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S.O. BOOK 345

(Indexed at front 256 pages)

Nov-1985 to
Aug 1986

November 8th 1985

It was coincidence that made me pick up this book as I was tidying some old magazines.

I hadn't realized that exactly a year had passed since I started writing in this journal. I notice I stopped writing in January. Its possible I have other notes somewhere to fill in the gaps.

Briefly the year has been a good one for Eric. He seems very happy. Has gardened and potted. Even drove us to Scotland (Matter of me) to the lake of Menteith and we went fishing each day. Seperate diary for this.

He does get sleepy each day and during the last 3-4 weeks has been disinclined to do very much and yet seemed restless.

Unfortunately (and a great shock to me) he had a 'turn' on Monday 4th Nov. Didn't last more than 10 minutes and he was fine after a sleep. but I've been in touch with Julie Bloxham, and Dr Hughes is arranging a CAT scan. It's so disappointing - but hopefully tablets will settle things. Can't bear to think of anything else. Mather has been very ill. Her kidney stopped functioning and for 9 weeks I've been going over to Bridgnorth. Fortunately she seems to be making a recovery - although the doctor gave her about a week to live when she came out of hospital. I'm very tired, wish I could shuttle off responsibility for a few weeks but obviously this is not possible. Other news. Jeffina is back in hospital with cancer recurred. Cherie Douglas Hume died last week of cancer (Feel that upset Eric) - The bright side of things is that Glynd Graham - local lads. have done

quite a bit of patching up round the house and put in a new door. Am hoping that come the Spring I can get them to do some decorating.

Will keep a record of events from now on.

15th November 1985

↳ Took Eric to New Cross for Car Scan.

He had trouble with his breathing. but apart from that seemed well.

16th Nov

↳ Eric's birthday. Seemed to enjoy the presents. Christine phoned to wish him Happy Birthday. She had been bungled so I phoned her back to make sure she was fine.

Sunday 17th Nov. 85

↳ Eric well. Went out into garden and pruned some roses.

Show sheep in the afternoon. He stayed up late to watch i.v.

Monday 18th Nov. 85

↳ I got up early (7.30) and about $\frac{1}{4}$ to 8 heard the hair on fire. It wasn't too violent and lasted about 15 minutes. He got up but later went back to bed. (Had to change bed and put on waterproof). Phoned Shepherd to tell him. He said just wait on the Car Scan results. Am feeling very shaky.

18th Nov.

20th Nov. 85

Phone call from Julie Blossham. She says Car Scan clear. but Dr Hughes wants the Tegretol pw up from 600 to 800.

22nd letter from Dr Hughes. (plus call from Julie)

Something has shown on the Car Scan, could be an infection (an abscess) so a course of anti-biotics is given.

16th December

Went to New Cross today. Eric has been rather lethargic and having trouble in putting thoughts into coherent speech. Sometimes all right but often quite noticeably vague.

Saw Dr Bland(?) and Dr Hughes. The latter said there was a fuzzy circle on the X-Ray similar to the abscess (meninges) ~~in~~ after the ear operation. Hoping the antibiotics will clear it up. Draped another consultation for Feb. A Car Scan to be done before then.

Eric rather disorientated - Had difficulty in remembering why he had had a bad night. I went on this evening to a meeting in the Victorian Hall (re closing local hospital). Eric seems to have just sat although he did get a few clues in the crossword. He went to bed early as I watched Home of the Year Show and Dolly Parton singing smulky Xmas songs.

Dec 16th

I find it very sad that Eric is so vague. Makes having ordinary conversation difficult. I suppose I'm very selfish, but I do wish life could be normal again. It's been so long since things were normal. Way back in the 60's, and even then I wasn't normal because (a) I drank too much. (b) I did as Eric commanded instead of doing what I thought was right, and therefore was a very bad mother. Still I did enjoy the drama of those days. The craziness, the hectic outrageous passions - just how I'd give anything for Eric to be doing any normal day work. For me to be looking after and improving the home - springing, playing the sax - the piano. I'd love to hear Eric play again - It would be wonderful if he would play for the old folk.

I'd love to have a old fashioned Xmas - the kind I had when I was a kid. I miss Christine - and yet am glad she is away enjoying herself - for us damned hard work here - and yet I'll get to make a big effort for Mum sake this year. It's a miracle she's alive to enjoy it. Eric asleep - so hereo keep toones he will be a little better. Certainly the last 4-5 weeks he has done nothing - It makes this bungalow upkeep and garden upkeep a worry to me. Still come the Spring I'll knock it all into shape if the weather is good. Having such an awful Spring & Summer made December and today very difficult.

December 23rd.

Eric was sick one day this week. He is very shaky handed. He gets up easy. Straps up late and sleeps every afternoon. Still rather vague and I find it difficult to hold a proper conversation. Could be me I suppose - but certainly he is not as well as he was 6 months ago. or even 2 months ago.

Still haven't got the Xmas tree down yet. but will do so today.

Mother is working like a beaver. Has made a Xmas cake - some mince - pies for me. and also Xmas puddings - I shall have to try to get something done myself.

Phone call from Sue. They hoped come and see us on Friday.

Phone call from Christine. Her presents have arrived - am very upset about it - but the cost of the Mail port is so expensive.

Weather fortunately keeping fine - now ^{mild} but ~~not~~.
- Alan hasn't phoned and I'm a bit scared about phoning him at home - but have had a card from him. so DEFINITE must be being hospital.

Dec 24th 85. Christine phoned to say her presents have arrived.

Picked up Mum. She has made mince - pies, bread - crumbs and 2 beautiful tuffles.

We got the preparation for Xmas Day well ahead.

Dec 25th

lovely day. Mum had bought me some beautiful presents. I think Eric quite enjoyed the day. The food was good and all got cooked at the right time. Mum looked a bit tired - but also had few dizzy each day since she re-started taking some tablets for her blood pressure.

Boxing Day

Dramas. Went out to take Mum home and found the car battery flat. Got R.A.C. Took her home. Eric insisted on coming with me. He is a darling for he knows I love the dark.

~~Friday 27th 85~~

~~###. Time got up and I was up~~
Friday 27th. 85.

Got cold buffet prepared ready for children's landscape camp. Weather very cold and roads icy. They arrived about 2-45 having had a dodgy drive over the mountains. All went over to Mum (except Eric who was in bed) to give Nancy her presents. Came back. They seemed to enjoy their meal. Exchanged presents.

Very noisy so Eric departed to his room. Spent evening with him playing guitar and Nancy & Belkin singing. Very enjoyable. Eric stayed in his room. They left at 9 and I was very worried about the icy roads, but I got 3 rings on the telephone about 12-1 so went to bed knowing they were safely home.

Saturday. 28th Dec. 85



Got alarm to get up as I intended go to Bridgworth for Mum Eric Grandey in the kitchen - I thought looking upon birds - then realized he was about to have a fit. My arm was round him but with the jerky and his weight we both ended up on the floor. Covered him with blankets but was afraid he might have banged his head as it'd come quite a cropper too.

Lapsed about 140 minutes until he managed to get up and walk to the bedroom. Slept until lunch time. Got up but was very vague and walked about aimlessly, vacantly staring at the walls.

About 2 o'clock he was sitting in his chair and I saw his head go up to the ~~left~~ then round to the right and he was off into another fit.

I decided to phone the doctor and I wanted to be sure I was doing everything possible to stop recurring fits as I know how they affect Eric's memory.

Dr. Grace came up. Eric was almost round from the fit but obviously didn't know what was happening. Dr. Grace kept him to the bedroom and gave him a diazepam injection to help calm him down and hopefully break the "fit" cycle.

Eric sick about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour later, but mainly leaving as he hadn't eaten that day.

This continued for a couple of hours on and off. He went back to sleep. Got up occasionally but didn't have the ability to communicate.

Wouldn't eat or drink.

- He slept all night. No fits.

Sunday 29th Dec 85

Eric very vague and muddled. Difficulty in finding words to describe articles. He wanted a nail-file but couldn't find the word for it. Also insisted he always wet shaved and didn't use an electric razor.

Spent most of the day in and out of bed or walking vaguely from room to room.

Managed to persuade him to eat a bowl of home-made soup about 5 p.m. and during the evening 2 cups of Oxo. He seemed better in the evening and watched the T.V. show on Gandhi, but am not sure he fully understood what he was watching.

It had snowed this morning so I cleared the snow. Tried to get the car started but the battery sounded dead. Went back to it about 2 hours later and it did start. Ran it for about $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. Hope it keeps going until I can get out and get a new battery. I think this one is getting old.

- Eric stayed up after me and although I had said leave the Central Heating on, found he had turned it off. So I put it on during the night. Very cold night.

Monday 30th Dec. 1985

Eric up before me and made me a pot of tea. I got up immediately and made him a cup of coffee. He was quite so vague this morning and Red put on the television. I phoned the surgery to tell Sheila that Dr Brace would be reminded that he had seen Eric and would

decide whether or not to get in touch with Dr. Hepes.

Joan Byrne came but I said I couldn't go to hand dressers.
Still very cold and trying to know.

Eric went to bed about 9-15.

Tuesday 31st December

Eric still rather vague but not so shaky.

Went to bed in the evening but got up after about 10 mins.

Stayed up till midnight. Reasonable but not always able to grasp the word he is looking for.

- Christine phoned at about 1-30. She had been out with Alan from New York. Her first words were "Daddy in hospital". Almost uncanny.

Lain & Sue phoned and we spoke to Nancy & Beltran. Phoned Alan to wish his happy New Year.

letter from New Cross to Car Scan

Wednesday 1st

on Friday

Eric still having trouble with finding right words, but not too bad as far as shakes etc concerned.

Bob phoned. He felt something was wrong.

Joan Gabbedy phoned.

I spent quiet day. I feel shattered. Eric slept from 2 to 5.30 but I went to bed before him. He is still walking about vaguely.

Thursday 2nd January 1986.

Eric up first. A vagueness about him but can't be sure of my own assessment. I'm just so worried.

Friday 3rd Jan. 1986

Car came to take us to New Cross. Nothing much to report. Eric breathing much better on walky up to the X-ray dept.

Sat 4th Jan. Car now in work.

New Battery on Sat. 4th Jan

Wednesday 8th January

Weather note: - Snowed quite heavily yesterday. Fortunately I went down to ~~Brook~~ Boreley (walked) as there had been some snow earlier. This week which had frozen.

Eric was rather vague over the weekend. By that I mean difficulty in remembering a word to end a sentence. Not quite so bad today.

Thursday 10th January 86.

We both went to bed late last night. Watched the snooker. I went to bed but Eric stayed up about $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs later than me. I got up before 8:00. He didn't wake up until 10. Still vague but maybe not quite so bad today. Having trouble in keeping night time warm. Have given him an ankle warmer to try to keep his hand and wrist warmer.

FRIDAY

He helped me put away groceries and managed a few of the clues in the easy Guardian Crossword. Also beat me at Countdown getting the conundrum at the end very quickly. Haven't heard anything from the hospital so hope it was an infection and that the drugs will do their work.

House note The snow has brought down a great branch of the Leylandii which is half on top of the garage. Don't think I can get it down myself. Will have to try and find someone to do it. Car started well (the new battery so that's good news).

Wednesday 15th Jan 80

Can't kid myself any more. Something is very wrong with Eric. The ability to connect thought and words deteriorating. He realizes this. Couldn't find the word for TERCH so drew it for me. Mentioned that he knew he laughed for no reason.

This morning he was up first and brought me tea to bed. but by 9.30 he was sitting in his chair nodding off. so he went to bed.

I waited on the pool and nothing came from New Cross. I then decided to phone Roger Kelly and bring him up to date on how Eric was. He said he had some information. so I am going down to the Surgery at 2.30 this afternoon. Feel more than apprehensive. Have the awful feeling that nothing can be done - I just hope I can find the strength to cope.

Bad news. The tumour is growing rapidly - Eric to go on to dexamethasone. 2 tablets a day. I know these will have quite a corticosteroid effect - as they did last year. but that may last a while. No talk of further surgery. Eric to go back to see Dr Hughes Feb 24th as arranged. I know I was half expecting this news but am shattered - frightened of my inability to cope.

Can't write more. I had such hopes that the deep X-ray would work for longer - life is hell. Why did it have to happen to Eric. He was so brilliant and had so much to offer.

Thursday to Friday, 16 to 17th
to Eric much better. The tablets working miraculously.

Thursday.

Saturday, 7th Feb 86

Eric been getting slower. Was up this morning at 5.30 a.m., but took till 11 o'clock to wash & shave. Couldn't find the words to tell me what he wanted for his very restless. Seemed to become more coherent towards evening. Feel so helpless.

Sunday, 8th Feb. 86.

Eric up again at 5.30 he says. I found him asleep in my chair at 9 a.m. He had had his breakfast pulled and miss etc.

Sat in chair until 11 a.m. - dizzy.

Then washed and shaved.

Seemed to get better by lunchtime.

Went to bed at 2.30. I'm undecided what to do, but need to get him more tablets so will awake to see Doctor. Still snowing slightly outside.

Monday 16th Phoned surgery. Got appointment to see Bhageretty at 10.15. He was marvellous and talked to me about Eric. reckons the specialist is not very likely to do anything, as there will be so much scarring from previous operations. Has put the dexamethasone up to ~~4~~ 4 x 2 mg tablets a day hoping it will relieve the tension and swelling on the brain.

Tuesday 18th. Eric a little brighter.

Wednesday 19th. Eric sleepy part of the day. Having difficulty in working out small things like switching television programmes.

Thursday 20th Eric got up and made my tea. Took a long time to get shaved and washed. Sat in chair snoozing. Looks very happy.

I went to Bridgnorth. Found he had locked middle door of stable. Must check that I have keys to get in.

5th March 86

Have seen Dr Hughes. and no more surgery. Eric lost control of bodily functions one night. Incredible state in the bedroom plus the fact he had no idea and had dozed.

Eventually got him clean. Since then Sister Jones has been in.

Eric hasn't shaved for 10 days. and won't wash himself. Managed to persuade him to let me wash his face arms and hands today. but although I was very gentle he was very touchy about my touching him.

Yesterday he slept most of the day. Today he is pacing about. Christine is coming on Friday. Feel it is such a long way for her to come, but can understand she wants to come and see him. I dread she's going to get a shock when she sees him.

Dain came last weekend. so I'm very fortunate with everyone being so kind.

April 2nd. Wednesday

Much has happened since I last wrote. Eric
is in hospital

Again weeks have passed. It is now June 16th 1986

June 16th 1986 Monday.

Eric has been in Lady Forester's hospital for almost 12 weeks.

I have visited 2 times a day and watched him gradually deteriorate. At first in hospital he was rather out of sorts, but I think he was then heavily sedated.

At first he could walk and slowly feed himself. Now he is very weak. I don't think he can walk, even with help.

He seems to know me, and can laugh and answer the odd question. He is eating very little as food seems to make him vomit.

Today he was very tired and was still in bed and weary when I went in at 11:30 am. Am not surprised as he was left in a chair since before I arrived at 11:30 am Sunday until 6 p.m. I have noticed that the result of not resting in the afternoon results in a bad day following.

He is apparently having trouble with urine retention, and is not taking enough fluid. Today he couldn't eat the meat course.

but managed some jelly. Jelly was saved for his tea & supper.

He genuinely seems pleased to see me & once he realizes I'm there but I'm sure he forgets me once I leave. I hope so. The misery for me of not knowing what he's feeling or thinking is indescribable.

I haven't seen a doctor - I fear to hear what he would say. My days are not happy. I have a ~~constant~~ continual battle with the garden. The house feels as if it could do with a spring clean but I'm too weary. The uncertainty of the progress of the disease is soul-destroying. The not knowing how much Eric knows, and how much he might suffer mentally is agony.

Tuesday June 17th. 86.

I am overwhelmingly tired this morning. Granted I've been doing a lot of gardening but I think my mind is weary and crying out for rest. Everything is such an effort to do.

Went into hospital. Eric sitting in chair. He tried to eat a little but had a slight convulsion. Very short but made him look very grey. The nurses quickly got him into bed. I left when he seemed to be sleeping.

When I went back in at 5 he was lying in bed. Beautifully clean. Tired looking but his mind seemed to be clear. He was obviously worried about where he was. Has not eaten today but had one cup of high protein drink. Fell awful walking away as I feel he knew I was going and couldn't understand why. Still I'm only guessing as I can't know what is going on in his mind.

I am so exhausted and yet haven't done anything physical.

Saturday, June 22nd.

Eric sitting up but very tired. Has been on liquid diet for about 3 days. I notice that the instructions

on the yellow card are for his mouth to be cleaned.

He is answering questions rationally, but very weak voice. In the afternoon he started doing his paper napkin. Afraid if he was hungry he said "Voy". I got him a biscuit from the kitchen, and also some bread and butter. I thought to think he might be starving and can't communicate. It really is a frightful illness. He is not persip much wine - none in 12 hrs. but there is not drinking much fluid.

Sunday June 23rd.

When I went in at 11.30. Sister was shaping Eric's beard. She said she wished she could remove his beard because of the difficulty of keep it clean. I said he had been clean shaven, so she and Staff Nurse Gristman spent 12 hrs shaving him. He looked understandably very tired afterwards.

When I went back in at 5 p.m. he was still sitting in the chair, without a cardigan and very cold as the outside temperature was low. I wrapped him up well, but even when he was put into bed at 6 he was still very cold. He ate $\frac{1}{2}$ slice bread and butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of soup. I don't think he had any lunch, although some had been left in the kitchen for him.

Monday, June 24th. 86.

Went in usual time. Eric sitting in chair. Pretty well wrapped up with cardigan on. Shaved head shaved and legs. Temperature in the ward very cold. I needed to keep on my ankles. Plaster on duty but seemed engrossed in tele/mattress. Eric had a little puddle and a bundle

up drink -

I went to B'north. Took Quincy into Bridgworth Infirmary. She is to have 2 toes amputated Tomorrow - No sugar in wine and B.B. 178.

left her under anesthetic and got to Broady hospital about 5.35. Eric still sitting in chair. Very cold.

Was put to bed almost immediately after I arrived. Had had piece of bread & butter at tea time according to Sister.

He looked a bit vacant but did answer questions in a very weak voice and responded to all greetings from people visiting. He had $\frac{1}{2}$ slice bread and butter and about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of soup.

Eric died at 7 am. August 10th.

I had been with him all night and was with him when he took his last breath. I do hope he knew I was there. I'll never know.
