane ahead of other passengers and was welcomed by Mother Goose and a crowd of children waiting to be photographed with the American Airlines pilot. Next day he was guest of the Mayor at City Hall. The Mayor, too, had read the books to her daughter when she was growing up.

There was consternation on 24 November when Elliot, waiting for Pooh’s return at the airport, discovered that his *protégé* was not on the plane! He had

missed his flight and had to wait until the following day for Elliott to collect him and the hunny pot and return him safely to his glass home.

In December 1983, Pooh appeared on Elliott's lap on the *Today* programme. 'The more you look at him the more he comes to life' said his now also elderly Friend and Companion. 'I must be crazy but I keep thinking that HE is about to talk.'

That month, too, he was invited to the usual Dutton's Christmas party and was introduced to John Dyson's two daughters – Lee, then ten years-old who had read *Willie Ille Pu* and Eliza, eight years-old who hadn't.

Elliott wrote that 'they gave every impression of leading very sheltered lives, talked in faint voices. No attempt to sell themselves. With their millions why should they?'

Their father, like Elliott, had warm feelings for Pooh. However he also had a pang of guilt that they were so far from home. Shortly after he joined the company he says that he made contact with the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and offered to return the toys to them but that, astonishingly, they were not interested. He then took them to the palatial premises of his company, Millbrook Capital Management, on East 51st Street and later to his family home where, he says, the children were not allowed to play with him.

'I wanted to keep Pooh in the public eye and didn't want him to become an asset that could be sold or auctioned.' Sitting in his New York office thirty years later, with a small crystal model of Pooh bear on the table, he admits – 'he still makes me smile.'

The problem of what to do with Pooh erupted again when, in 1986, Dutton became an imprint of Penguin Books.

Joe Kanon had joined Duttons in 1982 and from 1983 was President. He was part of the team that organised the eventual sale of the company to Penguin.

While all this was being discussed Joe Kanon kept Pooh safe in a cupboard in his apartment on East 79th Street 'in dread the whole time that something might happen to him. I did have two young children aged four and one at the time but they were never allowed to play with them, or even touch them as they had become fragile.' He remembers Elliott as 'a wonderful man and unofficial historian.'

John Dyson decided finally to offer the animals to the Donnell branch of New York Central Library. Years later when the Donnell Library closed, they were rehoused in the Children's Library at 135 East 46th Street.

Joe Kanon is happy. 'I go to the Library most days to write and so I pass the animals on my way. We have come full circle. The odd but nice thing about all this who-owned-what business is that it all came right in the end and Winnie and his friends have been well cared for just as we all hoped.'

The following year a party was held there to welcome the new residents. It was an impressive affair and the guests suitably distinguished for what the *New York Times* called, in a feature which occupied a whole page, 'such a historic occasion' and one in which Pooh became officially an American citizen.

The President of the Library then was Dr Vartan Gregorian who became 12th President of the Carnegie Corporation in New York. In 2010 he was awarded an honourary degree from Edinburgh university.

With the bear cradled in his arms, he said: 'Pooh is the one thing that unites all people of all colours and all races – he is a symbol of hope and joy.'

John Dyson agreed: 'He will now be here so that children of all ages can see these magical animals that inspired the original stories of Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends in the Forest.'

Naturally, there were refreshments on hand; tea, shortbread and, of course, honey.

Christopher Milne gave his blessing to the donation of the toys and sent his apologies that he could not be there himself, explained John Macrae III former President of Dutton.

Of course Elliott Graham was on hand too, as it was such an emotional occasion. 'If I were an ordinary person, the tears would be streaming down my face,' he admitted.

'He seems bemused', observed John Macrae III, nodding toward Pooh, who, sitting on a shelf, was holding court for 'Assorted-Friends-and-Relations', photographers and reporters.

Six year-old Sara Gould of Brooklyn had been given the honour of symbolically accepting Pooh on Behalf of the Children of New York and she hugged him.

Peter and Diane Dennis were also invited to be part of the fun and that year they, like Pooh had done forty years before, settled permanently in America and went off to live in Shadow Hills, California. So began their eight-year battle for a green card. Eventually, the fact that Peter was the only person authorised by the Milne Trust to perform the Pooh material came to his rescue and his application was finally approved as being 'in the national interest.'

Another accolade for Pooh indeed!

In a letter to Christopher Milne, Peter wrote of the Dutton move to Penguin and described his visit to John Dyson's home, 'where the toys were all sitting on a table in the front entrance of his lovely house.'

In his reply dated 3 March 1987, Christopher admitted: 'Though I've lost touch with those creatures and don't specially wish to be reminded of them, I feel they would be happier in their native country rather than in the office of an American millionaire financier.'

Years later in 2009 an article appeared on the Internet by American author, Jenny Boylan. She wrote of her own visit to New York Children's Library where her first sight of the animals in their new home recalled the time when, as a young would-be student she worked for Dutton. When she saw Pooh again, sitting, a little lop-sided, in his glass home she burst into tears.

She explained:

'In 1984 when I was at E.P Dutton, one of my friends there was an elderly man named Elliott Graham. Elliott was a grumpy, dignified soul and why he took a liking to me, I can't tell you. He was a generous, lovely man, with a very dry sense of humor.

'I hadn't thought about any of this in 25 years, until recently, when I walked into the New York Public Library and there in a glass case were all the Pooh animals, just as I remembered them at Dutton. Even little Piglet, who is not much more than a threadbare pin-cushion. Apparently the animals did, in time, find their way to the library, where they have been ever since.

'But that's not why I was crying.

'What brought me to tears was recalling my last day of work at Dutton. I was off to graduate school and a new career. At 4.45, there was a knock on my office door and a very soft, grumpy voice – sure, a bearlike voice – said "There's someone here who wants to say goodbye to you."

'I turned to see Elliott Graham standing there in my door, holding Winnie-the-Pooh. He held the bear toward me, and he nodded. "Go ahead," he said. "It's okay."

'So I hugged the original Winnie-the-Pooh.

'When I was done, I gave him back to him. That was the last time I ever saw him. Elliott Graham looked at me and nodded and said, "Good luck at school". And he walked away.

‘I was lucky to have had that old man as my friend, even if only for a little while, such a long time ago. I would have liked to have called him on the phone one last time and let him know I did, in time, become a writer.’

Despite his venerable age, in retirement Pooh remained the source of delight and fascination he had always been, not only for entertainers and the young at heart but for learned academics around the world. Serious-minded university students have explored the underlying psychology of it all for their PhD theses and even more serious-minded academics have written learned articles.

The Tao of Pooh, by Benjamin Hoff, a writer with a degree in Asian art first appeared in 1982. Basic Taoism is simply a way of appreciating, learning from and working with whatever happens in everyday life. From the Taoist point of view, the natural result of this harmonious way of living is happiness.

Benjamin Hoff uses Winnie-the-Pooh and the other characters from A.A. Milne’s stories to explain the basic principles of philosophical Taoism. Winnie-the-Pooh, he claims, is a master of psychology – recognised by one of the century’s greatest child psychologists and President of the Psychoanalytical Society, D.W. Winnicott who wrote, ‘one must recognise the central position of Winnie-the-Pooh.’

The book was on the *New York Times* best-seller list for forty nine weeks and is still used as required reading in some college and university courses both in America and the U.K.

Pooh and the Psychologists was published later in England in 2000 by Egmont. Its author, Professor of Psychology, John Tyerman Williams, argues that the whole of Western Philosophy from the Cosmologists of Ancient Greece to the Existentialists of today can be found in *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*.

How to Catch a Woozle, said the reviews, is a commentary on Kant’s theory of phenomena, *Piglet’s Anxiety* is an example of Heidegger’s Being-towards-Death and *Eeyore’s Party* is a form of Nietzsche’s *Ass Festival* from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

However, to keep a sense of perspective, in 2009 Pooh was beaten into second place on the BBC children’s ‘Best Bedtime Story’ poll by *The Gruffalo*.

Chapter Eightteen

The Shop at Pooh Corner

MEANTIME WHILE ALL THIS was going on in Pooh's new homeland, the activity generated in his name had also been escalating in the place of his birth.

Since the end of World War II, the little shops in Hartfield High Street had closed as one by one supermarkets in Tunbridge Wells and other nearby towns, went from strength to strength.

Then, early in 1978 a young potter, Mike Ridley, rented the white weather-boarded shop, formerly the home of the Jacques family and then run as the village bakery. It was a building echoing with the ghosts of summers past, when young Billy Moon would slip through the creaky door with Nanny Nou and Pooh to buy his special bulls eyes sweets.

Mike began by making children's nightlights-pottery houses with animals inside, one of which was named 'Wol's House'. It was a good beginning but there were more excitements ahead. Mike realised, just in time, that October 1928, fifty years before, had been the publishing date of *The House at Pooh Corner*.

There was an anniversary to celebrate.

For the Ridleys – his wife Jan and daughters Clare and Emma – it was action time and within a few weeks they had converted and opened a gift shop. They called it 'Pooh Corner'.

Was the village happy? Not at all. The success of the shop caused traffic flow problems in the narrow High Street and only the pubs were grateful to Pooh.

However, the rest of the world was delighted. Visitors began to flood in from far and wide, even from Iceland and in many cases people stopped over on their travels especially to pay their respects to Pooh. One couple even asked if they might be married on the premises!

At the last look in the shop's visitors' book, Pooh Corner had welcomed people, either through the door or on-line, from fifty six countries. The top ten are uK, uSA, Japan, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Argentina and New Zealand.

Mike says: 'Pooh fans are the nicest people you could ever hope to meet.' He adds, 'I'm a bit like Tigger myself – full of bounce but not very organised – I meet people every day in the shop, they laugh, they are happy and make me feel privileged to live and work in this wonderful place.'

Today, the shop overflows with 'Poohfernal' selling a range of Pooh-inspired books, goods and gifts. It is now open throughout the year, and has a small tearoom with check tablecloths where Mike's second wife, June, offers free birthday cake on 21 August – Pooh's birthday. The tearoom is called 'Piglit's' – spelt with a second 'i' and not an 'e' because that is how Piglet signs his name.

Above the shop is 'Owl's House' a self-catering holiday flat. The original pottery itself has become a necessary warehouse.

Over the years, Pooh Corner has also been visited by many well-known people. Among them have been actors from TV soaps *EastEnders* and *Neighbours*, David Davis (uncle David from the BBC's *Children's Hour*) who adapted the Pooh stories for radio, and Norman Shelley who read them. In 2009, David Benedictus, long-ago friend of Elliott Graham, called in to sign copies of his surprisingly look-alike best-seller *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood*. This is a daring 'Expotition' into the original Pooh's world in which the stories explain how *Owl Becomes An Author* and *It Stops Raining For Ever*.

Most importantly perhaps for Mike, was his introduction to Christopher Robin himself and, as he says in his own booklet *The Official Pooh Corner Rules for Playing Poohsticks*, 'The memory of our all too few meetings will always bring a smile to my face and a glow in my heart.'

In the past he had taken TV presenters and an assortment of journalists and radio presenters on 'Expotitions' around the Forest. But 2009 was a special year; he was filmed for television programmes in both Germany and Central China and the year culminated in an approach from the Walt Disney Animation Studios in California.

Departmental heads, two directors and a film crew arrived to film the authentic landscapes for the setting of their latest Winnie the Pooh feature movie, due to be released in 2011. Mike's efforts as a tour guide were to be rewarded and today he proudly says: 'Thank you Pooh for the official confirmation from Disney of an agreement that states "Winnie the Pooh – Mike Ridley/Story Consultant".'

First stop for most of the visitors has always been, of course, Pooh Bridge.

The Wobbly Bridge

By the 1970s Posingford Bridge, the wooden structure now known as 'Pooh Bridge', was showing signs of wear from all those feet pounding backwards and forwards. The side rails were not safe and the supports were crumbling. Local horse-riders complained that they could no longer ride across it. There was even talk of demolition. Something had to be done.

From 1975 onwards the local press ran articles which headlined the problems. In May 1976, there were warnings of the danger that children could even fall into the river. By 1978, the bridge was still 'In peril'.

A 'Save Pooh Bridge' campaign was launched. Money poured in from children and adults worldwide and eventually the County Council contributed, as did the Westminster Bank, DLS Builders and the Trustees of the Milne Estate.

As a result the repairs were made and in May 1979, Christopher Milne himself returned – somewhat reluctantly – to Hartfield for the first of only two visits since 1947.

He was the obvious choice as a 'celebrity' to cut the tape and re-open the bridge. But Christopher, who had long ago tried to escape the notoriety that Pooh had given him, was still far away, happily running the bookshop in Dartmouth, Devon. The knowledge that his childhood friend Iva, daughter of John Osman, the original builder of the bridge, would be there to share the spotlight helped him to accept the invitation. But his emergence from self-imposed exile inevitably attracted a battery of television crews and the international press.

He told them: 'I can look my dreaded namesake in the eye today and feel less embarrassed by him.' They responded by comments in the local papers the following week such as 'poor rich Mr Milne'.

In September that year he returned for the second visit to unveil a memorial honouring both his father and E.H. Shepard. The simple bronze plaque is set discreetly in rock on top of the Forest not signposted in order to preserve something of its magic character. For it was there long ago that Shepard drew the little boy Billy Moon, hand in paw with his bear, on their way up to the Enchanted Place. It was to be their last visit together before Christopher went off to school. The last time they would ever 'do nothing' together because 'they don't let you', he had explained sadly.

Christopher Milne and Peter Dennis met for the first time at this ceremony when Peter was again invited to read extracts from Winnie-the-Pooh and their two families became close friends. It was Peter who read Pooh stories to Christopher and Lesley's daughter, Clare. Eventually the Ashdown Forest Centre was opened at Wych Cross in 1983. The aim was to introduce visitors to the natural and historical wonders of the countryside but not, of course, to forget the most famous resident of all, who had been largely responsible for the undiminished flow of visitors and film crews.

Still the local press carried such headlines as, 'More tourists are not wanted on Pooh Bridge' while posters appeared around the village declaring ferociously 'TOURISM? WHO WANTS IT?'

Then while Pooh was living a star-studded life across the Atlantic in America, in his native England he became almost overnight the figurehead of yet another even more worrying battle.

'PB versus BP'

This is how Christopher Milne described the events that shook Sussex in 1987 when British Petroleum applied to sink a test bore hole into the very heart of the then privately-owned Ashdown Forest – still the largest area of lowland heath remaining in South East England.

They were looking for oil. The chosen spot was within sight of the Enchanted Place and the national press predictably carried headlines such as 'Oilmen's drill bears down on Pooh Corner'.

Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State in Mrs Thatcher's Government at the time, supported the application and proposed that the Council should relax their 'no go' policy.

Ironically, on this occasion, the leader of the opposition was the usually shy and retiring Christopher Milne. In the book by Barbara Willard, entitled *The Forest* he has described what happened:

The national press found him in his bookshop and there began a non-stop barrage of calls. In the end, he bought a whistle so that his wife, Lesley, could drag him in from the garden. Did he know that there was a threat to bring Dallas to the

Forest? He didn't and he was very angry. If the East Sussex County Council gave way, there would be nowhere safe left in Britain.

'I realised', he said with a chuckle, 'that to my own small voice could be added, if I wished it, the infinitely louder voice of a teddy bear'. He felt that although he had spent sixty years of his life trying to escape Pooh Bear he was inviting his help. PB versus BP. How he relished the contest!

There was talk of a 'little Texas' and fears that the places where Pooh and his friends stomped in the 1920s searching for Small, trapping Heffalumps or looking for the North Pole, would be taken over by oil Barons and be blighted by giant wells, metal rigs and monsters of a different kind.

How were they all to know that there was, indeed, another monster bearing down on Ashdown Forest. On 15 October 1987, the worst storm for three hundred years swept across southern England destroying everything in its path. Ships were wrecked, houses flattened and people died. Less devastating, but symbolically poignant – the year that Winnie-the-Pooh moved into his new glass case residence in New York's Donnell Library – trees of the Enchanted Place on top of the Forest had been uprooted.

The following year in February, Earl De La Warr, Christopher Robin's childhood friend Billy died tragically and on 25 November the De La Warr family threat to split up the Forest into small parcels for sale on the open market was finally averted.

The County Council saved the day by successfully buying the freehold of the entire Forest area from the family, apart from the 500 acre wood. Of the £1.2m. purchase price, £330,000 was contributed by the Council. The remainder was the result of a national appeal led by Christopher Milne. 'I am very, very glad' he said. 'This is a very good example of public ownership over private. I trust Mrs Thatcher will listen and learn.'

The spirit of Winnie-the-Pooh had triumphed. But beleaguered Hartfield residents still protested. Sussex County Council's new finger posts identifying for the first time the whereabouts of Pooh Bridge were often removed. The newspapers also quoted one un-named villager, who complained that anything that increased tourism was short-sighted. The hedges next to the bridge, he said, had gone and the river banks were being damaged. Besides, there was nowhere for visitors to park their cars.

In the 1980s the bridge was still in danger and by the nineties the *East Grinstead Courier* called it 'The Bridge of Sighs'. Visitors were even being asked to

bring their own sticks.

It was agreed to rebuild the bridge completely but where possible to use timber from the earlier structure. The design of the new bridge was based on photographs of the original.

A Maidstone builder, Cox Brothers Construction, offered to underwrite the project: 'Somebody had to step in and protect our national heritage' said Chairman Tony Stanbury. 'I was not going to stand by and wait for Americans', he added. Morgan Timber donated the green oak for the project and the actual construction cost was said to be £30,000 which would have been considerably higher without the generosity of local firms.

The Disney Corporation was also approached and is said to have contributed £10,000. The move again was strongly contested by many Hartfield people who were anxious about the impact of such a commercial giant on their village. 'This is an English Bridge in an English Wood. We should keep it English' was a typical comment in the *Kent and Sussex Courier*. The restored Pooh Bridge was finally re-opened in 2000.

In July the same year the Hartfield Parish Council and East Sussex County Council jointly commissioned a Pooh Bridge Management Plan. This recognised, at last, that the existence of Pooh-related tourism 'has given rise to both problems and opportunities' and looked forward to eliminating the first and maximising the second. This was, temporarily at least, oil on the troubled waters of the Bridge over the River.

Today, the only access to the bridge is down a footpath through the woods from Marsh Green Lane off the B2026 – a pilgrimage which thousands now make every year – yet you can still find residents of Hartfield itself who have never been to Poohsticks Bridge and for those who know when and where to go, it is still possible to be alone on Ashdown Forest.

Chapter Nineteen

Pooh the Philanthropist

FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS of Winnie-the-Pooh has been a bittersweet journey. The bemused, benign and often bothered bear has stomped his loveable way across the world, bringing immeasurable happiness to millions but so many confused emotions and even bitterness to those who knew him best.

The curious phenomenon of the teddy bear cult was already established in Europe and America when Pooh left Farnell's Acton factory in 1921. Toy makers had learned how to produce soft huggable bears which appealed instantly to all ages. It was the gentle wisdom and wit of A.A. Milne and the drawings of E.H. Shepard which gave Pooh his special status.

Internationally today arctophiles from all walks of life gather with many and varied missions but united by their reverence for teddy bears and Winnie-the-Pooh in particular.

The Teddy Bear Guide is published annually in Brighton to celebrate the birthday of President Theodore Roosevelt in October. Glenn and Irene Jackson began making teddy bears in 1985 and launched the guide two years later. Colourfully illustrated it takes its readers on an astonishing journey around the world. Glenn and Irene have accumulated a list of over 11,000 names of all teddy makers, collectors or museums there are or have ever been!

For them, Winnie-the-Pooh is the Patron Saint of teddy bears.

‘There can be little doubt that Winnie-the-Pooh is the most famous teddy bear in the world. This is due to the immense popularity of the books by A.A. Milne and also to the highly successful and lucrative Disney animations.

Without the teddy, there would have been *no* Winnie-the-Pooh books and without the books there would have been *no* Disney animations.’ they agree.

The Pembroke College Cambridge
Winnie-the-Pooh Society

Pooh seems to have had a surprisingly remarkable influence on learned minds even in places such as Cambridge university. The Pembroke College Winnie-the-Pooh Society is a club established at the beginning of 1993 which has become one of the most famous societies in the university. It is not a charity and its membership (honorary and otherwise) includes Her Majesty the Queen. The annual subscription is £2.

Clause III of their constitution states:

‘The aim of the Society shall be to meet for Eleveses and General Meetings in order to preserve and disseminate the works of A. A. Milne.

‘This is achieved by holding Eleveses Meetings at 4 pm (the most sensible time) every Saturday of Full Term, where we drink tea, eat (and perform surgery on) cake and read from the extant corpus of A. A. Milne. The society also holds special events such as formal Halls, pilgrimages to the real Hundred Acre Wood and the annual garden party during May week (which is obviously in June). The Queen is invited every year as are all the other honorary members but her commitments with Trooping the Colour have prevented her from being able to attend although she has sent several nice letters apologising.

Matters arising usually include correspondence on matters of Great Importance such as the concern in the name of Pooh over the price of Sainsbury crumpets.’

Clearly a respectful follower of Pooh, the Manager of the Cambridge store wrote in March 1997:

‘Please accept my heartfelt apologies for the retraction of our ‘12 for the price of 8 at 39p’ offer on our crumpets.

‘The twelve crumpets offer, I am sorry to say, has finished and they are now 52 pence. However, all is not lost as there are reward points available on these crumpets. These reward points can be exchanged for vouchers which will enable to you buy other goods. In considering the stance Pooh would have taken in this matter, I firmly believe he would advocate the purchase of honey, Tigger might require a new spring, and Rabbit may well be tempted by our organic carrot.

Alternatively, you can transfer your reward points into air miles and visit your favourite characters at Disney World, Paris, or perhaps take a glorious stroll through the Hundred Acre Wood and listen for the succinct sounds of Owl, Eeyore and the rumblings of Gopher.

The possibilities are endless!

Signed Mr Norman White – a.k.a Christopher Robin’

This provoked an angry reply:

‘Dear Mr White,

Thank you for your kind letter of the 4th March 1997, which we received a long time ago, of course, regarding the shocking suspension of the special offer on Sainsbury’s crumpets.

‘Whilst we are not altogether satisfied with the solution which you gave to our predicament, we were far more shocked to note your references to the Walt Disney Version of Winnie-the-Pooh, which our society regards as an abomination against A.A Milne (blessed be his name). I have the unpleasant duty to inform you that you were censured, by majority vote of the society soon after we received your letter.’

For those who raise an eyebrow or who simply do not understand this mesmerising power that a now very scruffy teddy bear has over so many sensible people, he deserves another, more material and less controversial accolade as a fund-raiser.

Midas Pooh

Listed on the Internet are dozens of collectors, museums, shops, charities and social-networking groups whose aim is to raise funds for good causes in the name of the teddy bear. The Disney Corporation, too, channels a generous percentage of its multi-billion dollar income to help the world’s needy causes.

Like King Midas who turned everything he touched to gold, Pooh is one of the most successful fund raisers of all time. The brokers, Merrill Lynch, in New York, estimate that the Disney-Shepard-Milne Pooh merchandising products alone have annual sales of over £3.75 billion. Whichever side of the fence you are on, the Disney Pooh was inspired by the literary Pooh and their roots are in Hartfield.

In his name, small groups and large organisations alike donate money and toys and practical help to an astonishingly varied, wide-ranging number of charities small and large. You will find them also on the Internet.

These are but a few:

Poohsticks Competitions

The simple game which had been played for centuries by children everywhere was given that name in about 1926 by Daphne Milne. It then grew and grew until it became an international sport. You can follow the Poohsticks trail across the world.

One of the largest of these gatherings takes place every year on the River Thames, near Oxford in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

In the 1980s, the lock-keeper at Days Lock near Abingdon, noticed that the foot bridge over the river below the weir was popular with walkers for playing Poohsticks. He also realised that their sticks were being collected from his garden. So he began to place suitable sticks in a bucket on the bridge alongside a collecting tin for his favourite charity, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Before long, he also launched the idea of a 'Poohsticks Competition' which was supported by the nearby village of Little Wittenham and the local branch of the RNLI.

When the lock-keeper retired, the local Rotary Club of Sinoden took over the competition which continued to expand, attracting interest from far and wide through press and media coverage. A few years ago the increasingly elderly members of the Sinoden club asked the younger, Rotary Club of Oxford Spires, to step in and help them out.

Every year, in March, up to one thousand competitors take part in the Oxford Spires Championship event, watched by at least twice that number.

Oxford university Student Teams from Australia, the Czech Republic, Japan and America compete. International television programmes have filmed the event and it is regularly featured in publications such as British Airways in-flight magazines, the *Countryfile* calendar, and 'what's on?' websites.

In 2009 the Championships raised around £2,000. The Club estimates that over the years the event has produced well over ten times that amount.

One of the organisers of the event today is Dr.Elizabeth Williamson. As a break from revision during her finals, she had read A.A. Milne's stories to cheer herself up. This passion for Pooh was remembered by friends organising her hen-night in 2000. They took her on a pilgrimage to Hartfield where, with Champagne bottles down their trousers, they staged a celebratory Poohsticks competition on Pooh Bridge itself.

They played the game with the champagne corks and toasted Winnie-the-Pooh, their favourite bear!

Good Bears of the World

Good Bears of the World was founded in England in 1969 by the American journalist and radio pioneer, James Theodore Ownby, who died in 1986. Headquarters were at first located in his radio station, KNDI, in Honolulu, Hawaii, until the group relocated to Toledo, Ohio in 1991.

He was a man with a mission, believing in the magical healing power of the teddy bear – a conviction that he found was shared by firemen, policemen, emergency workers, psychologists and grief counsellors – his was the first group to donate teddy bears to American police departments in the early 80s.

Colonel Bob Henderson who had fought in World War II alongside his own bear, ‘Teddy Girl’, took charge of operations in England and became an international celebrity himself. He died in 1990, and in 1994 ‘Teddy Girl’ was sold at auction for a record £110,000. She is now in a Japanese museum.

In England the charity is run by president Audrey Duck. She agrees that : ‘Although Pooh himself was not the original inspiration for the work of GBW there is no doubt at all that he IS the reason why children everywhere look to their teddies for a friendship and comfort that continues long after they have grown up.’

Today Good Bears of the World has branches internationally, runs a newspaper and a magazine, and organises rallies, picnics and auctions. In the year 2009 alone, 20,000 teddy bears were sent to comfort child victims of floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and domestic violence both in the united States and abroad. Hundreds of thousands of bears have also been given to many sick, injured, and underprivileged children and old folk. Victims of the Oklahoma City bombing, the crash of TWA flight 800 and the events of 11 September 2001 have also benefited from its generosity.

Food for Heroes

In the autumn of 2009 Pooh became the mascot of a fund-raising appeal appropriately titled ‘Food for Heroes.’ This was a book inspired by Squadron Leader Jon Pullen who had returned from active service in Basra eager to help the

plight of soldiers wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Politicians, actors, military giants – and Pooh – all contributed their favourite recipes.

‘Hero Pie’ was entered for Pooh.

Recipe for Hero Pie

Difficulty level: good

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 25–30 minutes

Ingredients:

6 large bramley apples
250 gram dried apricots
250 ml orange juice
3 tbs honey
200 gram plain flour, sieved
100 gram butter Sugar to sprinkle Milk to wash

Method

Preheat oven to 180 or gas mark 5.
Peel and chop the apples and cut the apricots. Cook with the orange juice till soft.
Add honey and leave to cool.
Mix butter and sieved flour.
Add water till the mix blends, then cut in half.
Roll out one half to size of chosen ceramic or metal plate.
Oil plate and lay pastry over then add the fruit mix.
Lay the second half of pastry over the top. Wash with milk and dust with sugar.

In his will A.A. Milne bequeathed his fortune and his royalties, first to his family and the rest to the three causes closest to his heart – the Royal Literary Fund for Authors, Westminster School and The Garrick Club. The Milne Trust was created to manage the inheritance.

The Royal Literary Fund for Authors

In 1790, the flamboyant, controversial and dissident minister the Rev David Williams, friend of actor David Garrick and also Benjamin Franklin, established a fund to help authors and their families in distress. The Prince Regent provided them with a house in Gerrard Street, Soho, and with the kudos of Royal Patronage, the Royal Literary Fund was born.

Over the years the Fund has benefited from the royalties bequeathed by writers such as Arthur Ransome, Rupert Brooke and Sir Osbert Lancaster.

But it was royalties from the estates of the novelist W. Somerset Maugham and A. A. Milne, followed by Disney's subsequent exploitation of the Pooh characters, which dramatically increased its income. The Fund suddenly found itself awash with money.

In 1999, the BBC reported that two academic posts were to be funded from Pooh's global merchandising empire. It would pay for two new posts in the English department at the university of Warwick which would explore standards of literacy and writing skills: 'A.A. Milne has turned so many people on to reading', said Professor Jeremy Treglown former Editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*, 'It is fitting that his legacy should continue to help young people with their writing skills.'

In 2009 through the Milne Trust, Winnie-the-Pooh was the second-highest provider of funds after W. Somerset Maugham, contributing £250,521.

- An acclaimed poet diagnosed with cancer, faced with several months of chemotherapy and unable to meet her deadlines, was made a grant by the Committee to help with bills while she was receiving treatment.
- A short-stories author who developed multiple sclerosis was bought a new computer printer and software to boost her morale and help her to keep writing.
- Just as a seventy year-old arthritic, award-winning playwright was about to sell her flat because she found commissions were drying up, the Committee stepped in. They awarded her an annual pension to provide a secure income.
- A maritime historian, a crime writer, a free-lance journalist, a children's novelist and a literary critic, are just a few of those who have been rescued by Pooh and whose lives have been eased through grants and pensions and practical handson assistance from the Royal Literary Fund.

About thirty years ago Christopher and Lesley Milne decided to sell half of their share of the Milne legacy to the Royal Literary Fund for just £150,000.

Today that is worth about £30 million.

Westminster School

The buildings that comprise the Royal College of St Peter in Westminster are even older than the Abbey itself in whose precincts it is located. By 1179 the College was better known as Westminster Public School which meant admission was available to members of the public from across the country, so long as they could pay their own costs. This was a progression from private tuition provided only to the nobility.

Today's fees are £28,344 annually.

Past pupils include Ben Jonson, Christopher Wren, Jeremy Bentham and, of course, A.A. Milne.

The Legacy from which the school now benefits – thanks to Winnie-the-Pooh – has been used for the acquisition of new buildings and for bursaries to help families of modest means. In 1997 the school expanded further, with the creation of a new day house, named after its benefactor – Milne's at 6a Dean's Yard.

The Garrick Club

Apart from A.A. Milne himself, the Garrick founded in 1831, counts British former Chancellors of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke, Nigel Lawson, Geoffrey Howe and Norman Lamont among its many illustrious members. Jeremy Paxman was once blackballed but he was finally elected after an outcry and is now a popular member.

This august organisation, mostly enjoyed by men over fifty, is famous for its rule barring women from joining, its pink and green (salmon and cucumber) ties and its £1,000 plus membership fee.

Ladies are invited to attend the Club itself where they may enjoy drinks in the morning room, lunch in the pink Milne Room aka the Pooh room and, more recently, after 9 p.m. drinks in the Cocktail Bar.

In 2000, the Disney Corporation offered the club a capital sum approaching £40m of which the Club received £30m after tax.

After lengthy discussion it was agreed to invest most of this money to safeguard the Club's future, some would be used on totally refurbishing the building itself and a Trust would be established to help cultural and artistic good causes.

The result of these discussions has meant that about £5m has been spent on building renovations, and £4m invested in the Trust which now gives away around £200,000 annually. Some has also been set aside for the Club's 'Causes Dear'. What remains is not much less than the original Disney sum after tax.

Members did well to remember the observation of A.A. Milne himself: 'The only money which we are never sorry to have spent is the money which we have given away.'

The Clare Milne Trust

In 2002 the Clare Milne Trust was established, also with funds derived originally from the will of Clare's grandfather. The aim of the Trust is to help smaller, effective charities with good volunteer support, in their work for the disabled in or close to Devon and Cornwall. Children and adults with autism, Down's Syndrome or any of a number of physical and mental disabilities still need support, protection, care and the promise of a rewarding and happy life. This, in turn, helps those they meet in their everyday life to accept and understand.

In 2001, the arctophile author, broadcaster and playwright, Gyles Brandreth had visited Christopher Milne's widow Lesley, for a very rare interview. They talked about Clare and her proposed new charity and he wrote of that meeting in the *Sunday Telegraph*. Gyles had met Christopher Milne when he and Julian Slade, of *Salad Days* fame, were collaborating in a musical play *Now We Are Sixty* in which the very young Welsh star Aled Jones played Christopher Robin:

'Christopher Robin Milne was a phenomenon. He is probably the most famous real child in literature but he seemed at his happiest when talking about his own daughter Clare.

'Christopher told me then that his daughter had taught him a philosophy that parents don't usually expect to learn from their children.

"Once we had accepted Clare's disability, there were plenty of other things we could be happy about, plenty to enjoy, plenty to be grateful for. And at the top of

the list was her own very evident zest for life, her high spirits, her sense of fun, her cheerful acceptance of all she couldn't do, her delight in what little she could. She set us an example. We tend to think that, if someone is deprived of a blessing that we ourselves possess, their life is sadder. But in fact the man who has less than his neighbour is only unhappy if he had been hoping for more and chooses to feel jealous."

"When I first met him, Christopher had just turned sixty. He seemed older. He was a little bent, with owlish glasses and a mischievous twinkle in his eye. I had been warned that I would find him painfully shy, diffident about his parents, reluctant to talk about Pooh. In fact, he was charming, courteous, gentle but forthcoming.

'He said at once, "Of course, we must talk about Pooh. It's been something of a love-hate relationship down the years, but it's all right now. Believe it or not, I can look at those four books without flinching. I'm quite fond of them really."

'Christopher told me that his chief delight in life – greater by far than any satisfaction he derived from his writing or any pleasure he got from his hobby of studying insects and caterpillars and weeds – had been using his hands to adapt and make everyday things for Clare: a chair, a tricycle, an unbreakable plate, a fork and spoon, a special egg whisk to help her make a cake. He had this fantasy that one day they might launch into business together: 'C R Milne & Daughter – Makers of Furniture for the Disabled.'

In a sense it was a fantasy that came true.

The story has a happy ending: the mega-millions from her grandfather that are surplus to Clare's modest everyday requirements go today, in their entirety, into this fund to help others who are disabled. There's a honeypot for many to share at the end of Pooh's rainbow.

Clare herself is happy. She is well looked after in her own home. She likes nice clothes. She loves shopping. And she likes good food.

What does she think of all this money?

'She's rather vague about that sort of thing', Mrs Milne told Gyles. 'She doesn't know the difference between £1,000 and £1,000,000. That's rather nice, don't you think? I think that's very nice, really very nice.'

The Clare Milne Centre and CEDA

CEDA (Community Equality Disability Action) was established in 1988 by a group of parents and carers of physically-disabled young adults in Devon. The aims and objectives of the organisation were to explore ways of providing meaningful and accessible learning and leisure opportunities to disabled people who were largely excluded from the majority of services on offer, for reasons financial, physical and attitudinal.

In the early days, CEDA operated from the basement of a wholly-unsuitable old Victorian hospital in Devon. In 2001, they were given notice and began searching for a new site. The Clare Milne Trust came to the rescue and funded the building of a new, specially adapted centre on Exeter Business Park into which CEDA moved in 2004. In the light and airy building they established an IT suite, an art room, a sensory room, safe play room, office space and meeting rooms.

Children were included for the first time in 1999, offering 5–19 year-olds a summer holiday club. There are now 150 young people enjoying the opportunity to make friends, join in activities and go on outings.

Today CEDA also provides a wide range of learning opportunities for disabled adults. Activities change regularly and have included glass painting, Tai chi, IT, literacy, sports, swimming, conservation, history, dance and drama.

The Echo Centre, Liskeard

On a sunny day in the summer of 2009 a large crowd of Cornish notables, the staff at the Echo Centre, Liskeard and many of those who enjoy the facilities provided there for the disabled, were gathered on the shores of Siblyback Lake, waiting for their special guest, Clare Milne. Sea shanties serenaded her as she arrived to launch a new boat named after her. Bubbly seemed just right for the occasion – partly because that is just how most people see Clare and partly because she is known to enjoy a glass or two!

Both the latest extension to the purpose-built Echo Centre and the conversion of their new boat have been made possible with the help of the affectionately named ‘Pooh money’.

The *Clare* is a unique boat. Based on a Drascombe longboat – a model originally used by fishing boats – she has three sails and has been completely adapted to enable wheelchair access and nicknamed a ‘wheelyboat’. Helen

Winchurch, acting manager of the Centre, explains that reservoirs, lakes and ponds are often totally inaccessible to wheelchair users and people with mobility problems.

This new boat, which will be kept at the South West Lakes Trust Angling and Watersports Centre on Siblyback Lake, will complement the existing boat *Echo* and provide independent access to the same wide range of waterborne activities enjoyed by able-bodied people.

The Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust

There have been ponies on Dartmoor since the eleventh century. At first they were used to carry tin from the moor but since the sixteenth century they have roamed wild because they were small, fast and agile and so were not large enough to be considered for military use.

Today these gentle, affectionate animals have become an endangered species cared for and protected by the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust. Their size and amenable character make them ideal companions, especially for disabled and special needs people of all ages.

In June 2009 the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust (DPHT) established a pilot project called 'Ponies Inspiring People (PIP)', funded primarily by the Clare Milne Trust and the Big Lottery Fund's Awards for All. It aims to provide an opportunity for care providers across the South West to access equine-based, interactive, life enriching, educational and inspirational programmes for children and adults with physical and/or learning disabilities. The success of this project has been rewarded by additional help from the Clare Milne Trust for a new purpose-built facility at Parke, Bovey Tracey, Devon.

The Sensory Trust

The Sensory Trust was formed to help promote a better enjoyment of outdoors for all disabled people regardless of age, disability or background. Its work with a wide variety of other groups has helped to improve the design and function of

many new projects in order to make them easily accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

The landscaping of The Garden at the centre of the Eden Project in Cornwall aims to create a stimulating, sensuous Mecca where visitors can relax, touch and enjoy the imaginative use of space, colour and scents in a natural setting.

One of the groups helped by the Sensory Trust is Asperations, a Devonshire charity, which had been established to support children with autistic spectrum disorders and their families. In 2002, it sent a big 'thank you' to the Milne family when they became the recipients of a £10,000 gift from the Clare Milne Trust, to help with therapy, outings and basic running costs.

Chapter Twenty

Poogle it for Fun

THE SIMPLE ANSWER TO almost any question today is to ‘Google it’. So try exploring Winniethe-Pooh, plus whatever the topic of your choice, and you will open up some astonishing and amusing discoveries of varying reliability.

Winniethe-Pooh and Hitler

‘Operation Winniethe-Pooh’, was the code name for an alleged plot by the British to smuggle Adolf Hitler from Berlin in 1945. Greg Hallett’s book *Hitler was a British Agent*, tells the persuasive but unlikely story of his escape. It claims that he left the Bunker at 3.50 p.m. on 30 April 1945 and hid in the bulkhead passage until 8 p.m. ‘Operation Winniethe-Pooh’ it is claimed, rescued Hitler through the emptied locks of the upper River Spree and then by submarine, boat and plane – destination Spain.

Winniethe-Pooh and the Indian Ocean

On 27 December 2009, 24-year-old Sarah Outen rowed alone into Mauritius. She was the first woman and youngest person to make the journey single-handed across the notoriously unpredictable Indian Ocean.

‘Adventures make life real and exciting’ she said, ‘I had known since a youngster that I would live for adventures.’ Her eclectic iPod list was loaded with *Winniethe-Pooh*, *War and Peace*, Jane Austen and various adventure books. The music shuffled between Mozart, Queen, the Rolling Stones, the Dixie Chicks, Fleet Foxes and Sigur Ros.

Winniethe-Pooh and Barak Obama

Before he became U.S. President, one of Barak Obama’s key advisors asserted that Winniethe-Pooh, Luke Skywalker and British football hooligans could shape the foreign policy of the United States.

Richard Danzig who served as Navy Secretary under President Clinton and was tipped to become National Security Adviser in an Obama White House, told a major foreign policy conference in Washington that the future of U.S. strategy in the war on terrorism should follow a lesson from the pages of *Winniethe-Pooh*,

which can be shortened to: 'If it is causing you too much pain, try something else.' Mr Danzig told the Centre for New American Security: 'Winniethe-Pooh seems to me to be a fundamental text on national security.'

Winniethe-Pooh and the big guns

Having just survived the Dunkirk evacuation and Battle of Britain, the British did not have an immediate answer to the German artillery threat from France. The high ground to either side of the Port of Dover was fortified on the personal order of the Prime Minister (who had visited to see the situation in person), and large calibre guns dug in there. At first, the only British cross-Channel guns already in place were *Winnie* and – later in 1940 – *Pooh* (named after the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and the bear Winniethe-Pooh). These were two 14 - inch (35.6 cm) guns positioned behind St Margaret's, Kent. They were spares taken from the stock of guns of the battleship *HMS King George V*. As they needed mountings, one was used from *HMS Furious* and the other from a test range. Neither was in a turret. Operated from a separate firing-control room, they were manned by twenty-five men of the Royal Marine Siege Regiment.

These boosted morale. *Winnie* fired Britain's first shell onto continental Europe in August 1940 – but proved slow and ineffectual in comparison with the German guns. Together they targeted the German guns (though they were too inaccurate and slow to target German shipping).

Winniethe-Pooh and Queen Elizabeth II

In June 2006 Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her 80th birthday with several hundred children in the gardens of Buckingham Palace. Among the guests was Winniethe-Pooh – sadly, not the original Winnie who, at the age of 85 was too old to travel but sent greetings from New York.

The Palace gardens were transformed into a fantasy land and actors performed a rollicking drama based on Roald Dahl's *Big Friendly Giant* about the terrible day the Queen's handbag was stolen.

Speaking on the platform afterwards Her Majesty admitted she was relieved to be reunited with her bag as she was never normally without it. 'British children's literature has been for many years an extraordinary success story', she told the crowd, who sang *Happy Birthday* to her.

Chapter Twenty One

Don't Ever Forget Me

In 1998 the formidable Mrs Gwynneth Dunwoody, Member of Parliament for Crewe and Nantwich, introduced a question in the House of Commons, in London, which was reported in the very serious official Government journal, Hansard. 'What plans has the Culture Secretary for the repatriation of Winnie-the-Pooh?'

It seems he had none.

Mrs Dunwoody had met Pooh and the other animals on a visit to New York and thought they looked very sad. Like the Elgin Marbles, she declared, they should be in their original home. So she organised a petition.

Tony Blair and President Clinton were locked in discussion over the possibility of war in Iraq and the Global Economy at the time. unsurprisingly, in reply to questions when Mr Blair appeared on ABC's *Good Morning America*, he said that Winnie-the-Pooh was 'down the agenda'. The White House issued a statement declaring that the subject was not expected either to be on the formal agenda for the President's meeting with Mr Blair but that it might come up in informal conversation.

Newspapers in both countries covered the confrontation with banner headlines 'Free the Hartfield Five!' they protested in Britain. 'Pooh on You' and 'Brits Ignite a Poo-Haha' replied the *New York Times*.

Mayor Rudolph Guiliani made an emergency visit to the Donnell Children's Room and issued a statement. 'Like millions of other immigrants, Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends came to America to build a better life for themselves and they want to remain in the Capital of the World.' He said that he had personally assured Pooh that he should not be bothered by the British Parliamentarian who was demanding his return.

So that was that and Pooh remained an American citizen.

He had outlived most of those who had been his friends and family.

Anne (Darlington/Ryde) died in 1958. Blue and Moon and she had been lifelong friends, writing often. Milne himself saved first editions for her and wrote

lengthy doggerel verses in them, signed Blue. A copy of his 1950 book of short stories *A Table Near the Band*, is signed with '25 years' love'.

Her daughters, Julia and Katie, treasure especially the heartrending sadness of Moon's own letter to their grandparents when Anne died at the age of only thirty-eight:

'Dear Bill and Marjorie,

I learnt this morning of Anne's death. It is almost as though a sister had died. She *was so very* close to me when we were children and she has remained close to my family ever since. I think she possessed more kindness and sympathy than anyone I have ever known.'

Remember my affection and admiration for dear Anne, but don't write back, please.'

Moon.

Daphne Milne died, almost unnoticed in London on 22 March 1971.

Elliott Graham, Winnie-the-Pooh's devoted guardian, died in 1988. He was in his 83rd year. His charge of forty years was, by then, safely secure in New York Children's Library.

Christopher Robin Milne died in 1996. For almost half-a-century he had lived a happy, book-lined, life with his wife, Lesley and their daughter Clare, in the Harbour Bookshop, Dartmouth, Devon. His father's biographer, Ann Thwaite, wrote an obituary for *The Times* in which she said: 'Christopher Milne was a remarkable man who triumphantly survived a remarkable childhood, though not without considerable pain on the way.'

Finally he escaped the shadows of the past and his three autobiographies *The Enchanted Places*, *The Path Through the Trees* and *Hollow on the Hill*, offer his readers a rare glimpse of a very private, yet inescapably public man and his passion for the countryside, learned all those years ago as a little boy with his teddy bear in Hartfield. He had proved, as Eeyore had claimed, 'this writing business' is not 'all stuff and nonsense.' He could do it, too.

Peter Dennis, Pooh's Ambassador Extraordinary, died in 2009. He had adopted a characteristically courageous, death-defying, attitude to the end, throwing himself into work and life. His last gift to the bear to whom he had devoted so much of his professional life, was a set of recordings of his friend Christopher Milne's autobiographies.

Shepard died in 1976. Many years before, A.A. Milne has written a poem which included the words "when I am gone, let Shepard decorate my tomb":

Shepard was never invited to fulfil these wishes and it is rather sad that his own grave bears the drawings not of Pooh and Piglet but of those other much loved characters, Mole and Ratty.

For A.A. Milne himself there seems to have been no funeral when he died in 1956: there was the rather surprising memorial service for a man who was an atheist, but no recollection among family or friends of what Daphne did with her husband's remains. The Dictionary of National Biography says he was cremated at Tunbridge Wells: but this is impossible since the Crematorium was not opened until 1959. This launched us on extensive but fruitless investigations around archives in Kent, Sussex and London. As our quest for Pooh's story was coming to an end, researcher Sally Evemy decided to double check several cemeteries and crematoria. When she telephoned the Downs Crematorium in Brighton they again found there was nothing 'on the system'. But probing their paper records produced an astonishing revelation.

The Downs is situated high above Brighton looking out towards the English Channel. It was to here, on 3rd February – a bitterly cold winter's day, on which the *East Grinstead Courier* headlined 'Arctic Spell Hits Road and Rail Traffic' – that the remains of the genius, A.A. Milne, were driven across Ashdown Forest towards Brighton an hour away. There is no suggestion of a funeral, or of any mourners present. The Crematorium staff say that his ashes were scattered over the upper Memorial Garden.

Today the only memorials to the author who created one of literature's great immortals are the blue plaque on his home in Chelsea, that overlooking the slopes of Ashdown Forest and perhaps, most important of all – the elderly British-born teddy bear who inspired him.

In England, there is to be a new web-site appeal for recognition of the inspiration that Pooh's life and thoughts have been to so many and the immense contribution his commercial acumen has made to the welfare of the disabled and deprived.

The problem is, where and what should that memorial be? A statue? A blue plaque? A museum? Could The Elms in Acton where it all began be the ideal setting? Or would the Conservators of Ashdown Forest, perhaps, now welcome the publicity?

Whatever is decided, whatever happens on the way, the real Winnie-the-Pooh sits safely in his air-conditioned American retirement home welcoming homage from far and wide. Far away across the Atlantic, in Sussex, pilgrims from around

the world still follow in his footsteps to the Enchanted Place on top of the Forest, where as A.A. Milne promised all those years ago ‘a little boy and his bear would always be playing.’



‘This is my life’

c. The Estate of E.H.Shepard



Waiting for Pooh – Shirley Harrison with Hartfield playgroup children.



Story time with Winnie-the-Pooh and Hartfield playgroup children. (c. *Mike Champion*)



Teddies galore! The Farnell factory in the grounds of The Elms in Acton, where Pooh was 'born.' (*The Toy and Fancy Goods Trader*)



The Elms - the Farnell family home, now Twyford Church of England High School.



Harrods toy department in 1921 – as Pooh knew it. (c. *Harrods*)



Mallord Street, Chelsea –Pooh's first home.



Daff with Moon and Pooh. (c. *Marcus Adams, Camera Press*)



Nanny Nou in retirement. (*The Pitt-Payne family*)



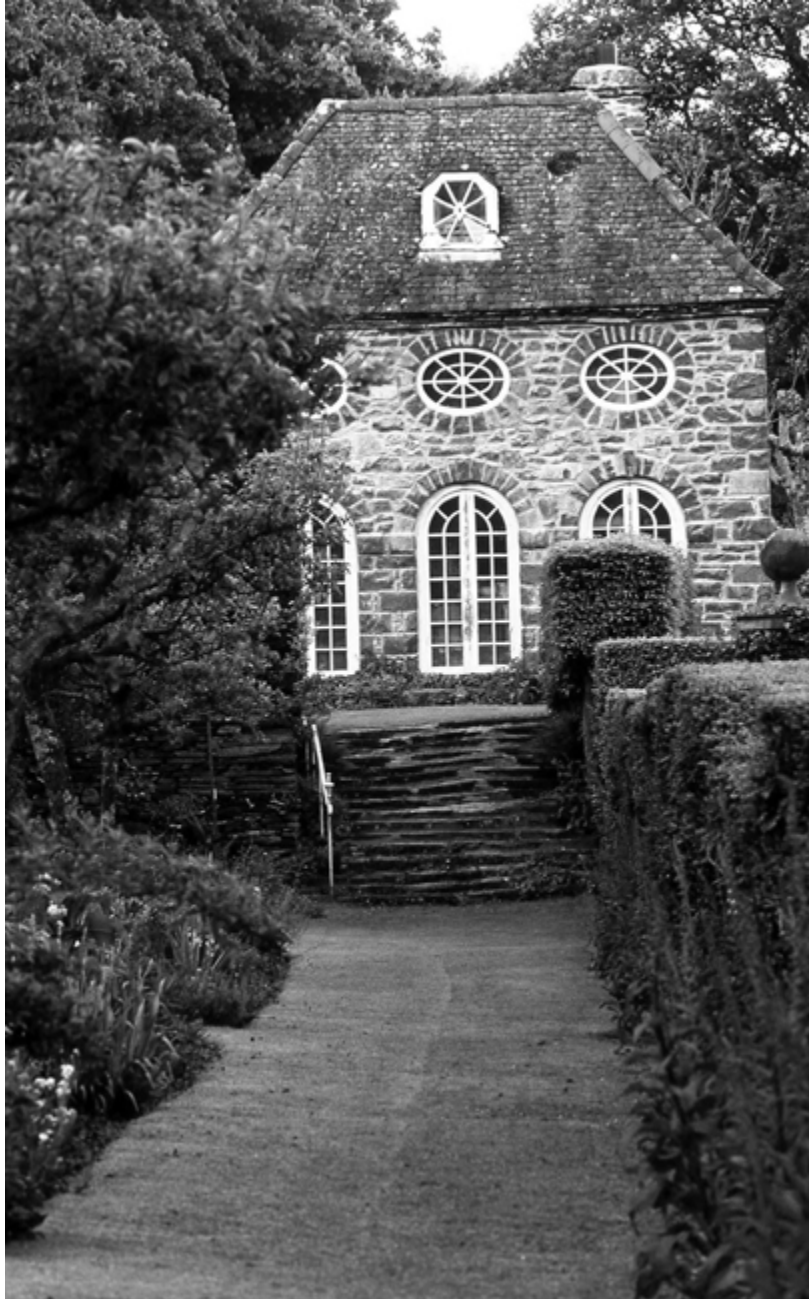
Moon, Blue and Pooh. (*Source unknown*)



Lieutenant Colebourn with the bear cub Winnie, who came from Canada to live – and play with Christopher Robin – in London Zoo. (*Gord Crossley of the Fort Garry Horse Museum, Winnipeg*)



London walks. Anne Darlington and Christopher Robin. (*Dr Katie Ryde – Anne's daughter*)



The Orangery at Plas Brondanw, Wales – where A.A. Milne started to write
When We Were Very Young. (Robin Llewellyn, Portmeirion)



Painting of Hartfield as Pooh knew it.



Welcome to Hartfield! The village sign. (*Alex Harrison*)



George Tasker, the gardener who created he gardens. (*Peter Tasker, his son*)



Christopher Robin's playmate, Hannah Symons, who lived in Cotchford Lane.
(*Tim Rooth, her son*)



The gardens at Cotchford Farm just after the Milnes moved in. (*Peter Old*)



Cotchford Farm – much the same today as in 1924 when it was home to Pooh. (*Alastair Johns*)



Mrs Jacques ' bakery – where Christopher Robin bought his bullseyes. (*Dawn Boakes, Mrs Jacques' grand-daughter*)



Christopher Robin in 1929 at the Pageant of Ashdown Forest with the animals. (*Trevor Trench, Michael Hall School, Forest Row*)



Posingford Bridge in 1907 – before it became Pooh Bridge – with the men who made it. (*Mike Parcell*)



Schooldays. Moon and Anne start school. (*Dr. Katie Ryde, Anne's daughter*)



On Ashdown Forest - where Piglet learned to jump. (*Alex Harrison*)



Inside Gills Lap – Pooh's Enchanted Place. (*Mike Ridley*)



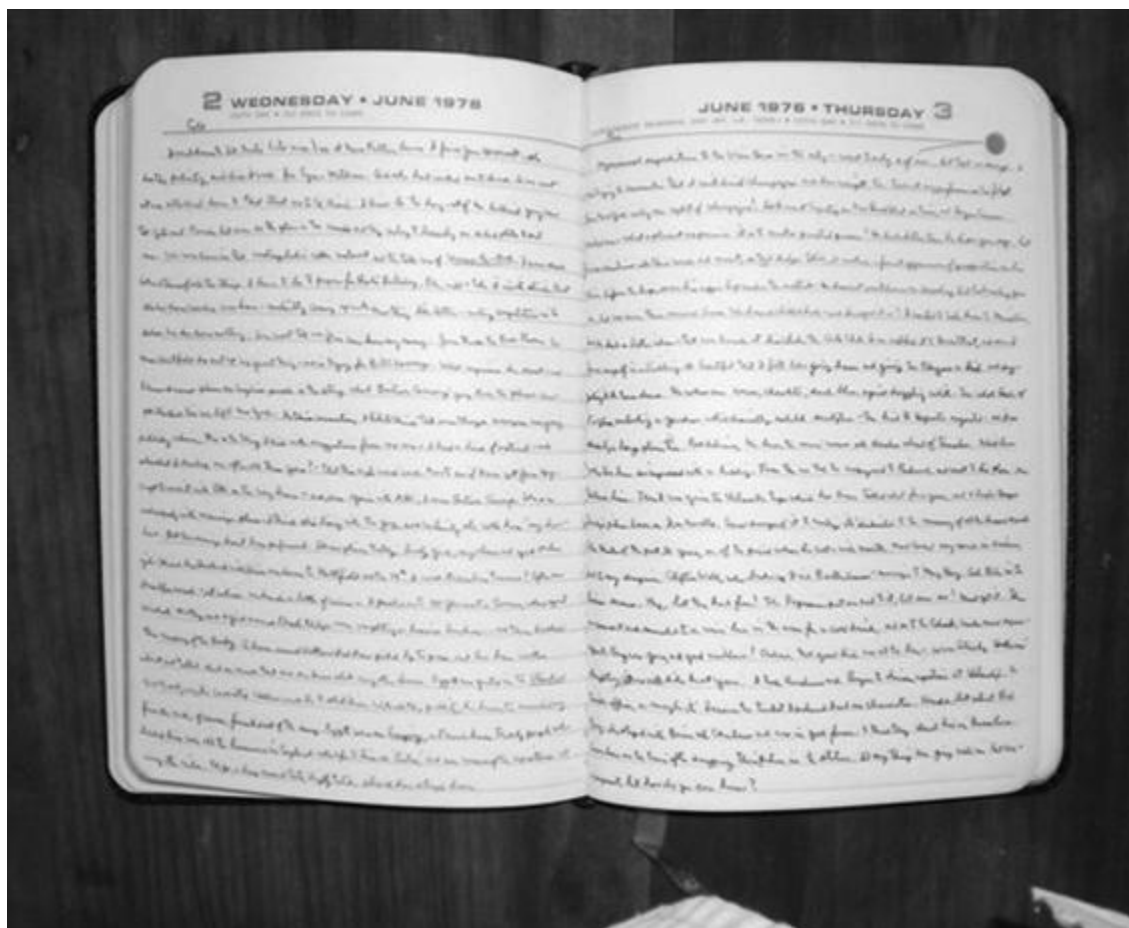
The grown ups who, as children, took part in the Pageant of Ashdown Forest.
(*Angus Beaton*)



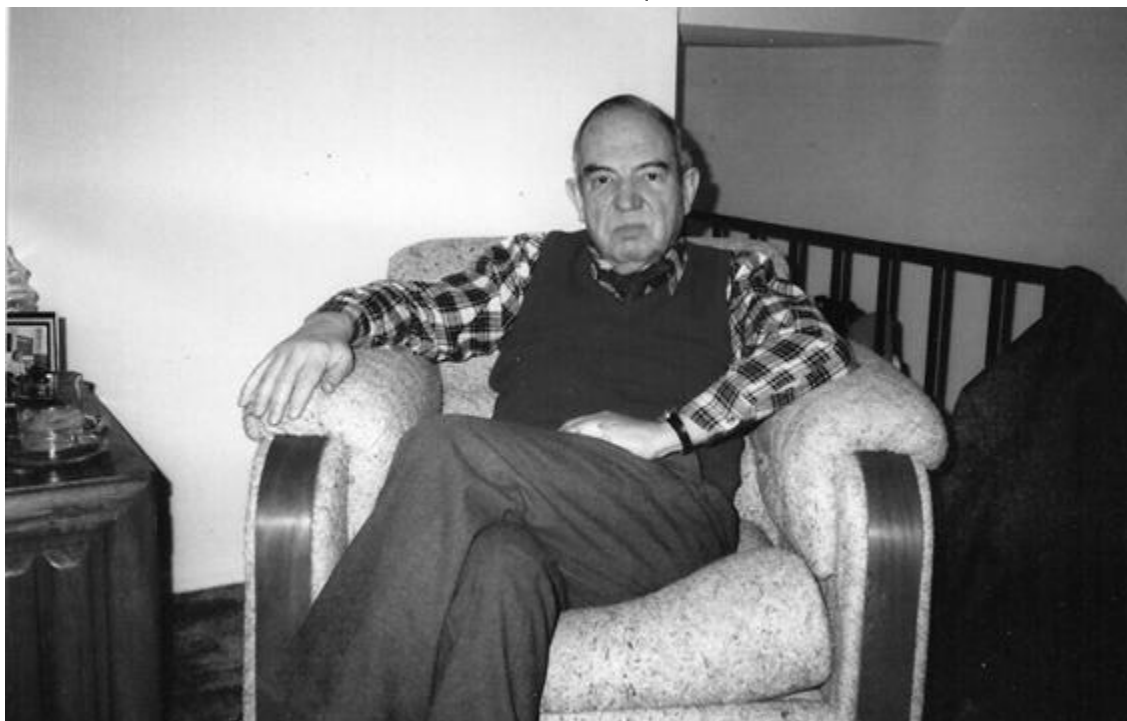
Christopher Robin's first-ever grown-up school bag with his initials inscribed.
Given by Mrs Milne to Bill Belton, Mr Rabbit Man. (*Alex Harrison*)



Pooh and friends – Eeyore, Kanga, Piglet and Tigger – at home in the New
York Children's Library. (c. *New York Public Library – NYPL*)



The Elliott Graham diaries. (*photo Duncan Field*)



Elliott Graham, who looked after Pooh for 40 years. (*Judy Henry, his niece*)



Pooh and Elliott's favourite hotels - the Great Western Royal in Paddington (*c. Steam Museum of the GWR*) and the Algonquin in New York.



In 1976 Pooh returns to the Ashdown Forest to play Poohsticks with Peter Taylor from the Hartfield Playschool. (c. *Mike Champion*)



Pooh witnesses the engagement of a young couple at the New York Children's Library. (*photo John Peters*)



The late Peter Dennis, the actor who took his performance of *Oh Bother* to the United States and Britain. (*Diane Dennis*)



Date	Name	Comments
7/6/09	Jasmine	I love your movies and books.
7/6/09	Victor	I love how you designed your characters.
7/6/09	Josh	I like Winnie the Pooh.
7/6/09	Sydney	That is Amazing
7/6/09	Annie T.	I love Winnie the Pooh!
7/6/09	Jesse L.	Dream come true!
7/05/09	Dublin, 10	I can't believe you still have the original toys today!
7/06/09	Dublin, 10	
7/06/09	Jen	A nail really holds Eeyore's tail?!

Children sign the visitors' book in the Library.



Pooh accompanied on his travels by American author, Nancy Winters, and her own bear, Moreton Hampstead. (c. *Nancy Winters*)



The old bakery today -now Pooh Corner and visited by thousands of tourists from all over the world every year. (*Mike Ridley*)



Times have changed! The signpost to Pooh Bridge. (*Shirley Harrison*)



Christopher Milne's daughter, Clare, launches a boat named after her at the Echo Centre for the Handicapped, Cornwall. (c. *The Echo Centre, Liskeard*)

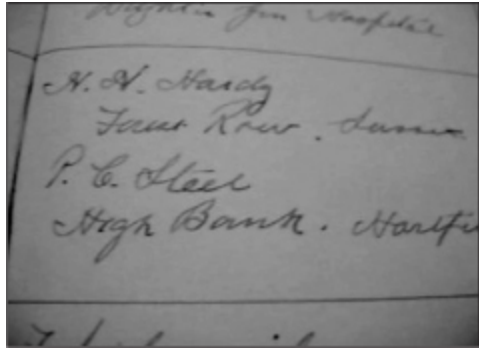


The World Poohsticks Championships, Oxford.

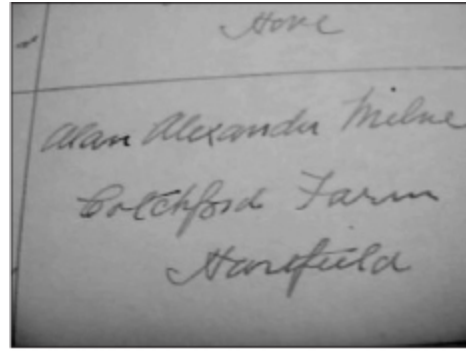


The Downs Crematorium in Brighton: the Upper Memorial Garden where A.A. Milne's ashes are now known to have been scattered. There is no plaque to commemorate his cremation.

Newly discovered entries from the Downs Crematorium ledgers: cremation number 21667 on 3rd February 1956.



Names and addresses of persons signing certificates: Doctors Hardy and Steel.



Name of deceased: Alan Alexander Milne.



Christopher Milne stands alone, overlooking the Forest of his childhood and the plaque unveiled in honour of his father, E.H. Shepard and Winnie-the-Pooh.
(c. *Mike Champion*)



The end of the story. Growing up – Christopher Robin off to school, kicking Pooh out of his life. (c. *Punch Library*)

A Pooh Lifeline

- ★ 1868: Charles Henry Harrod opens a shop in Kensington.
- ★ 1871: Joseph Farnell founds the family business in Acton.
- ★ 1879: Margarete Steiff makes toy stuffed elephant called 'Elefante'.
- ★ 1882: Alan Alexander Milne born on January 18 in Hampstead.
- ★ 1891: Joseph.
 - ★ dies leaving the business to his three daughters and son.
- ★ 1893-1900: Alan Alexander Milne at Westminster School.
- ★ 1894: Gebruder Sussenguth in Germany produce the first stuffed toy bear.
 - ★ 1900-1903: Alan Alexander Milne at Trinity College, Cambridge, on a mathematics scholarship.
 - ★ 1901: Queen Victoria dies.
 - ★ 1902: President Theodore Roosevelt refuses to shoot a bear cub and Maurice Michtom begins selling 'Teddy's bears'.
 - ★ 1903: Steiff in Germany sells toy bears at Leipzig Toy Fair and teddy bear fever grips Europe.
 - ★ 1906: A.A. Milne becomes Assistant Editor of *Punch*.
 - ★ 1907: First advertisement for a 'Teddy Bear' appears in *Playthings* magazine.
 - ★ 1908: *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* used as the music for Roosevelt's Presidential Campaign. Animal skins being replaced by mohair as a softer more durable fabric for toy teddy bears.
 - Farnell produces the first British teddy bears in mohair.
 - ★ 1910: A.A. Milne meets Daphne (originally Dorothy) de Selincourt.
 - ★ 1912: Harrods catalogue cover shows a Farnell bear.
 - ★ 1913: A.A. Milne (known later as Blue) marries Daphne de Selincourt (known later as Daff).
 - ★ 1914: Lieutenant Colebourn buys a bear in Canada and names her Winnie. Lieutenant Colebourn posted to fight in Europe and takes Winnie with him to England. Presents Winnie to London Zoo.

★ 1915–1919: A.A. Milne a signals officer and instructor in Army.
Invalided out.

★ 1917: A.A. Milne's first play *Wurzel-Flummery* performed in London.

★ 1919: A.A. Milne resigns from *Punch* .

His most famous play, *Mr. Pim Passes By*, produced in London.
Daff and Blue move to Mallord Street, Chelsea.

Anne Darlington born.

★ 1920: Christopher Robin (known as Moon) born.

★ 1921: Olive Rand (known as Nou) joins the family as Nanny.

Moon's first birthday. Daff buys the bear destined to become Winnie-the-Pooh from Harrods.

★ 1923: A.A. Milne writes the poem *Vespers* for Daphne, published first in *Vanity Fair*. The family holidays in Wales.

★ 1924: Moon meets a swan while on holiday at Poling, Sussex and calls it Pooh.

Blue meets artist, Ernest Shepard (known as Kipper).

When We Were Very Young published, illustrated by Shepard. Milne launched as a children's writer. Moon's teddy bear made his first appearance as 'Edward' bear.

The Milnes discover Cotchford Farm on Ashdown Forest in Hartfield, Sussex.

★ 1925: The family moves in to Cotchford for weekends and holidays.

Ernest Shepard and his wife Florence and son, Graham, visit Cotchford Farm.

'Edward' bear becomes 'Winnie-the-Pooh', explores the Forest and plays Poohsticks with Moon and Nou. Discovers the 100 Aker Wood and Owl's tree. On 24 December, the London *Evening News* publish the story *Winnie-the-Pooh and Some Bees*. Illustrations by J.H. Dowd.

★ 1926: *Eeyore has a Birthday* published in the August edition of the *Royal Magazine* and *Winnie-the-Pooh*, the best-selling of Milne's books, published in London on 14 October and in New York on 21 October.

Pooh becomes world famous.

John Macrae, President of Dutton Publishing in New York, visits Milnes.

Moon starts morning school at Miss Walters in Chelsea.

★ 1927: *Now We Are Six*, a second collection of children's verse published in October.

Florence Shepard dies.

★ 1928: Moon records *Pooh Hums, Vespers* and *Buckingham Palace* for HMV. *The House at Pooh Corner* published in October introducing Tigger.

★ 1929: Moon starts boys' school and Pooh is left at home.

Two plays produced, *The Ivory Door* and *Toad of Toad Hall*, an adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*.

Blue's favourite brother, Ken dies in May.

Pooh takes part in The Pageant of Ashdown Forest attended by the Duchess of York (future Queen and mother of Queen Elizabeth II).

★ 1930: Christopher starts boarding school. Nou leaves.

Stephen Slesinger visits Milnes and recognises Pooh's potential for his marketing empire. Milne sells merchandising rights to him.

The Depression in Britain and uSA.

★ 1931: Pooh has become a 50 million-dollar-a-year bear.

He stays in England while Daff and Blue visit the uSA.

★ 1932: He is pictured in colour for the first time.

★ 1933: Slesinger launches a Winnie-the-Pooh game.

★ 1935: Pooh is earning more money for A.A. Milne than his serious plays or novels.

★ 1939: A.A. Milne's autobiography *It's Too Late Now* published and dedicated to his brother, Ken.

Pooh probably first in Mallord Street, then in Sussex during the War years.

★ 1941–1946: Christopher Milne in the Royal Engineers.

★ 1947: Christopher graduates from Cambridge.

Elliott Macrae visits Cotchford Farm to arrange the toys' visit to New York.

Pooh and the toys arrive in America on board Queen Elizabeth.

Elliott Graham becomes their guardian and Pooh is introduced to Dutton's staff.

In June Pooh and the animals visit Detroit. Start tour of seven cities including Boston.

★ 1948: Christopher Milne marries his cousin, Lesley de Selincourt, in July.

★ 1951: A.A. Milne publishes his last play, *Before the Flood*.

Christopher Robin's animals are now touring the United States.
E.P. Dutton, Milne's American publisher, insures them for \$50,000.

★ 1952: Pooh in Miami and District Columbia.

A.A. Milne has a stroke in October and undergoes an operation in December that leaves him partially paralysed.

★ 1953: Pooh's first television appearance on *Fred Waring Show*.

★ 1956: A.A. Milne dies 31 January aged 74. His four children's books had already been translated into a dozen languages and sold more than seven million copies. Milne memorial service in London.

Daff offers the animals for sale to Dutton.

Clare Milne born to Christopher and Lesley.

★ 1960: *Winnie Ille Pu* published and reaches New York best-seller list.
Shirley Slesinger sells merchandising rights to Disney.

★ 1966: Walt Disney launches *Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree*.

Walt Disney dies.

★ 1969: Pooh returns to England for V&A exhibition and meets Peter Dennis.

★ 1971: Daphne dies.

★ 1976: Pooh returns to Hartfield.

E.H. Shepard dies.

★ 1978: Mike Ridley opens Pooh Corner shop in Hartfield. Nou dies.

★ 1979: Christopher Milne opens restored Pooh Bridge.

Plaque to A.A. Milne and E.H. Shepard unveiled on Ashdown Forest by Christopher Milne.

★ 1981: Pooh in Chicago and at the Fifth Avenue Book Fair.

★ 1982: *The Tao of Pooh* published.

★ 1983: Pooh flies to England on Concorde with American author Nancy Winters.

Appears on *Today* programme.

★ 1986: Pooh and friends offered to The Children's Room, New York Public Library.

★ 1987: Party hosted by the Mayor of New York to celebrate their new home.

British Petroleum applies to sink a bore hole on Ashdown Forest.
Protest led by Christopher Milne.

★ 1988: Elliott Graham dies

★ 1996: Christopher Milne dies.

★ 1998: Gwynneth Dunwoody MP launches 'Bring back Pooh' campaign.

★ 2000: Newly-restored Pooh Bridge reopened with funds from Disney.

★ 2011: Pooh's 90th birthday; an appeal launched to commemorate his life.

Acknowledgements

As ever, thanks go to: my agent Doreen Montgomery for her unstinting support and encouragement over so many years and her understanding about my ‘wobbly’ spelling; Sally Evemy, my ‘collaborator’ for all the extra research and editing I have again thrown at her; Judy Henry, who looked after us so well in America and for her introduction to the diaries of her Uncle, Elliott Graham; Alastair, Harriet and Alex Johns of Cotchford Farm, who allowed us to intrude on their privacy with much good humour and practical help; Mike Parcell, Hartfield historian, without whose acreage of archives we would have been lost; Duncan Field, my husband for allowing me to escape.

Following in the footsteps of Winnie-the-Pooh has been a happy and rewarding journey encouraged by the support and enthusiasm of almost all We hope we have forgotten no one.

In England we met or spoke to:

- ★ Sally Ackroyd, St. Albans Museum.
- ★ Gary Batt, Dukes Auctions.
- ★ Bill Belton of Hartfield.
- ★ Dick Belton of Crowborough.
- ★ Tom Belton of Hartfield.
- ★ Dawn Boakes of Withyham.
- ★ Mrs Stephen Bradley of Mallord Street.
- ★ Gyles Brandreth for permission to quote from his interview with Mrs Lesley Milne.
- ★ William Brooks, Cambridge university.
- ★ Michael Brown, The Milne Trustees.
- ★ Dru Butterfield, Dartmoor Ponies Heritage Trust.
- ★ Mike Champion.
- ★ Anna Clark, Teddy Bear Doctor.
- ★ Sheri Coates, The Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management.
- ★ Pauline Cockrill, *Teddy Bear Encyclopedia*.
- ★ Renata Colley, CEDA.
- ★ Helen Cruikshank, Lodsworth.

- ★ 11th Earl De La Warr.
- ★ Susan Derry, Buckhurst Park.
- ★ Dr. Patti Darke, Surrey university.
- ★ Laura Dawkins, Dictionary of National Biography.
- ★ Tamsin Dunwoody.
- ★ Michael Fletcher, London Zoo.
- ★ Rosemary Foster (nee Weaver).
- ★ John Foster.
- ★ Andre Galiani, *Punch* Archive.
- ★ Rose Glover of Hartfield.
- ★ Gareth Goodwin, Archivist Guards Museum.
- ★ Leigh Gotch, Toy director, Bonhams.
- ★ David Graham, *Hartfield Parish Magazine* .
- ★ Davina Griffiths, Plas Brondanw.
- ★ Les Hallett of Hartfield.
- ★ Karen Halls of The Decoy, Poling.
- ★ Kate Harmer and Catherine Howell, Museum of Childhood.
- ★ Alex Harrison.
- ★ Hartfield Playschool parents and children.
- ★ Nancy Holmes of Hartfield.
- ★ Ailsa Holmes, Trevor Trench, Tamara van Manen and Michael Hall School.
- ★ Jenny Hudson of Hartfield.
- ★ Minette and Roger Hunt.
- ★ Peter Janson Smith.
- ★ Gareth Johnson of Hartfield.
- ★ Richard Jones Perrott.
- ★ Irene Jones of Lodsworth.
- ★ David Kelsall, St Albans Cathedral Archives.
- ★ David Knights, Acton History Group.
- ★ Vikki Langridge and team, Downs Crematorium.
- ★ Robin Llewellyn, Portmeirion.
- ★ Bob Low, The Garrick Club.
- ★ Kim Lyons, The Milne Trust.
- ★ Adrian McConnell.
- ★ Laura Medhurst of Hartfield.
- ★ Molly Millington, Evelyn Clarke House Forest Row.

- ★ Tommy Mitchell of Hartfield.
- ★ Erik, Elizabeth and Mark Nielsen.
- ★ Dr. Jonathan Oates, Acton Library archives.
- ★ Peter Old for generous use of archive photographs.
- ★ Trish Oliver and Audrey Duck, *Good Bears of the World*.
- ★ Michael Palmer, London Zoo.
- ★ Andy Parker, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust.
- ★ James and Michael Pitt-Payne for personal memories.
- ★ Polly Pumphrey for much needed computer help.
- ★ Philip Pople of Bishopstone.
- ★ Mike and June Ridley of Hartfield.
- ★ Caroline Roche.
- ★ Tim Rooth.
- ★ Hannah Rooth (nee Symons).
- ★ Jo Rothery, McBears.
- ★ Julian Roup, Bonhams;.
- ★ Katie and Julia Ryde, daughters of Anne Darlington.
- ★ Ian Scott, Deans.
- ★ Brian Sibley, author and broadcaster.
- ★ Chris Silcock, Westminster School.
- ★ Carol South, Lodsworth.
- ★ Alison Stokes, *Hero Bear* .
- ★ Jane Stoneham, The Sensory Trust.
- ★ Rev. Brian Strange of Georgeham.
- ★ James Sutton, Victoria and Albert Museum Archive.
- ★ Janice Swanson and Stephanie Thwaites, Curtis Brown.
- ★ Pete Tasker formerly of Hartfield.
- ★ Mary, Simon and Peter Taylor of Hartfield.
- ★ The Polka Theatre Wimbledon Teddy Bear Museum.
- ★ The Royal Literary Fund for Authors.
- ★ Mary Thompson, daughter of Mary Hillier.
- ★ Ann Thwaite, biographer of A.A. Milne.
- ★ Tour Guides International.
- ★ Roger Trayhurn, Swindon Library.
- ★ Ann Treneman, journalist.
- ★ Johnny Turnbull, Estate Agent for Mallord Street.

- ★ Nigel urwin, Clare Milne Trustees.
- ★ Ailsa Walsh, great niece of Sybil Kempe.
- ★ Lyn Welch, The Twyford Church of England High School, Acton.
- ★ Dr. Elizabeth Williamson of Oxford.
- ★ Helen Winchurch, The Echo Centre.
- ★ Nancy Winters, author and arctophile.
- ★ Victoria Wood, Victoria and Albert Museum.
- ★ Sebastian Wormell, Harrods Archives.
- ★ Paul Yerrell of Amber Computers who was always there when needed.

In America and Canada:

- ★ Jenny Boylan, author, Maine.
- ★ Wanda Chow of Burnaby.
- ★ Scott Byers, Renata Colley, Mercedes Diaz and Holly Thomas, Macy New York.
- ★ Gord Crossley, Fort Garry Horse Museum, Winnipeg.
- ★ Peter and Diane Dennis.
- ★ John Dyson, Millbank Capital Management.
- ★ Dr Vartan Gregorian, President of The Carnegie Corporation.
- ★ Humanities Research Centre, Austin, The Milne Archives.
- ★ Michael Inman and William Stinger, New York Public Library.
- ★ Joe Kanon, former President of Dutton.
- ★ Mimi Kayden, also formerly of Dutton.
- ★ Marleen Lee of Boston.
- ★ Diane Loughran, Silverdale Vineyards, California.
- ★ Richard Marek, President of Dutton.
- ★ Judy Morse, Penguin.
- ★ Debbie Olsen, Researcher.
- ★ Stephanie Owing-Lurie.
- ★ Amber Paranick, The Library of Congress.
- ★ John Peters, New York Children's Library.
- ★ Bob Sadler of Detroit.
- ★ Carole Scheele.
- ★ Nicole Steeves, Chicago Public Library.
- ★ Michael Willis, formerly of Dutton.

Index

A.A. Milne. *His Life*, (biography), see Thwaite, Ann

Acton, [13-18](#), [19](#), [21](#), [127](#), [147](#)

America, [34](#), [36-9](#), [49](#), [73](#), [76](#), [81-9](#), [90-101](#), [107-19](#), [127](#), [131](#), [144-7](#)

arctophile, [108-10](#), [127](#), [136](#)

Ashdown Forest, [9](#), [10](#), [25](#), [37](#), [55-8](#), [77-80](#), [90-2](#), [98](#), [103](#), [123-6](#), [146-](#)

[7](#)

At Home, [10](#)

Barrie, J.M., [25](#), [48](#), [52](#)

BBC, [35](#), [71](#), [107](#), [119](#), [121](#), [134](#)

Benedictus, David, [104](#), [106](#), [111](#), [121](#)

‘Blue’, see Milne, (A.A.) Alan Alexander ‘Blue’

Blyton, Enid, [72](#)

Boakes, Mrs. Dawn, [10](#), [62-3](#), [78](#), [120](#)

BP, [123-4](#)

Brandreth, Gyles, [136-8](#)

Brilliant Career of Winnie-the-Pooh, The, see Thwaite, Ann

Buckingham Palace, [22](#), [52](#), [55](#), [90](#), [143](#)

Buckingham Palace, [51](#), [76](#)

Cambridge university, [25](#), [86](#), [88](#), [95](#), [128](#)

CEDA, [138](#)

Chandler, Arthur R. (biographer of E.H. Shepard), [69](#)

Changing the Guard, [51](#)

Chauffeur, [55](#), [63](#), [80](#): see also [59](#), [78-80](#)

Chestnuts, The, [67](#)

Christopher Robin, see Milne, Christopher Robin, ‘Moon’

Churchill, Winston, [71](#), [142](#)

Clare Milne Trust, The, [136](#), [138](#), [140](#)

Colebourn, Lieutenant Harry, [43-6](#)

Cotchford, 10-11, [55](#), [58-66](#), [70](#), [77-8](#), [85-9](#), [98-9](#), [102](#), [108](#)

‘Daff’, see Milne, Daphne, ‘Daff’, (born Dorothy de Selincourt)

Darlington, Anne (later Ryde), [48](#), [49](#), [50](#), [63](#), [74](#), [86](#), [100](#), [145](#)

Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust, The, [139-40](#)
 De La Warr, Earl, and family, [57](#), [63](#), [66](#), [77](#), [125](#)
 Dennis, Peter (Voice of Pooh, the), [105](#), [109](#), [117](#), [123](#), [146](#)
 Depression, [34](#), [82](#)
 Disney, [10](#), [12](#), [42](#), [81](#), [101-3](#), [122](#), [125](#), [127](#), [129-30](#), [134](#), [136](#)
Dormouse and the Doctor, The, [38](#)
 Dowd, J.H., [42](#)
 Downs Crematorium, [146-7](#)
 Dunwoody, Gwynneth, [144](#)
 Dutton, E.P. & Co (uS publisher), [10](#), [36](#), [38-9](#), [71](#), [83](#), [89](#), [91-9](#), [110-18](#)
 Dyson, [112](#), [114-16](#)
 Echo Centre, Liskeard, [139](#)
 Eeyore, [9](#), [10](#), [27](#), [31](#), [32](#), [58](#), [62](#), [64](#), [66](#), [67](#), [68](#), [70](#), [76](#), [89](#), [93](#), [95](#), [99](#),
[101-5](#), [119](#), [129](#), [146](#)
Eeyore's Birthday, [76](#), [119](#)
Eeyore Loses a Tail, [67](#)
 Enchanted Place (Galleons, or Gills, Lap), [10](#), [13](#), [58](#), [65](#), [66](#), [70](#), [107](#), [108](#),
[123-4](#), [147](#)
Enchanted Places, The (Christopher Milne's autobiography), [23](#), [33](#), [67](#), [74](#),
[89](#), [146](#)
 'expotition', [34](#), [67](#), [70](#), [121](#)
 Farnell, Joseph Kirby, [14](#), [15](#), [21](#), [28](#)
Farnell Teddy Bears, see Martin, Kathy
 Farnells, [14-23](#), [40](#), [127](#)
 Food for Heroes (Hero Pie), [132-3](#)
Fourth Wall, The, [75](#)
 Fraser Simson, F., [48](#), [76](#), [100](#)
 Garrick Club, The, [11](#), [53](#), [98](#), [133](#), [135-6](#)
 Good Bears of the World, [108](#), [131-2](#)
 Graham, Elliott, [91-3](#), [96-101](#), [103-4](#), [106-7](#), [109-17](#), [121](#), [145](#)
 Grahame, Kenneth, [25](#), [37](#), [39](#), [48](#)
Gruffalo, The, [119](#)
Halfway Down, [40](#)
 Harbour Bookshop, 10, [29](#), [96](#), [122](#), [124](#), [145](#)
 Harrod, Charles
 Henry, [21](#)

Harrods, [17](#), [19](#), [20](#), [21-4](#), [30](#), [31](#), [59](#), [87](#)
 Hartfield, 9-12, [50](#), [55](#), [60](#), [62-63](#), [70](#), [77](#), [78](#), [80](#), [88](#), [98](#), [107](#), [120](#),
[122](#), [125](#), [126](#), [130](#), [144](#), [146](#)
 Hartfield Playgroup, [10-11](#), [107-8](#)
 heffalump, [58](#), [67](#), [109](#), [124](#)
 HMV, [76](#)
Hollow on the Hill (Christopher Milne's third autobiography), [146](#)
 Hotels, [91](#), [106](#), [109-10](#)
House at Pooh Corner, The, 9, 13, [27](#), [36](#), [67](#), [75](#), [76](#), [93](#), [119](#), [120](#)
 HRH The Duchess of York, see Queen Mother
 Hundred Acre Wood (also [100](#) Aker Wood and [100](#) Acre Wood), [57](#), [66](#),
[102](#), [128-9](#)
 'hunny', 12, [46](#), [76](#), [77](#), [78](#), [81](#), [83](#), [114](#)
 'hunny Tea Party', [78](#)
In Which We Are Introduced To Winnie-the-Pooh and Some Bees, [71](#), [102](#)
It's Too Late Now (A.A. Milne's autobiography),
 Kanga, 9, 10, [27](#), [31](#), [58](#), [68](#), [77](#), [93](#), [95](#), [97](#)
 Kempe, Sybil, [17](#), [18](#)
 King George VI, [90](#)
 legal battle (Milne trustees, the Slesingers and Disney), [101-4](#)
 London Zoo, [45](#), [47](#), [113](#)
 Lucas, E.V., [38](#), [45](#)
 Mackail, Denis, [48](#), [50](#), [74](#)
 Macrae family, [71](#), [83-4](#), [89](#), [91](#), [93-4](#), [100](#), [116](#)
 Mallord Street, [29-30](#), [35](#), [40](#), [48-51](#), [53](#), [61](#), [71-3](#), [76](#), [81](#), [83](#)
Man Who Drew Pooh, The (E.H. Shepard's biography), see Chandler, Arthur, R.
 Martin, Kathy, [14](#), [27](#)
 Methuen (uK publisher), [11](#), [38](#), [39](#), [45](#), [82](#), [107](#), [113](#)
 Milne, (A.A.) Alan Alexander: 'Blue', [9-12](#), [22](#), [24-42](#), [46](#), [48-9](#), [54-6](#),
[58-61](#), [63](#), [66-7](#), [69-71](#), [75-78](#), [80](#), [82-6](#), [88-9](#), [91-2](#), [98](#), [103](#), [109](#), [123](#),
[127-8](#), [146](#)
 Milne, Christopher Robin:
 'Moon', [9-10](#), [12-13](#), [23-4](#), [27-43](#), [46](#), [48-68](#), [70-80](#), [82-9](#), [95-6](#), [98-](#)
[100](#), [104](#), [110](#), [113](#), [116-17](#), [121-5](#), [135-7](#), [145-6](#)
 Milne, Clare (daughter of CRM), [100](#), [123](#), [136-40](#), [145](#)

Milne, Daphne: 'Daff' (born Dorothy de Selincourt), [9-11](#), [22-3](#), [26-32](#), [36-7](#), [46](#), [50](#), [59-63](#), [69](#), [72](#), [75-7](#), [79-80](#), [82-6](#), [89](#), [96](#), [98-101](#), [113](#), [130](#), [145](#)

Milne, (Ken) Kenneth John, (brother of AAM), and family, [25](#), [30](#), [71](#), [75](#), [77](#), [86](#), [98](#)

Milne, Lesley (widow of CRM, formerly de Selincourt), [96](#), [100](#), [123-4](#), [135-8](#), [145](#)

nanny, nannies, [22](#), [30](#), [32](#), [50](#), [63](#), [64](#), [66](#), [82](#), [120](#)

NBC, [81](#)

New York Children's Library, 12, [116-17](#), [144-5](#)

New York Natural History Museum, [101](#)

New York Times, [81](#), [104](#), [114](#), [116](#), [119](#), [144](#)

Northcliffe, Lord, [25](#)

North Pole, [58](#), [124](#)

'Nou' see Rand, Olive (later Brockwell)

Now We Are Six, 9, [62](#), [65](#), [74](#), [75](#), [76](#), [106](#)

Osman, Iva, [65](#), [122](#)

Owl, 9, [27](#), [58](#), [67](#), [74](#), [105](#), [121](#), [129](#)

Path Through The Trees, The (Christopher Milne's autobiography), [96](#), [146](#)

Peace With Honour, [84](#)

Pear's Soap, [75](#)

Pembroke College Cambridge Winnie-the-Pooh Society, The, [128-9](#)

Penguin Books, [115](#)

Peter Pan, [25](#), [51](#), [52](#)

Piglet, [9-11](#), [31](#), [32](#), [37](#), [41](#), [58](#), [64](#), [65-8](#), [74](#), [76-7](#), [90](#), [93](#), [95](#), [105](#), [108](#), [117](#), [119](#), [121](#), [146](#)

Plas Brondanw, [37](#)

Playfair, Nigel, [37](#), [38](#)

Pooh and the Psychologists, [119](#)

Pooh Goes Visiting And Gets Into A Tight Place, [72](#), [102](#)

Poohsticks, 10, [66](#), [79](#), [107](#), [130](#), [131](#)

Poohsticks/Posingford Bridge, [58](#), [65](#), [107-8](#), [122-6](#)

Potter, Beatrix, [19](#)

Punch, [26-8](#), [38](#), [69](#), [75](#), [102](#)

Queen Elizabeth II, [10](#), [54](#), [77](#), [90](#), [128](#), [143](#)

Queen Mother, [26](#), [77-8](#), [90](#)

Rabbit, 9, [27](#), [58](#), [68](#), [72](#), [105](#), [129](#)
 Rand, Olive: 'Nou' (later Brockwell), [24](#), [30-33](#), [35-6](#), [38](#), [50](#), [52-5](#), [60](#),
[62-7](#), [79-80](#), [84](#)
Return to the Hundred Acre Wood, see Benedictus, David Ridley, Mike, [120-22](#)
 Roo, [31](#), [58](#), [64](#), [68](#), [77](#), [93](#)
 Roosevelt, President Theodore (Teddy), [16](#), [17](#), [48](#), [127](#)
 Royal Literary Fund for Authors, The, [75](#), [98](#), [133-5](#)
 Rupert Bear, [12](#), [18](#), [108](#)
 Sagan, Francoise, [94](#), [97](#)
 Sensory Trust, The, [140](#)
 Shelley, Norman, [71](#), [121](#)
 Shepard, E.H. 'Kipper', 9, [12](#), [38-41](#), [46-7](#), [58](#), [65-8](#), [70-1](#), [75](#), [80-1](#), [95](#),
[98-9](#), [104-5](#), [114](#), [123](#), [127](#), [146](#)
 Shepard, Florence, [70](#), [71](#), [75](#)
 Simson, H. Fraser, see Fraser Simson, H. Slesinger, Stephen, [81](#), [82](#), [101](#),
[103](#)
 Steiff, Margarete, [15](#), [16](#), [40](#)
 Stopes, Marie, [28-9](#), [41](#)
 Sundials, [67](#), [85](#)
 Symons, Hannah (later Rooth), [64](#), [66](#), [77-8](#)
Tao of Pooh, The, [118](#)
 Tasker, George, and family, [11](#), [59](#), [61-2](#), [66-7](#), [78-9](#), [85](#), [88](#), [98-9](#)
 Teddy Bear, [9-18](#), [70](#), [109](#), [127](#), [131-2](#)
Teddy Bear Guide, The, [127](#)
 Territorial Army, [31](#)
 Thatcher, Mrs., [124](#), [125](#)
 Thwaite, Ann, [30](#), [33](#), [36](#), [39](#), [40](#), [71](#), [82](#), [145](#)
 Tigger, 9, 10, [32](#), [37](#), [58](#), [68](#), [77](#), [88](#), [91](#), [93](#), [95](#), [103](#), [105](#), [121](#), [129](#)
Toad of Toad Hall, [37](#)
 Trespassers W, [67](#)
 Twyford Church of England High School (The Elms), [18](#), [147](#)
Vespers, [35](#), [40](#), [51](#), [53](#), [72](#), [76](#)
 Victoria and Albert Museum, [105](#), [115](#)
 Voice of Pooh, the, see Dennis, Peter
 Wells, H.G., [25](#), [48](#)
 Westminster School, [25](#), [98](#), [133](#), [135](#)

When We Were Very Young, [9](#), [30](#), [38](#), [39](#), [48](#), [51](#), [69](#), [76](#), [84](#)

Wind in the Willows, *The*, [12](#), [25](#), [37](#), [39](#)

Winnie Ille Pu (Latin translation), [104](#), [114](#)

Winnie-the-Pooh (the Farnell Alpha bear), [9](#), [33](#), [34](#), [37-8](#), [66-76](#), [79-84](#), [86-88](#), [112](#), [120-7](#), [146-7](#): born, [16](#), [18](#): in Harrods, [20](#), [23-4](#): in Mallord Street, [23](#), [31-2](#), [40](#), [71-4](#), [83](#), [87](#): in Cotchford, [25](#), [55-6](#), [58](#), [60-7](#), [70](#), [72](#), [77-8](#) (the Pageant), [79](#), [87](#), [89](#): career launch, [37](#), [40](#), [42](#): named, 426: in America, [10](#), [12](#), [77](#), [81](#), [87](#), [89-93](#), [97](#), [99-104](#), [109](#), [111-18](#), [124](#), [145](#), [147](#): returns to England, [11](#), [105-110](#)

Winnie-the-Pooh, 9, 11, [42](#), [72](#), [81](#), [83-4](#), [93](#), [102](#), [104](#), [106](#), [108](#), [118-19](#), [123](#), [141](#)

Winnie the Pooh And The Honey Tree, [10](#), [102](#)

Winters, Nancy, [109-10](#) ‘

Wolery, The’, [67](#)

World War I (Great War), [17](#), [27](#), [29](#), [31](#), [34](#), [43](#)

World War II, 9, 10, [33](#), [40](#), [72](#), [92](#), [120](#), [131](#)

The Life and Times of the Real

Winnie- the-Pooh



The Teddy Bear Who
Inspired A.A. Milne

Shirley Harrison