

Looking Back

Part One: *The Search*

One bright, sunny morning in the middle of June, 2010, Paramartha and I left Madhyamaloka for Ipswich, with Paramartha at the wheel. Our journey had a double objective. We were to visit the Ipswich Buddhist Centre, where I was to give a talk, as well as meet members of the local sangha, and we were to search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors, who we knew came from that part of Suffolk. On the way we visited Bury St Edmunds, a place I had not seen before, where we spent a couple of hours looking round the cathedral, and where we had lunch in the cathedral refectory. From Bury we drove straight to Ipswich, and soon we were being warmly greeted by Swadipa and Carol, with whom we were to stay. In the evening, after I had rested, Harshaprabha, an old friend of ours, took us out to a quiet Italian restaurant for dinner. After the meal he drove us round the town, of which we had not seen much during our visit the previous year. We saw the marina, where I was astonished by the enormous number of dinghies and other boats, the docks, and an early Norman Foster building – a controversial one, according to Harshaprabha. We also saw, on a house in the old part of the town, a plaque which informed us that the house opposite was the birthplace of the great Cardinal Wolsey, Ipswich's most famous son.

After breakfast the following day Paramartha and I set out for Felixtowe, which before the war was a popular holiday resort. The reason for our going there was that I very much wanted to see the sea, a pleasure I had not had for some time. As the product of an island race I was very conscious of the sea, and as all my ancestors on the spear side were from Suffolk I was particularly conscious of the North Sea. Indeed, since I first encountered it in my teens in Kate Freiligrath Kroeker's translation, Heine's cycle 'The North Sea' has been one of my favourite longer poems. Be that as it may, there we were on the deserted beach that morning, Paramartha and I. Except for the wind, it was a perfect June day. The sun was bright, the sky without a cloud. I walked down the sand to within a few feet of the white surf, and stood there looking out over the rollers to the distant horizon, where the prussian blue of the sea met the eggshell blue of the sky.

From Felixstowe we drove to Battsford. Thanks to the internet, Paramartha had discovered that my great-grandfather Edward Lingwood was born in Battsford in 1828, and in the absence of other clues we had decided that it was in Battsford that we would begin our search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors. The village was rather scattered, and we had to drive round for a while before finding the lane that led to the parish church. It was built of cobbles, like so many Suffolk churches, had a quaint belfry like structure at one end instead of the more usual round tower, and was dedicated to St Mary. Finding the door unlocked, we entered and spent the next fifteen or twenty minutes looking round the church's well lit interior. There was a memorial tablet on one of the walls, and there were red heraldic shields in two of the windows, but these did not relate to any member of the Lingwood family, though it was more than likely that my great-grandfather was baptised in the ancient stone font. We therefore continued our search in the graveyard. It was overgrown with grass and weeds, and the graves were not in neat rows, as in a modern municipal cemetery, but scattered, as if whenever a new grave was needed the sexton simply dug it wherever there was an

unoccupied space. Moreover, the ground was very uneven, so that I had to tread carefully. This meant that soon Paramartha was not only ahead of me but out of sight round the other side of the building. I paused, and stood in the hot sun surveying the scene. Before long Paramartha was back. He had found something, he said quietly with a broad smile. I followed him as quickly as I could to the back of the church. Close to the wall there was a grave with a small double headstone. The inscriptions on all the other headstones we had seen were illegible, as the soft sandstone had weathered over the years, but the inscription on the double headstone could be read quite easily, probably because the grave was protected by the wall. Two children were buried there. One was Arthur, who was born in 1841 and died the same year, aged only a few months; the other was Elizabeth, who was born in 1840 and died in 1849. They were the children of Edward and Sarah Lingwood, the headstone said, which meant that they were my great-grandfather's brother and sister.

We left Battsford well pleased with the start we had made. It was more than we had dared hope for from the first day of our search. We had not driven for more than a mile or two along the road out of the village, a road bordered on both sides by trees in the full glory of their summer leafage, when Paramartha suddenly slowed down, then stopped. He had seen on the other side of the road, at the entrance to a driveway, a sign which said 'St John's' and the name had jogged his memory. He had come across it while researching my ancestry on the internet! We therefore parked just inside the driveway, and Paramartha strode up to the house to make enquiries. Minutes later he was talking to whoever it was had come to the door in response to his knock. As he afterwards told me, he had apologised to the lady for disturbing her but explained that he had with him an old gentleman whose family may have had a connection with the house. Naturally she wanted to know the family's name. When he said it was Lingwood she told him that the family had indeed once occupied the house and that she had a box of papers relating to its history. Paramartha hurried back to me with the news, whereupon I walked with him up the driveway and introduced myself to the lady to whom he had spoken, who by this time had emerged from the house. Soon the three of us were seated on chairs under the trees. Her name was Pat Knoch, the woman told us. She was eighty, had lived at the house for some years and it was called St John's because the Knights of St John had occupied the site until the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII. The Knights had planted the holm oak under which I was sitting. Having given us this information and more besides, she went back into the house to fetch what she called her Lingwood box. Paramartha and I "looked at each other in a wild surmise". Was providence, or our good karma, about to vouchsafe us the miracle of a breakthrough in our search for traces of my ancestors? When at last the box came we were not disappointed. A cursory inspection showed that it contained wills, personal letters, photographs, obituaries and other items of interest. A treasure had fallen into our hands. It had fallen into them by accident, or rather by virtue of a whole series of accidents. Had we not been driving along that particular road that morning Paramartha would not have spotted the sign that said 'St John's'. Had his memory not been jogged by the sign we would not have stopped, and he would not have gone up to the house to make enquiries. Had Pat Knoch not been at home at the time, we would not have known of the existence of the Lingwood box. Finally, had Pat Knoch not been of a generous, trusting disposition she would not have allowed us to take away the precious box and photocopy its contents. Indeed, it was clear that she shared in our joy, and was glad to have been of assistance to us in our search.

Paramartha and I had been so absorbed in our fresh discovery that we had forgotten about lunch, and it was only when we were on the road again that we realised we had not yet eaten. Swadipa had recommended the Red Lion, this being the only vegetarian pub in Suffolk, perhaps in all England. As it was situated a little off the beaten track we experienced some difficulty finding it, and eventually we had to pull into the side of the road and phone Swadipa for directions. Though it was mid week we found the place full, which suggested that vegetarianism had made some headway in Suffolk. We secured a table in a quiet corner, some distance from the bar, and while waiting for our meal dipped into the Lingwood Box, which we of course had not left in the car. After the meal, which was a reasonably good one, we drove straight back to Ipswich. I went to my room and rested, as in the evening I would be giving a talk at the Ipswich Buddhist Centre. Paramartha went and had the entire contents of the Lingwood Box photocopied. The result was 200 pages of material.

I had opened the new Ipswich Buddhist Centre the previous year, and this time I had been asked to bless the centre's newly completed chapter room. This I did by chanting a few Pali verses, after which I shared with my closely packed auditors some of my recent reflections. First, though, I spoke of Paramartha's and my search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors and of the remarkable discovery we had made that very day. That search would probably bring us back to Ipswich again, and thus my ties with the local sangha would be further strengthened. I then adverted to the events of the past year, and in particular to the change from 'Western' to 'Triratna' in the nomenclature of our Order. This enabled me to speak on the subject of the Three Jewels, i.e. on the Buddha or Perfectly Enlightened One, the Dharma or body of truths taught by the Buddha, and the Sangha or spiritual community of those practicing the Dharma. Usually, I said, the three were enumerated in this order, which was the chronological one, as it were, the Dharma having originated from the Buddha, and the Sangha from the Dharma. But the order could be reversed. There was no Sangha without the Dharma, and no Dharma without the Buddha. It was the Dharma that made the Sangha. Without the united practice of the Dharma by its members the Sangha was no more than an ecclesiastical institution or a social club. I then spoke about the Buddha. It was important that we knew about the life of Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha, for it was ultimately on him that we depended for what knowledge of the Dharma we possessed. The most reliable source of information about that life was the Pali scriptures. Besides providing us with the earliest account of his teaching, those scriptures tell us a good deal about his personal appearance, his way of life, his manner of teaching, his relations with his disciples and with a wide variety of other people, from princes to peasants, and from ascetics to well to do farmers. We can also get a sense of the Buddha's living presence by going on pilgrimage to the places where he was born, where he gained perfect enlightenment, where he gave his first teaching, and where he passed into paranirvana. This, or something like it, was what I said that evening, though at somewhat greater length. I also answered a few questions.

On our second and last whole day in Suffolk it was dull and overcast. But Paramartha and I did not, however, allow our spirits to be dampened, and after breakfast we left for the village of Barking where my great-great-great-grandfather Edward Lingwood of Eye was buried. He was buried in the parish church of St Mary. His grave was an alter grave, that is to say it was situated immediately in front of the alter. I sat in the car, and Paramartha went to investigate. On his return he reported that the area in front of the alter was carpeted and he had been unable to see whether or not there was a grave underneath. We therefore drove to Battisford, where Paramartha gave back the Lingwood Box to Pat Knoch and thanked her for allowing us to photocopy the contents.

Before he left she insisted on his taking photographs of the Victorian flush toilet and of the Maltese cross above the door, the well known badge of the Knights of St John. The Lingwood Box having been returned to its owner as promised, Paramartha and I were soon on our way to Eye, some thirty miles to the north. When we were a few miles from our destination we happened to see a cemetery by the roadside, and as the gates stood wide open we drove in. Just inside the entrance, on the right, there was a small chapel, and beyond it several acres of old graves. While Paramartha went in search of inscriptions I stayed near the car and studied a row of new graves on the left of the path, some of them with bunches of fresh flowers on them. They were all close together, and had small white headstones of what may have been marble. Some graves, I noticed, were very small, so that I wondered if they might hold not a dead body but only a handful of ashes. Paramartha returned from his search to say that he had not found anything of interest. Here, as elsewhere, the headstones were of sandstone, which meant that any inscriptions on them soon became illegible. We therefore resumed our journey north.

Eye was not a village but a town. It dated back to the end of the 11th Century, when William the Conqueror granted the lordship of Eye to William Malet, who built a castle and established a market. Before long there was a flourishing town on the spot. Towards the end of the 14th century the church of St Peter and St Paul was built, and it was enlarged a hundred years later, when the hundred and one foot tower was added. Both church and tower were built of knapped flints which, glittering in the dull morning light, contrasted well with the dressed stone that had also been used. The building was, in fact, a fine specimen of East Anglian medieval architecture, and testified to the wealth of the town in the middle ages. The interior was no less impressive than the exterior. It had a nave with two side aisles, a high, arched wooden roof, and a wooden rude screen that connected the end pair of pillars. Paramartha and I were not the only visitors and we wandered round looking at the memorials to departed worthies, at the carved woodwork, at the richly coloured and gilded panels depicting various kings and saints, including (as I later discovered) the martyred King Edmund and St Edward the Confessor, and at the very gothic cover of the stone font. There was no sign of the Lingwood name anywhere, and soon we were out of the town and on our way to Brome.

The door of the parish church of St Mary, Brome, was open, but as the sky was still overcast it was dark inside. Paramartha groped his way round the nave to a light switch but the single electric bulb gave only a feeble light and I could see very little. Nonetheless, I managed to make my way to the Cornwallis family tombs, on the other side of which Paramartha was moving about. There must have been four or five tombs all crowded together to the left of the altar. In the gloom it was difficult for me to make out their shadowy forms but I passed my hand over the bare head of the recumbent figure on the tomb nearest, then over the 'gable peak' head dress of the recumbent figure by his side, a head dress that told me that the couple had lived in the early Tudor period. The stone was cold to the touch. I thought of a passage in 'The Eve of St Agnes', in which Keats describes the ancient beadsman and the castle chapel:

The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
 Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

The sky had now cleared, and after the darkness and cold of the church it was pleasant to wander among the crumbling headstones in the warm sunshine, looking for inscriptions that were legible. As usual, Paramartha took the lead in the search, forging ahead, and moving rapidly from one headstone to another. After fifteen or twenty minutes he motioned me to follow him to the back of the church. Side by side, their headstones against the cobbled back wall of the church there were five coffin-shaped tomb graves. The inscriptions were all quite legible, the graves were those of my great-great-great-great-grandfather Thomas Lingwood of Brome, his wife, and three of their sons. It was very quiet there behind the church. I stood regarding the five graves for a few minutes, then turned away and slowly walked back to the car with Paramartha. The day's search had ended in an important discovery, and it was time for us to leave Brome for Ipswich, the dead for the living, and the past for the world of the 21st century.

We were in a mood of quiet satisfaction as we drove back to Ipswich, eating the sandwiches Carol had made for us on the way, and not talking very much. On reaching the town we did not drive straight to Swadipa's and Carol's hospitable home. Instead, we drove through Gainsborough Road, for it was in a house in this road that my great-grandfather Edward Lingwood of Battisford had spent the last years of his life and we wanted to see what it looked like. As far as we could judge, the houses were all late Victorian, but not having an address we could not tell in which of the houses, if in any, my great-grandfather had lived. In the afternoon, after resting for a couple of hours, I had tea with Srivandana at her flat. Our last evening in Ipswich passed quietly. After dinner with Swadipa and Carol, I spent the rest of the evening in my room, reflecting, while Paramartha had a long talk with Swadipa downstairs.

The following morning was a morning of farewells. Paramartha and I thanked Swadipa and Carol warmly for their hospitality. They assured us that we were welcome to come and stay with them next year and continue our search, which was by no means finished. Torrential rain lashed us on the way back to Birmingham, and we arrived at Madhyamaloka in time for lunch. For me, at least, our three days in Suffolk had been a holiday. I greatly enjoyed driving through the beautiful Suffolk countryside, spending more time in the open air than usual, exploring the old parish churches and viewing the long unvisited North Sea. I was also glad to have had a little more contact with the Ipswich sangha. Perhaps Paramartha and I would return next year, and continue our search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors.

Part two: *The Ancestors*

It was the year 1528. King Henry VIII had been on the throne for nineteen years, the great Cardinal Wolsey was still Lord Chancellor of England, and in Rushmere St Michael in the county of Suffolk, on the 2nd of August in that year, Robert Lynghoode was making his will. Very likely he was dying, perhaps of the plague, for it is clear from the terms of the will that his six children are all under age, besides which his wife Joan is pregnant with a seventh child, and that he is concerned for their future welfare. After declaring that he is 'in good mind and whole remembrance' he leaves his soul to God Almighty and Our Lady and all the holy company in heaven (for England is still Catholic)

and his body to be buried in the church of Saint Michael of Rushmere. Perhaps his conscience was troubling him, for his first bequest is to the high altar of Rushmere church 'for my tithes forgotten'. There are also bequests to the high altars of three other churches in the locality and a bequest to Rushmere church for repairs. His principal bequests are to his children Nicholas, Elizabeth, Margery, Laurence, Thomas, Robert, together with the unborn child, to each of whom he leaves five marks sterling, a cow, and a quantity of barley. Should one of his children die before reaching the age of twenty, the five marks is to go to an honest priest to say mass for the testator and his friends in Rushmere church. Should two of them die, an honest secular priest is to have ten marks to say mass for a whole year. Should more than two children die before reaching the age of twenty the money is to go to their mother. Relatives and friends are not forgotten. To his brother Steven Lynghoode he bequeaths one of his black cattle at Waldsdyke, and to Ellen Gyldorne, who may be a servant, a measure of barley. Finally, Robert Lynghoode of Rushmere leaves all his remaining goods to his wife Joan, whom he makes his executrix. He directs her to deliver all his children's money to Sr Thomas Bedingfeld and Sr Laurence Mayewe for them to hold for the benefit of the children until such time as they should require it.

The will is witnessed by Sr Thomas Bedingfeld, Sr Robert Clarke, and John Leslyn.

Sir Thomas Bedingfeld of Oxburgh belonged to an East Anglian family well known to historians of the Tudor period. He was High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1522 and died in 1538 after making a nuncupative will in which he left everything to his wife Alice, daughter of William London, Mayor of Norwich. His brother Sir Edmund Bedingfeld (1479/80–1553) was knighted in 1523 for demonstrating bravery in the French wars and eventually inherited from his brother Robert Bedingfeld the great estate of Oxburgh Hall, Kings Lynn, Norfolk. Following Henry VIII's divorce he was entrusted with the care of Katherine of Aragon at Kimbolton Castle. It was the father of the brothers, Sir Edmund Bedingfeld (1443–1496) who built Oxburgh Hall where Henry VII and his queen once stayed. Oxburgh Hall is now a National Trust property. Sir Henry Bedingfeld (1509-1583) of Oxburgh, the son of Thomas Bedingfeld and nephew of the younger Sir Edmund Bedingfeld, had the care of the Princess Elizabeth (the future queen Elizabeth II) when on the orders of Queen Mary she was transferred from the Tower of London to Woodstock in Oxfordshire.

It should be noted that Sir Thomas Bedingfeld is both entrusted with the children's money until they are of age *and* is a witness to Robert Lynghoode's will, whereas Sir Laurence Mayewe is only entrusted with the children's money and Sir Robert Clarke and John Leslyn are only witnesses to the will. This suggests that Robert Lynghoode had a closer connection with Sir Thomas Bedingfeld than with the three other men, which indeed is not unlikely. Sir Thomas's father originally came from Bedingfeld, which is situated in the same part of Suffolk that my Lingwood ancestors came from, so the two families may well have known each other for several generations.

Robert Lynghoode's will was of great interest to me. It told me quite a lot about my ancestor. He was married to a woman named Joan, had at least six children, and died at a comparatively early age. He was quite well-to-do, being in a position to leave money, a cow, and a quantity of barley to each of his children, as if to set them up in life as soon as they became of age. His wife was left the residue of his estate, which no doubt meant a house and land and the means of providing for herself and the children until they grew up and could fend for themselves. The bequest

to his brother suggests that he had land in Waldesdyke as well as in Rushmere. That he makes bequests to so many churches does not necessarily mean that Robert Lynghoode was especially pious. Probably it was no more than what a person of good standing in the community was expected to do in those days. More significant is the fact that he expresses a wish to be buried in Rushmere church, i.e. not in the graveyard like ordinary folk, and apparently takes it for granted that his wish will be respected.

Besides his will, there were two other sources of information about Robert Lynghoode of Rushmere. One is a genealogy included in the Lingwood family papers (LFP); the other, the Suffolk Subsidy Returns for 1524. In the genealogy Robert Lynghoode is styled constable, a term that in this connection means an officer who, under a High Sheriff, is responsible for the maintenance of law and order, probably within a certain area. It is not clear whether Robert Lynghoode served under Sir Thomas Bedingfeld or under some other occupant or occupants of the post of High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk. The subsidy of 1524 was granted by parliament to Henry VIII to finance the war in France. It was a graduated tax, spread over four years. In the first two years land and houses paid one shilling for each pound of their yearly value. Those who had moveable goods valued at £20 and upwards paid one shilling for each pound. According to the Suffolk Subsidy Returns of 1524 Robert Lynghoode paid, or was assessed at, the sum of £16.8s.0d – it is not clear which it was. In either case he must have been quite well to do, as indeed is evident from the terms of his will.

Robert Lynghoode of Rushmere thus emerges from the early Tudor records as a substantial Suffolk yeoman, a man of some position in his community, a responsible father and husband, a good Catholic, and with contacts – even friends – among the gentry of East Anglia. On the whole it is a not unattractive picture.

Nicholas Lingwood of Badingham, yeoman, Robert Lynghoode's eldest son, farmed at Badingham, had four sons and three daughters by his wife Margery, and according to the Suffolk Subsidy Returns of 1568 he paid, or was assessed at, the sum of £10. He died in 1591, his wife in 1563.

Next in line is John Lingwood of Dennington, yeoman, Nicholas Lingwood's eldest son, who was born in 1548 and died in 1597. He married (1) Margaret Connold of Laxfield and (2) Mary. He had five sons and a daughter. One of the sons bore the unusual name of Wulfran.

John Lingwood of Swaffing, yeoman, John Lingwood's eldest son, was born in 1575, married Mary, and by her had three sons and three daughters, plus an unnamed child.

The record for Thomas Lingwood of Hynten St Blythburg, yeoman, who was born in 1600, is sparse. All that is known of him is that, unusually for the philoprogenitive Lingwoods, he had only one child, a son.

This son, Thomas Lingwood of Badingham I, yeoman, did a little better than his father in the generative department. He had two sons, and died in 1683.

Thomas Lingwood of Badingham II, yeoman, the elder of Thomas Lingwood I's two sons, married Annis Aldous, and died in 1698, leaving two sons and four daughters.

Thomas Lingwood of Brome I, gentleman, the elder of Thomas Lingwood of Badingham II's two sons, was born in 1688, died in 1748, and was buried in the graveyard of Brome parish church. His wife was Mary Peake of Wickenham Skeith, who was born in 1695 and died in 1763. They had one son, though the records may be incorrect and there may have been other children. Thomas Lingwood of Brome was the first of my Lingwood ancestors to be styled gentleman. All his ascendants, from his father to Thomas Lingwood of Badingham up to and including Robert Lynghoode of Rushmere, are styled yeoman. It is an interesting example of upward social mobility.

Thomas Lingwood of Brome II, gentleman, was born in 1736 and died in 1815, leaving a will. Like his father, he was buried in the graveyard of the Brome parish church. He married Mary Lathbury, who was born in 1735 and died in 1802. They had twelve sons and three daughters.

It was the coffin shaped tomb graves of Thomas and Mary Lingwood and three of their children that Paramartha and I found behind the back wall of the parish church of St Mary, Brome, when we visited Suffolk in June 2010.

The last will and testament of Thomas Lingwood of Brome II is dated 1809, which means that he made it seven years before his death, the witnesses being Mary Kelly, Richard Kelly, and J. Bellman. The will is prolix, repetitive, and entirely devoid of punctuation, and must have been drawn up by a lawyer. After a simple invocation of the Deity (for England has long been Protestant), the testator appoints three of his sons as his executors. They are Thomas Lathbury Lingwood, Peter Lathbury Lingwood, and Decimus Lathbury Lingwood, and the three names occur again and again throughout the will like a kind of refrain. He gives them "all and every my messuages, farms, lands, tenements and hereditaments and all other my real estate whatsoever situate, lying, and being in, Brome, aforesaid, and the Thrandeston in the said County, or in any other Town, Parish, or place near or adjoining thereton as are freehold or charter hold...(punctuation added)." He then proceeds to make sundry bequests, the gist of which is as follows.

- (1) The interest from a sum of £1,500 in consolidated bank annuities is to continue to be paid annually to Robert Page and Mary Page (Thomas's daughter) and is to be paid for the rest of their natural lives.
- (2) He bequeathes to his granddaughter Mary Page (daughter of the above) the sum of £100, to be paid on her attaining her 21st birthday.
- (3) He also asks his executors to set up from the moneys from his estate a fund to pay annuity of £10 to Mr Thomas Bond, yeoman, of Starson, in the county of Norfolk.
- (4) A similar fund to be set up to pay annuity of £10 to Ann Pretty (who lives with him).
- (5) Lastly, he directs that the residue of the monies from the sale of his real and personal estates be divided and shared alike amongst his children, namely, Thomas Lathbury Lingwood, Peter Lathbury Lingwood, Joseph Lathbury Lingwood, Charlotte Edmonds (his daughter), Edward Lingwood, Decimus Lingwood, and Benjamin Lingwood.

In 1811 Thomas Lingwood of Brome added a codicil to his will in his own hand.

The codicil was witnessed by Ann Pretty. In it he bequeaths £500 each to his granddaughters Mary and Charlotte Page, the amounts to be paid to them within six months of their attaining the age of twenty one. The genuineness of the codicil may have been questioned, for in 1815 Edward Lingwood of Eye, Thomas's eldest son, confirmed that the codicil was indeed in his father's handwriting.

The will and its codicil do not really tell us much about Thomas Lingwood of Brome. They tell us what he owned, which evidently was quite a lot, but they tell us nothing about the man himself. He may have left generous bequests to his two grand-daughters because he was particularly fond of them, but on the other hand he may have done so just because that was what was expected of a wealthy grandfather. Our only other source of information about him comes from an item in the *Norfolk Chronicle* of June 22, 1782, which reports on the General Meeting of the 'Diss Association for apprehending and prosecuting Horse-Stealers.' At this meeting 'the Gentlemen residing in or near the said Hundred, associated for prosecuting Horse-Stealers, held the fifth Day of this Instant June in the King's Head at Diss, the Treasurer's Accounts for the last Year were settled, and it was agreed that Mr Benjamin Fincham of Diss, aforesaid, should be continued Treasurer for the Year ensuing, and that the Articles of this Association should remain in full Force, and that the Reward of Ten Guineas, together with all reasonable Charges, be continued to be paid by the Treasurer to any Person or Persons who shall apprehend, and prosecute to Conviction, the Stealers of any Horse, Mare, or Gelding, from any of the undermentioned Subscribers.' Amongst the undermentioned subscribers is Thomas Lingwood of Brome, which suggests that he would have shared, to an extent at least, the interests and opinions of the other landowners and gentlemen farmers of East Anglia.

Thomas's brothers must have been no less prosperous than he was. One of them, Thomas Lathbury Lingwood, could afford to give his only son a university education. This son was Robert Maulkin Lingwood, born in 1813. A Cambridge graduate (B.A. 1836, M.A. 1840), he was a botanist and entomologist, was in the Channel Islands and in Ireland with the distinguished C.C. Babington (a correspondent of Charles Darwin), discovered and named various plants, and was a member of a number of scientific bodies. He was High Sheriff of Herefordshire in 1848, and in 1860 he became Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the County. Robert Maulkin Lingwood married his first cousin Elizabeth Lingwood, daughter of Benjamin Lingwood, but they had no issue. He died in 1887, at Lystone House, Llanwarne.

While he was at Cambridge Robert Maulkin Lingwood applied to the College of Arms for a grant of arms. In 1835, since he was able to 'prove his pedigree' to their satisfaction, the application was accepted. The grant was made not to Robert Maulkin himself, but to his grandfather Thomas Lingwood of Brome, and to all the latter's male descendants. Among the LFP there is a sketch of the armorial bearings of the family, together with the motto CREDE DEO. In traditional heraldic terms the Arms are: Azure a saltire, engrailed, ermine, between fleur de lis, or. Crest: A Talbot's Head, ermine, erased, and ear sable with mural crown gules.

Edward Lingwood of Eye and Needham Market, the eldest son of Thomas Lingwood of Brome II, was born in 1770 and died in 1849, and was buried in front of the altar of Barking parish church. He married Hannah Ward, who was born in 1766 and died in 1798, at the age of 32. They had two children, Edward and Hannah. It was his altar grave that Paramartha was unable to see as the area in front of the altar was covered by a carpet.

Edward Lingwood of Battisford, the only son of Edward Lingwood of Eye and Needham Market, was born circa. 1797 and baptised 12 June 1797 at Eye. In 1827 he married Sarah Haywood, and they had eleven sons and three daughters. He died in 1864, after living in retirement at The Elms, Stowmarket, and was buried in the graveyard of Battisford parish church, of which he had been 'Perpetual Churchwarden'. According to the Census of 1851, Edward Lingwood of Battisford, then aged 53, lived at St John's, farmed 400 acres, and employed sixteen men and eight boys. There lived at home with him seven children, including Edward, his eldest son, as well as two male and two female lodgers.

St John's - or The Manor House, as it was also known - was the large, tree-surrounded house Paramartha and I had come across on the first day of our search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors. It was where we met Pat Knoch, its present occupier and owner or custodian of the Lingwood box, from whom we learned that the property had once been occupied by members of the Lingwood family. Though we could see that the house was old, despite its relatively modern frontage, at the time we had no idea how old it really was or how long and varied was its history. That history began with the mention of Battisford Manor in the Domesday Book where it is described as a farm. According to a note in the LFP, 'a priory was founded on the spot in the time of Herbert Losinga, bishop of Norwich, by Radulfus Fitzbrian and Emma, his wife. It was dedicated to St Leonard and endowed by them with lands and tithes'. More information is to be found in the National Trust Listing Text (grade II). After describing St John's as it exists today, in great detail, it goes on to say: 'The house is built upon the moated site of the Preceptory of the Knights hospitallers founded here in circa. 1154 and dissolved in 1540'. In the reign of Elizabeth I the property was owned by Sir Thomas Gresham, Lord of the Battisford and St John's Manors, and the founder of the Royal Exchange. Dame Anne, Sir Thomas's wife, rebuilt the house in 1570, and in the course of the rebuilding 'many rafters were reused from a large open hall of late C13 or early C14'.

Sarah Lingwood was born in 1803 and died in 1879. She appears to have been an educated, intelligent, and pious woman, and came from a prosperous and well connected family. Her brother Edward Haywood was Bar-at-law of the Inner Temple. He married Christine Annette Campbell of Brighton, daughter of the late Daniel Campbell, cousin to the Duke of Northumberland and to Lord Carbery. In the LFP there are type written copies of two letters from Sarah to her and Edward's third son, Henry Lingwood, then seventeen and living first at Wickham Market, Suffolk, and afterwards at Crabtree, near Plymouth, Devonshire.

The first letter is headed Battisford and dated 19 September, 1848. Sarah was writing because his brothers were all fully employed. His father was busy carting barley, which suggests that the harvest was well underway. There followed news of various members of the family. Tom had that day gone to Woolpit bullock fair instead of his father, who did not like to leave home. They had been surprised to see Horace, who came with a friend to see the balloon at Stowe, probably one of the hot-air balloons popular at the time. They had heard of a situation for James at Yarmouth, but his father had not yet decided. Mr Page had taken great pains to make enquiries. Sarah probably had an ear for music, for she commented that Mr Cooper, who married Henry's sister Sarah, played the flute beautifully. His sister had come with him, and Sarah had found her a most pleasing amiable person and quite liked her. She and Sarah junior had gone for a ride to Brice and would spend the next day with Sarah senior's mother. Other news was that Mr Moores and Mr Wood had been at St John's shooting, which probably means shooting pheasants; that her brother and his wife had been

at Bosmere, but had not come to St John's; that Mr Edmonds had left ten shillings for him, which he was not to spend on 'those hateful things', cigars. He had not given so much to his sister Sarah, who was a 'most extraordinary woman for her age'. What made her daughter so extraordinary Sarah did not say. Finally, she had admonished him, her dear boy, to walk in the strait path, for 'he that walketh uprightly walketh safely'. That God might abundantly bless him in this life and save him for ever was, she assured him, the very frequent prayer of his mother.

Sarah Lingwood's second letter to her son Henry, now 18 and working in a Mill in or near Plymouth, bears no date but is marked 'To be posted Battsford, Saturday evening.' The envelope is stamped 'Ipswich 1 July 1849' and 'Plymouth July 3 1849.' She writes;

My dear Henry,

I was truly glad to receive your interesting letter for which I was looking most anxiously – fearing perhaps mine had not reached you – I wish my dear boy you had not so many hours to work without rest, and rejoice at your determination to do your best and when we are in the path of duty, we may hope and expect God's blessing on our honest endeavours – nevertheless nothing would give us more pleasure than to find you were promoted to some place in the Mill, where you had less to do. I am thankful you do not omit to go to church – I am glad you like Plympton church, because I conclude you can go there in all weathers, and it is not good to roam from church to church, if we know where to go to hear God's word rightly preached.

I should like much to see the glorious view of the ocean at Plymouth and am thankful that every opportunity you have of taking a walk, that you can command such lovely views.

I was very pleased with the green plant, I think I have found it out – it is so fleshy, that probably it will not dry well, but Sarah will be glad to have whole specimens of what you will find, but a blossom pleases me much. Sarah went to Burstal on Wednesday and is to return to-night. James is gone to the train to meet her. James came home last Monday – he is rather taller bit stouter I think; he is full of spirits – he seems to like his occupation much and is improved in manner. He received your letter and will answer it he says when he goes home, which he is to do next Thursday – he has his meals alone at the back of the shop, to be in waiting when called.

Sarah half expects Mr. C.C. next week to go with her to the Flower Show at Ipswich; the children being all at home I should prefer his visit another time. My Brother and his wife are still in Dublin staying with Mrs. Putland – Mrs. H. is of "immense consequence" so my Brother says. I should like to see the Slate quarry – is not Plymouth Dock cut out of slate? When the flints are ground what coloured earthenware is it used for? White?

I think I heard from Horace just after I wrote to you; he seems very comfortable and contented and I hope will continue so – he wrote quite a long letter. – I was afraid he would miss the gun.

We have two large hay and stover stacks got up very well -

Mr; & Mrs. R. Lingwood have been on a trip to the Lakes.

Your father has given up all thoughts of hiring Roydon Hall which I am glad of – Edward and Thos. Are very anxious to go to the Norwich Show. Thos. Has been ailing and taking medicine

every day since you left – I hope however this illness has been for his good in some respects and I have no longer any cause for uneasiness: you understand this.

There are 4 young peafowls, they are very pretty, and are kept in the partridge coop by the walnut tree. The peahen hatched 5 chickens but soon walked them to death. Sarah has 12 Ducks hatched.

I have had a very bad face-ache all the week, but it is much better. DO you get any beer, as I read whiskey cider is the usual drink? I am sure you will smile at my odd mixture of subjects – (you write where instead of were very often in your letters).

Sarah is just returned and left all friends well at Burstal. She went to the Ipswich Museum and to some gardens at Bramford. She had a long ride on “Jack” she is very much obliged for the plant – I must bid you good night with my kind love and best wishes –

Your most affectionate

Mother

A mixture of topics indeed! Henry may well have smiled reading his mother’s letter. As she does in the first letter, Sarah shows herself to be solicitous for both the material and spiritual welfare of her son, and perhaps even more for the latter than the former. Though thankful that he still goes to church, she appears not to be concerned what kind of church he attends, whether Anglican or Nonconformist. Her principal concern is that he should be able to hear God’s word rightly preached. In this she is firmly Protestant, even Evangelical. Yet though she is pious, Sarah is not parochial. She has a strong desire to see the ocean, which she has either not seen or saw a long time ago, and she wonders if Plymouth Dock was not cut out of slate, and would like to know of what colour was the earthenware made from ground flints. Horizons were expanding in remote, rural, Suffolk. People went on trips to the Lake District, Ipswich had its own museum, and the fact that someone had gone to meet a train could be mentioned without comment.

The walnut tree mentioned by Sarah in her letter, beside which was the partridge coop where she kept her peafowl chicks, was no longer to be seen at St John’s. It had been blown down in a storm during her time at the house, Pat Knoch told Paramartha and me. Neither were there any peacocks there, as there may have been when Sarah lived in the old house. I had no difficulty imagining them strutting haughtily about the place, displaying their magnificent plumage and bringing a touch of oriental splendour to the sober English countryside.

Thomas Lingwood, the second son of Edward and Sarah Lingwood, was born in Battisford in 1832, but spent the greater part of his life at Shrub House, Brockford. He evidently inherited the strong religious feelings of his mother. According to an obituary in the LFP, he was for much of his life devoted to mission work, holding Sunday services in the old oak beamed house at Brockford, fitting up the barn as a mission hall when numbers increased, and erecting a gospel hall on his land at Brockford six years before his death. We have no clue as to the precise nature of his religious views. Probably he was an evangelically-inclined protestant and, like his mother, believed that

people should be able to “hear the word of God rightly preached”. He may also have been dissatisfied with the lukewarm ministrations of the local Anglican clergy.

But Thomas Lingwood’s interests were not exclusively religious. He was a lover and breeder of horses, a subject on which his advice was frequently sought, and for sixty years he never failed to appear at the Woodbridge Horse Fair. He was an active member of several local charities, and a keen horticulturist whose garden was greatly admired for its wealth of old fashioned flowers, including a fine display of roses. He died in 1915, at the age of 85. A large number of people attended his funeral, which was held in the Gospel Hall, from which his oak coffin was taken to Wetheringsett Cemetery on the shoulders of tenants on his estate. He never married. In his will he provided for the upkeep of the Gospel Hall, and for the disposal of his books on religion. He also left generous legacies to his numerous nephews and nieces, as well as to his housekeeper and various friends.

In the LFP there is a photograph of Thomas Lingwood, and beside it a photograph of his twin sister Sarah Lingwood Cooper. He has a broad forehead, deep set eyes, and full lips similar to those of my father. His expression is one of strength and kindness, and he wears a kind of bow-tie. Sarah is seated, and reads a newspaper. Behind her is a fireplace and a clock the hands of which pointed to 1.55. Her face is thin, her nose aquiline, and she wears on her head a small cap. Both brother and sister are in their fifties, even their sixties.

James Grace Lingwood, the fourth son of Edward and Sarah Lingwood, was born in 1832. His second name was that of one of his three godparents, a Mr. Grace. A note to a genealogical tree in the LFP describes him as an artist, but we do not know if he ever went to art school or practised as an artist professionally. From Sarah’s letters to his brother Henry we know that as a young man he worked in a shop in Yarmouth and seemed happy there. He never married, and died in 1863, aged 29. Behind the bare facts there may well be a story of blasted hopes and unfulfilled aspirations.

Two of Edward’s and Sarah’s sons emigrated to Canada. They were Septimus Robert (known as Robert), their seventh son, born in 1835, and William Herbert, their eleventh son, born in 1845. Robert went first, when he was in his early twenties, and William followed later. Both brothers married in Canada, and founded, Robert’s case at least, a branch of the Lingwood family in that country. Initially, Robert leased a farm in Nichol township, but the venture was not a success. He then became a director of a company drilling for oil, and with his brother William went into the brewing and canning business.

One of the most interesting aspects of the lives of the two brothers in Canada is their membership of the Fergus Company, a militia organised for defence against the Fenian Raids of 1865-66. Once the Fergus Company was ordered to go to Sarnia. They went by wagon to Guelph, where they were joined by the Elora Company and took the train to Sarnia. There was no confrontation with the Fenians. On another occasion the Fergus Company went to Niagara, where they were in a skirmish with the Fenians under General O’Neil. The Fenians were repulsed. According to family tradition, Robert was wounded in the hand during the fighting, the wound festered, and it had to be amputated. Later he moved from Fergus to Guelph, where he died of TB in 1875, leaving four sons, four daughters, and a handwritten will. Edith Wilson, who put together the Lingwood box, was his granddaughter. In the LFP there is a photograph of Captain Robert Lingwood in his militia uniform. William Herbert Lingwood returned to England in about 1900, and after and

during much hardship eventually settled in Stowmarket, where he died, blind, in 1924, leaving one child, a daughter, then living in the United States.

Edward Lingwood of Ashfield, the eldest son of Edward Lingwood of Battisford and his wife Sarah, stayed at home and made his contribution to the history of the Lingwood family, including the line that ends with the present writer. He was born in 1828, and educated at Eye Grammar School. In his late twenties he married Catherine Sophia Sheldrake (known as Kate), the daughter of Edward Sheldrake of Ixworth Priory. They had fourteen children, at least four of whom died in infancy. The census of 1861 records Edward Lingwood as farming 232 acres in Ashfield, Suffolk, and employing thirteen men and five boys. He was then 32. Subsequent censuses show him as living, successively, in Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, Thwaite, Bramford, and in St Margaret (Ipswich), all in Suffolk.

An obituary in the LFP gives a summary of his career; "He started farming at the age of 20, at Ashfield; and in later years he acted as agent for Lord Thurlow. For some time he was a well-known follower of the Essex and Suffolk Foxhounds, his favourite meet being at Hintlesham Park gates. About fifty years ago he was a member of the Needham Market Bowling Club, and he would ride a dozen miles in order to participate in his favourite game. He was for a long period a member of the Stowmarket Farmer's Club, and was one who read papers in various districts on sheep breeding. The noted flock of the later Mr. Henry Lingwood was developed from sheep drawn from the deceased gentleman's flock when he relinquished farming 25 years ago. During his long period of activity Mr. Lingwood represented parishes in which he resided on the Stowmarket or Hartismere Boards of Guardians; in politics he was a staunch Conservative, for considerable periods he held the position of churchwarden or overseer. He was an ardent collector of birds' eggs, and had a wonderful knowledge of bird-life in general, travelling long distances to hear and see rare specimens. Up to the date of his death he could quote the Latin name for almost any English bird." Edward Lingwood spent the last years of his life in retirement at his residence in Gainsborough Road, Ipswich, where he died in 1909, his wife Kate having died earlier that year. They were survived by six sons and two daughters.

In the LFP there are two three-quarter length photographs of Edward Lingwood of Ashfield and his wife Kate. Both are seated beside a table. He looks to his left, she to her right. Edward has the same broad forehead and deep set eyes as his brother Thomas, as well as the same full lips, but he is bearded and his expression is sad, even tragic. Between his hands he holds an open book or magazine. Kate has a thin, pale face, and about her lips there is a hint of a smile. Her smooth dark hair is parted in the middle and surmounted by a small cap. She has a full skirt and full sleeves, and appears to be reading. On the table at her elbow there is a row of books.

One of those books could have been *Prayer and Praise at Eventide*, a copy of which, inscribed to him in her own hand, Kate gave to her son Philip Francis Lingwood, my grandfather. I found this book at the bottom of a cupboard when I was a child and read the inscription. In the house at that time there were only two other articles that had belonged to my grandfather, a silver-mounted amber cane and a wooden despatch case, and all that I really knew about him was that he had died young. Even now I know very little more than that. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the Lingwood box contained no information about him, the compiler being more concerned with the fortunes of the descendants of Septimus Robert Lingwood in Canada. The second is that he

died when my father was three years old, so that the latter had no personal recollections of him to pass on to me.

Philip Francis Lingwood, the seventh son of Edward Lingwood of Ashfield and his wife Kate, was born in 1873 at Occold, Suffolk. At some point he came to London, where in 1896 he married Anna Ellen Butters, born 1872, the daughter of Walter Butters, a farm labourer, of Besthorpe, Norfolk, and his wife Caroline. They had two children, Philip Edward Lingwood, born at Woolwich, Kent (now part of Greater London) in 1899, and Helen Francis Lingwood, born in 1902. He died in 1902, at Charlton, London. Anna Ellen lived until 1952, having remarried after the death of Philip Francis, and had two more children.

As a child I knew that my grandfather had died young, but I also knew, from what I heard – or overheard – from my elders, that there was a mystery about his death, or at least something unexplained. One version was that he had caught a chill after going for a swim and had died of pneumonia. Another version of the story was that he had picked up a deadly infection from certain diplomatic papers that had arrived from the Far East, papers he had handled in the course of his duties at the war office. If there was any truth in this account, the papers may well have been kept for a while in the wooden despatch case, which had soon passed into my possession, along with the silver-mounted amber cane. The case was lined with green beige and it could be locked. On its polished back a crest was picked out in gold. The crest was in the form of a shield, on the shield there was a horizontal bar, on the bar a row of three balls. I do not know if the crest was my grandfather's, or that of a previous owner of the case. It also seems that my grandfather had a fine copperplate handwriting, on account of which he was given the task of making out the commissions that went to the queen for signature. However, hearsay is not evidence, as a libel lawyer once reminded me, and I cannot vouch for the truth of all the things I heard – or overheard – as a child.

Though she had a framed photograph of my grandfather hanging in her kitchen, not far from a similar one of her deceased second husband, I can remember my grandmother speaking of him only once. This was when I was fourteen or fifteen. My mother and I were alone with her one day, and my mother, who was like a daughter to her, happened to remark that over the years her memories of her first husband must have gradually faded. "Oh no!" my grandmother at once exclaimed, a joyous expression lighting up her face. "It's all as fresh as if it were yesterday!"

Philip Edward Lingwood, the only son of Philip Francis Lingwood and his wife Anna, was born in 1899 in Woolwich, Kent. In 1920 he married Catherine Florence Margaret Ketskemety (known as Florrie to her brothers and sisters and Kit to her husband and his relations). They had two children, Dennis Philip Edward, who was born in 1925, and Joan Doreen, who was born in 1926 and died in 2001, leaving a husband Edward Turner (known as Eddie), and four children, John, Maria, David, and Kamala (known as Kay). Philip and Florrie/Kit were divorced in 1946 and both remarried, the former once, the latter twice. Philip Edward died in 1971, and Florrie/Kit in 1990, after being twice widowed.

Philip Edward, my father, grew up in Besthorpe, Norfolk, and in Tooting, South London. After leaving school he worked for, or was apprenticed to, a jeweller, along with several other boys. The boys all 'lived in', and my father more than once told me, when I was a child, how he and the other boys used to play tricks on the jeweller's elderly housekeeper. When World War I began he was fifteen, and it was not long before he enlisted, giving a false age. He served in the trenches, was

badly wounded, was invalided back to England, and while recovering in St Benedict's Hospital, Tooting, met my mother, who was working there as a VAD. Later he trained as a French Polisher at the Lord Roberts Workshops.

Had Philip Francis Lingwood, his father, not died young, my father probably would have had a very different life. He certainly would not have grown up in Tooting, and though he may have enlisted he almost certainly would not have met my mother, so that, had I been born at all, I would have been born to a different mother and with a different genetic inheritance. In a word, I would not have been quite me, and would have had a different kind of life.

But speculation is a waste of time. I have had the life I have had, and it has been a life very different from that of any of my Lingwood biological ancestors or, for that matter, from the life of any of my Ketskemety ancestors. I have never married, and at 85 I am unlikely to do so, and I therefore will have no biological descendants. I will, I trust, have many spiritual descendants, in the form of the members of the Triratna Buddhist Order. In other words, my spiritual descendants will be all those who, whether in Suffolk, in England, or in any other part of the world, Go For Refuge to the Three Jewels, and who study, practise, and communicate the Buddhadhamma as taught by me in the course of sixty and more years.

Part Three: *Reflections*

The discovery of the Lingwood box was important for me. Before it, I had known of my paternal Lingwood ancestry only that my Grandfather was from a good Suffolk family and had died young. Now I knew a good deal more than that. Thanks to the contents of that box, I was suddenly swept back over four centuries of English history, over a dozen generations of Lingwoods, to the reign of Henry VIII and to Robert Lynghoode of Rushmere, the first of my known Lingwood ancestors. I was in a position similar to that of one who, having been adopted at an early age and brought up by adoptive parents, one day discovers that he has real parents and is a member of a real, biological family. The difference between us was that his discovery related to the present, whereas mine related to the past.

To discover one's true parents is to learn something about oneself, and to discover a whole series of previously unknown ancestors is to learn even more, and to learn it with greater certainty. The basic fact about my Lingwood ancestors was that they were farmers. Generation after generation they had ploughed, sowed, harvested, and gathered into barns. Farming was therefore in my blood, along with other ingredients, and it was natural that when, in a foreign country, I acquired a stone cottage and four acres of hillside land, I should have cultivated those four acres as a matter of course. During the seven years that I lived at the cottage I grew maize and buckwheat, cared for my hundred orange trees, and saw to it that there were vegetables for the table and flowers for the shrine. There were good practical reasons for my doing this, but I did not do it only for these reasons. I also did it because engaging with the soil gave me a deep inner satisfaction. It was the kind

of satisfaction that Edward Lingwood of Battsford must have experienced when carting barley a hundred years earlier.

Ancestry is far from being merely biological. It is also cultural and religious, and the different ancestries can overlap, the biological with the cultural, the cultural with the religious. Probably the most important part of our cultural heritage is language, through which so much of our knowledge and experience is mediated. In my own case, I inherited from my Lingwood ancestors not only some of my genes but the language in which I think, speak, and write. From my Ketskemety ancestry I inherited it only to a limited extent, for until two generations ago that side of my family spoke not English but Hungarian, of which I know hardly a word. Not that this really mattered. I grew up speaking, as my native tongue, one of the world's great languages, through which I had immediate access to one of the world's great literatures. I have always been thankful that I spoke the language that Shakespeare and Milton spoke and have been able to enjoy their works in the original, as well as the works of so many other poets, dramatists, novelists, historians, philosophers, and essayists who have contributed to the creation of the glory that is English literature. Nor is that all. Much has been translated into English from other languages, both ancient and modern, eastern and western, to the cultural enrichment of the English-speaking world. Among the works translated have been the Buddhist scriptures. Had none of them been translated it would not have been possible for me, as a boy of sixteen or seventeen, to discover the Dharma.

Proper names are an integral part of any language. As I look back over the line of my paternal ancestors I see four Thomas Lingwoods, three Edwards, two Johns, two Philips, one Robert, and one Nicholas – but no Dennis. There was no Dennis until 1925 when I was born and baptised Dennis Philip Edward at the parish church of St Nicholas, Tooting. The person responsible for this innovation in the matter of names was my aunt Helen, my father's sister, who was also my godmother. 'Dennis' must have been a name she particularly liked; but I have never liked it, and would much rather have been called Edward, or even Philip. I was not the only one who disliked the first of my baptismal names, my dislike being shared by at least one other person. This was old, red-faced Thomas Whitehead (known to the family as Uncle Tom), my bluff, hearty godfather. As a small child I often heard him declare, as I sat perched on his knee, 'He's not Dennis. He's little Phil.' Whether my two godparents had argued the point over the baptismal font at my Christening I never knew. Years later I was to undergo more than one change of name. From Dennis I became first Dharmapriya, then (for a few hours) Dharmarakshita, after that Sangharakshita, and finally Urygen Sangharakshita.

The change from Dennis to Dharmapriya and its successors was much more than a simple change of name. It marked a change of religion on my part. Dennis and the two other names I was given at the font were my baptismal names. They bore witness to the fact that I had undergone the rite of admission into the Christian church. The change from Dennis to Dharmapriya was therefore an event of singular moment. It was a change from being a member of the Christian church to being a member of the Buddhist sangha, from being a Christian, albeit a very nominal one, to being a believing and practising Buddhist. At the same time, this did not mean that I ceased to appreciate and enjoy Christian art, though I appreciated it aesthetically, without giving intellectual assent to its doctrinal content. Even when I was a small boy, and had as yet no definite religious ideas, whether Christian or non-Christian, I was unaccountably drawn to old churches. Visiting them, and photographing them with my box camera, was one of the highlights of my summer holidays at

Shoreham-by-Sea with my parents and my sister. It was therefore only natural that I should have felt at home in the parish churches of Suffolk, where so many of my Lingwood ancestors were baptised, were married, where they sang hymns and heard sermons, and where, finally, they were buried.

There followed from this, inevitably, the thought of impermanence and death as the fundamental reality of the human condition. I cannot claim, however, that my search for traces of my Lingwood ancestors, or the discoveries I made about them, gave me any fresh or original insights into that reality, though they reinforced, and underlined, the insights I already had. My discoveries did, however, give me a more vivid sense of how one generation succeeds another, and of how important it is that within the span of human life allotted to us we take full advantage of our spiritual opportunities, especially if we are so fortunate as to be able to study and practise the Dharma.

Though I have biological ancestors I certainly will not leave behind me any biological descendants; but perhaps, in years to come, there will be spiritual descendants of mine who will, one day, search for traces of me in Tooting and Kalimpong, Hampstead and Moseley, and elsewhere.

I wonder what they will discover.