

Transcript – KP/AK/2/Blathwayt/5-p1-5

Eagle House
Northend
Batheaston
Bath
Somerset

Wed. [Wednesday] 19th Nov. [November] 1952.

Dearest Annie,

Thank you so much for your letter dated 15th Nov. [November] – postmark 17th Nov. received 18th with a stamped envelope enclosed for a reply.

I am a dreadful person for not writing to my old friends; I really do want to write but I cannot get myself to keep up with the time.

I am so sorry dear Annie that your sight is very bad, and that you have been so ill.

I suppose it is partly our age, I shall be 74 on the 1st February. William used to say to me

“Our term of life is 70 years
an age which few survive,
and if with more than common strength
to 80 we arrive,
then if we live 15 years more
we shall be 95.”

I had a great aunt who lived to 99.

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Poor William only got himself to 69. and 10 months.

He had been feeling his heart a good deal for some time. He was about as usual on the 1st August, he went along to the Northend Stores and brought back our food, - he watered the vine with the hose pipe, wrote his diary, and balanced the accounts and so on, but he said he felt tired. As he did not come down to breakfast at 9 o'clock on the 2nd August, at 9.15 I went up to his room to see how he was. I found him with his legs and lower part of his body on the ground, and his head on the edge of his bed. He was quite cold and stiff, and must have been dead for a number of hours. I had spoken to him at about 10 minutes to 12 on the night of August 1st, and he was alive then, so he probably died in the very early hours of the 2nd August. It was from a clot of blood in the heart. I was quite alone in the house, and so I phoned for our doctor, and he came quickly.

He got the police and they moved William onto the bed. In the evening they moved him to the Royal United Hospital and put him in the chapel there.

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On August 6th they brought the hearse out here and then we left for Arno's [*note: misspelling of Arnos*] Vale, Bristol, where William was cremated at 3 o'clock. A number of relations and some friends turned up.

At 6 o'clock his ashes were scattered on the lawn on ground that had been dug for it, on the same spot as Mother's ashes had been strewn. Our relations were there and quite a number of our Batheaston neighbours.

William's old friend Mrs. George Oates, formerly Miss Eileen Evans read out some of William's poems as soon as the ashes had been scattered, she ended with this one, - X

(The time has been rushing on and now it is Sat. [Saturday] 29th Nov. [November]

(From The Bath Critic – Feb. [February] 1952 page 55.)

X "Au Revoir
(after the German of Gustav Falke)

Lay roses of one of the brightest red,
I wish to have no sadness in my room,
No melancholy thoughts, no sombre gloom,
But cheerfulness around when I am dead.

Let there be music and let no one grieve –
In death there should be nothing to appal –
Just let the curtains gradually fall,
As night falls on a lovely summer's eve.

William Blathwayt. "

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Mrs. Eileen Oates has planted William's memorial garden with 50 snowdrops, 50 crocuses, yellow, white, sky blue, purple, and striped, 50 trumpet daffodils, and grass seed which is now green grass; and in November she and her husband Mr. George Oates, brought out 3 Ena Harkness rose trees, (crimson scarlet) which Joe Rawlings has planted in the Memorial Garden; so I hope it will look nice next year.

I am afraid that you will think you are never going to hear from me.

I am quite alone in Eagle House in the day time. Mr. George Phelps a plumber, and his wife Doris a clerk at the Admiralty, go out to their work at about 8 o'clock in the morning, and do not come back until the evening. But I like being alone, other people about talking, tire me.

Monday 1st Dec. [December] On the 25th November our doctor – Dr. Murray- [illegible], (the one who came here and found dear William dead) died quite suddenly himself at his home Lambridge, Bath. He was such a nice sweet kind gentle man. I shall have to find a new doctor now.

I am so sorry I never wrote to numbers of kind friends and relations last Xmas.

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I received [words inserted] On the 15 Dec. [December] 1951. you sent me a sweet Xmas card, a red candle in a lamp in snow etc. thank you so much for it. When you are writing to dear Jessie please

thank her very much from me for a card I received from her on the 22nd Dec. 1951 – of snow - church, holly, robin, fir trees.

William made me his sole Executrix. I have such large numbers of kind letters that I have not answered yet.

In the Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald Nov. [*November*] 29 1952 is the following. I did not write it, it is on the 1st outside page.

‘Batheaston Poet’ left £17,869.

Mr. William Blathwayt, of Eagle House, Batheaston, [*illegible deletion*] known as “the Batheaston poet”, and a direct lineal descendant of William Blathwayt, Secretary of State to William of Orange, died on Aug. [*August*] 2, aged 69, leaving £17,869, 7s – 2d gross £17,767-15s-8d net value (duty paid £2,024).

He left £300 to Eileen M. Oates; £4,500 to his godchild, Penelope J. Hughes: and the residue to his sister Miss Mary Blathwayt, of the same address, to whom probate has been granted.”

My 1st cousin once removed, who now owns Dyrham Park, Justin Blathwayt, 2nd son of my cousin the late Harry Blathwayt the youngest of the three boys, my father and sister [*illegible words*] -