

## **IVY EDITH SHAWCROSS**

**(1918-1999)**

Memorial Service

Christ Church, Thorley Lane, Timperley

Thank you for joining us for this memorial service. There are people here from Cheshire, the London area and from the United States. Mum would be looking forward to the party!

Ivy Edith Binks was born in London. She grew up in London. She considered herself a Londoner and she liked to tell me that I was born within the sound of Bow Bells which, she said, made me "a true Cockney". Some of you may wonder why the life of this Londoner is being celebrated here and not in London.

Our branch of the Shawcross family came from Flixton, Lancashire. They farmed near this church and contributed to its construction. Across the road from this church is "Newcroft" where my great grandfather Charles Rogerson Shawcross lived with his family and where Lucy and Lillian Shawcross continued to reside after their parents died until they too passed away and joined other family buried in this graveyard.

Instead of farming, my grandfather, Charles Frederick Shawcross earned a veterinary surgeon's degree at Liverpool University, winning four gold medals. After graduation he married Edith Warburton and served in Palestine during WW I. Kenneth Charles Warburton Shawcross, my father, was born in 1916. His younger sister, my aunt Barbara was still living with her parents during World War II when they moved to "Oakwood", later known as the "White House" which is near here.

Dad trained at London Hospital, becoming qualified in time to serve in Egypt, India and Burma during WW II. But in 1939 he met Ivy Binks at a dance. Ivy was the daughter of Edith Clara Morgan and John Edward Binks who was rising in the railway union eventually becoming president of the National Union of Railwaymen. The family had many parties; my mother called them "do's. Ivy's school friend, Doris Dancer, who is here today, gave us some of the party programs from those days. Last night, my uncle Eddie Binks said, "I am the last of the happy little band that used to meet at Trinder Road". The Binks family house was on Trinder Road but, as Eddie said, they are gone now; both the parents, my mother's sister "Eda" and her husband Bill, Kenneth and now Ivy; the house was destroyed by a German bomb.

In one turbulent year, Ivy and Kenneth were married, the Binks family home was bombed killing Ivy's mother; Ivy (pregnant with me) and her father survived by sheltering under the kitchen table while the house collapsed around them; I was born and, a few weeks after my birth, my father was sent off to the war as a doctor in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Ivy stayed on in the London area with her father but, during the V2 bombing of London she moved to Timperley to stay with her Shawcross in-laws. One can only imagine how difficult those years must have been.

In the few things she kept to the end, we found letters Dad wrote from India. So we know more of their courtship in London and the early days of their marriage. They were clearly in love. In one letter, Dad said that now Ivy was living in Timperley with his family she would become more of a Shawcross than he was. She was safe from the bombing but there were still the stresses of wartime and a husband away for four years. In her pocket diary she notes on her wedding anniversary, January 17, 1945, "Der Tag, alone again". My aunt Barbara was also suffering because her new young husband, a Scot, Jim Melville, a

fighter pilot had been shot down behind enemy lines. Think of the worries in that family at that time. Our good fortune is that both Kenneth and Jim eventually returned home, safe and sound.

After the war Kenneth worked at Urmston Hospital, so we moved to Flixton in Lancashire. There they endured the tough, cold, post-war time of rationing and power cuts, including the famous "winter of 1947". But they made new friends and we were pleased to hear recently from our neighbor Tessa who is here today. My sister, Linda was born in Flixton in 1946 and was christened at the old Flixton church, a center for our family in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Soon Kenneth, Ivy, John and Linda moved back to Timperley so that my father could join Dr. Brown at his practice with the surgery near the Timperley Cricket Club grounds. After Dr. Brown retired, Kenneth and Jim Falconer ran the practice for many years. The family is indebted to Jim and Jennifer Falconer and Brendan and other doctors from that continuing medical practice for providing Ivy with the best medical care that anyone could hope for.

In the early days of the National Health Service, Kenneth worked particularly hard. Those were not easy years for anyone in Britain. Ivy was running the home, bringing up the children which from 1951 included my brother Charles. Ivy was also helping my father in his medical practice. We lived in Timperley first at 1 Marsden Drive, then at 20 Wellington Road and then they built a house at 10 Moss Lane which also served as the center for the medical practice. They worked hard, but made friends and found time for holidays. Kenneth joined the Rotary Club and Ivy became an active member of the Inner Wheel.

The family loved games: billiards, cards, table tennis and darts to name a few. Ivy liked cards: canasta and later bridge were her favorites. If Ivy could beat Kenneth at a game of Canasta that delighted her immensely and my father pretended to be infuriated. I can still hear Ivy saying in a formal tone "may I go out partner" with eyebrows raised and a smile, leaving Dad with a big hand of cards to count against his score. Ivy was quite able to find a way to lose if it meant that one of her young grandchildren could win!

Kenneth took up golf and, in her 50's, Ivy also became a golfer. They were both members of the Ringway Golf Club. Ivy played golf until she was more than 80. For me one of the sad moments of her final illness was earlier this year when she asked me to carry her golf bag from the car back into the house. We both knew, but did not say, that her golf playing days were over.

In retirement, Ivy and Kenneth moved to Hale where they found their neighbors in Lindop Road to be kind and helpful. After Kenneth died Ivy quickly moved to Easingwold on Regent Road in Altrincham. Again she was immensely fortunate in her friends and neighbors and she was also fortunate to have people like Karen who kept an observant eye on her and Jean who helped Ivy in the house as she got older.

There are many here today who know more than I do about the life my mother led in recent years. But I do know that Ivy was someone that you could always count on for help. She was always visiting and helping the old and sick, even when she was old and sick herself. So, more and more she became an important part of this community. No longer a Londoner, this was her home and she would stay. But now and then you might hear her singing "Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner" and at a party, after a glass of wine, she might rally the family to sing the old music hall favorites like "Knees up mother Brown".

She gave a lifetime of help, love and support to her husband. She had a good sense of humor. She loved to talk and tell a story. Ivy had more stories to tell from shopping trip to Altrincham market than I had after two years in Africa. She loved to entertain. On one occasion after cooking for a party she said to my wife, Frances, that her epitaph should be "She hath fed them!" She was generous, providing all that was in her power to her children and grandchildren. She sent my children comics and sweets no matter where we

lived in the World. I have memories of opening-up sticky parcels at the post office customs inspection point in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania as my mother smuggled in chocolates hidden in rolls of comics.

As the years went by she formed a bond with my children and all of her grandchildren. So much that they would look to their grandmother for advice and help. It mattered a great deal to her grandchildren what she thought of them and, through her hopes and expectations, she helped shape them. In all her roles, daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother and friend to those in need, Ivy did her best.

She leaves behind many friends and relatives. Including, her brother Eddie and his wife Pat and family: sister in law Barbara and her family of Andrew, Helen and Tricia and their children. Also her own children and their spouses, that is Frances and I, Linda and Kelvin and Charles and Arlene; grandchildren, Clare, Paul and Lucy; Simon and Debbie; Sarah and Richard; and great grandchildren Annika and Sarah; Zoe and Michelle; Joshua and born this July, Ean.

The great grandchildren are still young, and my mother never even saw the youngest Ean, except in photographs. As the years go by there will be more great grandchildren who will not meet Ivy Shawcross. But the results of our actions do ripple down the generations, and the influence of her life on our family will continue to be large and good.

We are grateful to be able to tell her story in this church.

We hope you will join us for the reception so that you can add your memories of Ivy to ours.

John Frederick Shawcross

October 1, 1999