

Hymn

Neonate, 5lbs 2oz. Unplanned, unwanted and illegitimate.

Late to start speaking. Half-brother. Underweight. 'Such a naughty child'. Unvaccinated against smallpox. Poor school attender. Slow learner. Unexplained bruising. Blasphemer. Smoker.

Evacuee. Last to be chosen at Brightlingsea Village Hall. Billeted to large family. 'Hollow bones'. Re-evacuated to Yatton. Vaccinated against Diphtheria. Orphaned by step-father. Doesn't attend funeral. Improved reader. School leaver. Farm labourer. Hard worker.

Conscripted for National Service. Jungle fighter. Wounded, decorated, promoted, demobbed. Council worker.

Criminal: gross indecency with another man. Dismissed. Unemployed. Farm labourer. Apprentice electrician. Qualified electrician.

Married. Council tenant. Licensed dog-owner. Father. Father again. Cuckold. Father yet again. Estranged from wife. Ex-dog owner. Private tenant. Problem drinker, debtor. Divorced, unemployed, homeless.

Recovering alcoholic. Council tenant. Ex-alcoholic. Warehouse worker. Home-owner. Pensioner. Dog-owner. [Grandparent].

Lover, beloved. Ex-smoker, joint home-owner. [Grandparent]. Recipient of Carer's Allowance. [Grandparent]. Bereaved. [Grandparent]. Alone at Christmas, frail. More frail. 'Off legs', inpatient, outpatient. Recipient of DS1500. Cancer survivor. Partially sighted. Forgetful, underweight, frail. [Great-grandparent]. Nursing home resident. Bingo champion.

Nonagenarian, 65kg. Fatter, fitter, and popular.

'I was with your father when he died.'

'He walked out on us when I was born.'

'He told me about his life.'

'You know nothing about him.'

A thin white plastic bag—no handles—marked "Property of Patient". Brown nylon trousers, checked shirt, mock Fairisle jumper. Baggy Y-fronts, string vest, worn socks, velcro-tabbed shoes. Old-fashioned watch. Sellotaped glasses.

Wedding ring.

Family photograph, Margate 1970.